CABINET

Monday 18 September 2023
10.00 a.m.
Council Chamber, Rotherham Town Hall, Moorgate Street, Rotherham. S60 2TH

Cabinet Members:-

Leader of the Council	Councillor Chris Read
Deputy Leader of the Council, Housing and Neighbourhood Working Portfolio	Councillor Sarah Allen
Adult Social Care and Health Portfolio	Councillor David Roche
Children and Young People Portfolio	Councillor Victoria Cusworth
Corporate Services, Community Safety and Finance Portfolio	Councillor Saghir Alam
Jobs and the Local Economy Portfolio	Councillor Denise Lelliott
Social Inclusion Portfolio	Councillor Dave Sheppard
Transport and Environment Portfolio	Councillor Dominic Beck

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

CABINET

Venue:	**The Town Hall, The Crofts, Moorgate Street, Rotherham. S60 2TH**
Date and Time:	**Monday 18 September 2023 at 10.00 a.m.**
Agenda Contact	**Governance Unit – goverance@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 11 - 22)

To receive the record of proceedings of the Cabinet meeting held on 7 August 2023.

5. Exclusion of the Press and Public

Agenda Item(s) 15 and 16 have exempt appendices. Therefore, if necessary when considering those items, the Chair will move the following resolution:-

That under Section 100(A) 4 of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) of business on the grounds that it/they involve(s) the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12(A) of such Act indicated, as now amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND HEALTH

6. Public Health Proposals to Drugs and Alcohol Grant 2022-25 - Annual Update (Pages 23 - 44)

Report from the Strategic Director for Adult Care, Housing and Health.

Recommendations:

1. That this report is accepted as the first annual update on the 3-year outlined grant plan for use of the Supplementary Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery Grant as set out in July the 2022 Cabinet Paper.

2. That Cabinet note that the Council is in year two of the current three year grant commitment. Whilst this has been made as part of a 10-year national strategy, there is currently no certainty of funding beyond 2025.

3. That Cabinet choose to continue to support the reprofiling of spend across the agreed Grant Plan categories to mitigate the risk of underspend and returning unspent grant to the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities.

7. Stag Willow Extra Care Scheme (Pages 45 - 94)

Report from the Strategic Director for Adult Care, Housing and Health.

Recommendations:

That Cabinet:

1. Note the decision by Together Housing to permanently close the Resource Centre and the change in type of housing scheme from Extra Care to General Housing.

2. Approve the permanent change in service delivery to an offsite wrap around

care and support service in line with the current delivery model.

8. Re-procurement of a Local Healthwatch Service (Pages 95 - 119)

Report from the Strategic Director for Adult Care, Housing and Health.

Recommendations:

That Cabinet:

1. Approve Option 2 to procure a local Healthwatch Service for a contract period of 3 years from 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2027 (with an option to extend for a further year)
2. Note the increase in the contract value.

CORPORATE SERVICES, COMMUNITY SAFETY AND FINANCE

9. New Applications for Business Rates Relief (Pages 121 - 138)

Report from the Strategic Director for Finance and Customer Services.

Recommendations:

That Cabinet:

1. Approve the applications for Discretionary Business Rate Relief for Labre's Hope Community Interest Company, Beacon South Yorkshire Ltd, Miramar Judo Academy Ltd and Unity Boxing Centre CIC in accordance with the details set out in Section 6 to this report for the 2022/23 and 2023/24 financial years.

10. Polling Districts and Polling Places Review 2023- Approval for consultation commencement (Pages 139 - 171)

Report from the Chief Executive.

Recommendations:

That Cabinet:

1. Note the information in this report regarding the scope of the review.
2. Approve the timetable for the review, as set out in Appendix 2.

11. Digital Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan (Pages 173 - 220)

Report from the Strategic Director for Finance and Customer Services.

Recommendations:

That Cabinet:

1. Notes the work undertaken to date as part of the Digital Inclusion programme.
2. Endorse the co-designed Digital Inclusion Strategy and support the approach being taken to help people and communities who are most at risk from digital exclusion.

12. July 2023-24 Financial Monitoring Report (Pages 221 - 249)

Report from the Strategic Director for Finance and Customer Services.

Recommendations:

That Cabinet:

1. Note the current General Fund Revenue Budget forecast overspend of £4.5m.

2. Note that actions will continue to be taken to reduce the overspend position but that it is possible that the Council will need to draw on its reserves to balance the 2023/24 financial position.

3. Approve the capital budget variations as detailed in section 2.61 of the report.

HOUSING

13. Scrutiny Review Recommendations - Selective Licensing (Pages 251 - 263)

Report from the Assistant Chief Executive.

Recommendations:

1) Cabinet notes the following recommendations for consideration and response.

   a) That reinspection be prioritised for landlords whose properties have required action previously.

b) Consideration be given to how the Council may support retention of experienced inspectors already in the Council's employment.

c) That consideration be given to incentivising responsible landlords, and, where there is a proven track record, empowering landlords to self-assess, provided that the service can still obtain assurances that decent standards are maintained.

d) That consideration be given to managing expectations around selective licensing as a measure focused on the health of residents, rather than aesthetics or regeneration.

e) That consideration be given to how uptake of the cost-of-living support offer among families in selective licensing areas may be further promoted and monitored, with a view to identifying gaps and promoting financial inclusion.

f) Given the complexity of measuring impact on deprivation and difficulty in improving relative levels of deprivation, that consideration be given to how internal measures may better reflect the real impact of the scheme.

g) That a joined-up approach be sought with relevant Council strategies and services, with partner and voluntary sector organisations and with resident-led initiatives prior to any future selective licensing declaration.

h) That engagement with landlords and with tenants be considered alongside any response to the above recommendations, and that the response to the above recommendations be subject to the learning derived from continued engagement with landlords and tenants.

2) Cabinet responds to the recommendations by November 2023 in accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

14. Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy (Pages 265 - 313)

Report from the Strategic Director for Adult Care, Housing and Health.

Recommendations:

That Cabinet:

1. Approves the specific Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy.

2. Delegates authority to the Assistant Director of Housing, in consultation with

the Cabinet Member for Housing, to alter the Policy to bring it into line with forthcoming new legal time limits for social landlords to address damp and mould, if required.

JOBS AND THE LOCAL ECONOMY

15. Mainline Station Update (Pages 315 - 342)

Report from the Strategic Director for Regeneration and Environment.

Recommendations:

That Cabinet:-

1. Authorises the Assistant Director of Planning, Regeneration and Transport to negotiate the acquisition by agreement of the property interests in Appendix 1 Appendix 2 and Appendix 3 and within the available funding, in consultation with the Council's S.151 Officer, Assistant Director - Legal Services, the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy, and the Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment.

2. Grants a Resolution in Principle to investigate the use of powers, under either the Compulsory Purchase Order or Transport and Works Act Order, to acquire the necessary property interests.

16. Council Building Decarbonisation Programme (Pages 343 - 375)

Report of the Strategic Director, Finance and Customer Services

Recommendations:

That Cabinet:-

1. Approves the programme of works to design and fit the LED and Solar PV works to the five Council buildings listed in Section 2.5 of this report to be delivered through a procurement process.
2. Approves the appointment of a partner to support and advise on the development of the remaining operational estate and to deliver the decarbonisation works contained in this report, to the five Council buildings, to be identified through a procurement process.
3. Approves the use of grant funding from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme and a contribution from the existing Council capital decarbonisation project to deliver the proposed works to the Council's operational property, as set out in exempt Appendix 1.
4. Approve a procurement process to be undertaken to establish a heat delivery contract to provide a heat source to the proposed Council

owned properties.

5. Approve that a report will be to be submitted to Cabinet following this process that will detail the outcome of the procurement, its financial feasibility and recommendations for heat delivery for the five buildings listed within Section 2.5.

17. Joint Regional Statement of Common Ground (Pages 377 - 459)

Report from the Strategic Director for Regeneration and Environment.

Recommendations:

That Cabinet:-

1. Approves that the Council be a signatory to the Joint Regional Statement of Common Ground.

LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

18. LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Report and Action Plan (Pages 461 - 498)

Report from the Assistant Chief Executive.

Recommendations:

That Cabinet:

1. Note the observations and key recommendations made by the Corporate Peer Team to the Council.

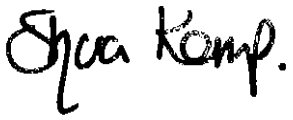
2. Approve the high-level action plan which is the Council's response to the findings.

19. Recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (To Follow)

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 13 September, 2023.

20. Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Cabinet will be held on Monday 16 October, 2023 commencing at 10.00am in Rotherham Town Hall.



SHARON KEMP,
Chief Executive.

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THE CABINET
Monday 7 August 2023

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

33. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

34. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

The first question was received from Farooq Tareen who explained he was a member of the Muslim Burial Council. He was astonished to read an article in the Star of 31 July 2023 in which Councillor Alam was quoted as saying “Last year in April there was a concern of water in one of the graves, so I came, had a look and told Dignity they needed to resolve this and put the drainage in”. The grave discussed belonged to his wife. He felt the words used in the article showed a lack of empathy and compassion and asked that this be passed on to Councillor Alam.

He also wanted to know, following the Clancy Report in 2020, why there had not been any move to employ a hydrogeologist to find out the source of water in the graveyard?

He also understood that the Environment Agency had objected to the planning application for the proposed area, which was adjacent to the cramped Muslim area on issues relating to water and had declared the site unsuitable for burial and Mr Tarren asked what the alternative was going to be.

The Leader gave his condolences on the passing of his late wife. He explained that Councillor Alam was working at an employment tribunal, which was the reason for him not being in attendance. He believed that if Councillor Alam had made a poor choice of language, then he would regret that.

The Monitoring Officer explained regarding the appointment of a hydrogeologist that it was understood from the Clancy Report that the water was being held in patches was due to the clay soil and so a hydrologist was not requires.

The Leader addressed Mr Tareen’s concerns regarding the Environment Agency and the planning application explaining that he understood it was

being considered by the Council's planning officers and by the Planning Committee. He felt it was not unusual for the Environment Agency to express concerns about burial grounds however the planning process would decide if it was a suitable place for burials to take place.

In his supplementary Mr Tareen asked what the alternatives were if the planning permission was not granted?

In response the Leader indicated he would not speculate on alternative locations as consideration would need to be given a location where burials could take place that would be suitable for both the Muslim and non-Muslim communities.

The second question was from Mr Saghir Hussain who sought clarity on who was responsible for the cemetery at Herringthorpe. Was it the Council or Dignity? He felt there was a lot of confusion and felt the Council was speaking on behalf of dignity. He also queried who commissioned the Clancy report?

The Monitoring Officer explained that Dignity had commissioned the report and that he was answering based solely on the information contained within the report.

The Leader explained that Dignity was responsible for the operation of the crematorium and graveyards that fell within that contract, along with anything about the day to day running of those, the management of those and the commissioning of the long-term plans. Dignity had responsibility for delivering those things that were within the contract. The Council had responsibility to ensuring that the service was provided but on a day-to-day basis it was Dignity's responsibility.

In his supplementary Mr Hussain said he understood that the day-to-day operational side belonged to Dignity however this matter was not day-to-day, it was an actual subterranean issue and he sought clarification as to who was responsible?

The Leader explained that Dignity was responsible for that because it was around ensuring that the services provided were appropriate in a safe and sustainable way.

Mr Hussain went on to say that the issue was not one that had arisen in the last five years, it had been present for over two decades and was clearly evident in the graveyard. The matter had been there long before dignity arrived. RMBC had fitted systems to rectify the issue, but they were not fitted properly and there were still graves that were full of water. What was going to be done to address this?

The Leader reiterated that ensuring the graveyard functioned properly, that the graves were safe and appropriate and to a standard was the responsibility of Dignity through the contract. He was not aware of what

had happened prior to the contract but it was now Dignity's responsibility as per the contract. He had hoped that drainage had improved over the past year but if things still needed to be addressed then they needed to be raised with Dignity.

The next question was from Mr Arshed Azam who began by registering his disappointment as at the last meeting it was unanimously agreed to hold a joint meeting with all parties at the table. The responses he had received from officers to his questions were an adequate and he had been contacted a month ago regarding arranging a meeting that had still not taken place. He sought a commitment that a meeting would be arranged within a month.

The Leader understood a plan was in place for the meeting to take place, but asked the Monitoring Officer to ensure that within the next month there was an opportunity for a small group of people to come together to speak with officers and raise concerns.

The next question was from Nida Khan said that a lot of what they were saying at these meetings was based on information gained from professional reports. The Council had installed a drainage system and she believed there were no records of where it was installed. She felt that each time they attended a meeting nothing was resolved. She asked why the Council did not have records of the drainage system?

The Leader said he would refer this to the relevant service to understand what records were held on this matter.

Nida Khan also indicated that the community was concerns as there was only space for only 90 graves remaining and the community needed to know what would happen when they had been used?

The Leader explained that everyone wanted to ensure there was adequate burial spaces however he could not speculate where they would be provided. It was a priority that this was progressed however the planning process could not be rushed.

Councillor Bennett-Sylvester expressed his disappointment that the plans for Thrybergh County Park had been scaled back. He had been informed this was due to inflationary pressures and queried how much of the delay in completion was down to those pressures and what could be done to speed up the delivery of the project to avoid additional costs?

The Leader said there had not been any slow time in the development of the scheme and noted that the Council was delivering a capital programme on a scale not seen in Rotherham previously. The Council had been successful in securing government grants however the economic headwinds were against the Council. He gave his assurance that the Council would deliver as much of the scheme as possible to a high quality but within the available resources.

The Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment explained that the principle of the scheme was around the new café facility with increased seating provision. The main aspects of the scheme still remained however the Council was seeing challenges due to inflation and market challenges in terms of materials, tendering processes etc.

In his supplementary Councillor Bennett-Sylvester noted that part of the long-term aim was a new play area and he queried what the knock-on effects would be if this was not delivered?

The Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment noted that lots of proposals come forward when consulting with the community. Other funding bids may become available to enable this to be considered as a project in the future.

Another member of the public raised concerns regarding the new section of the graveyard and asked if there could be a clear consensus due to religious factors that a full 5-year plan be provided so the Muslim community were aware of future plans.

The Leader agreed there was a need to ensure there was adequate burial spaces. He would check and provide a response regarding the commissioning of a long plan from Dignity.

35. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Resolved: That the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 10 July 2023 be approved as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

36. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Chair advised that appendices to Minute numbers. 38, 39, and 41, contained exempt information, however, the meeting remained open to the public and press throughout.

37. SEND SUFFICIENCY UPDATE - ROWAN CENTRE

Consideration was given to the report which followed previous reports to Cabinet relating to closing the Rowan Centre as a provision following a successful transition of pupils to Elements at Dinnington where their needs could be better met. The process according to the Department for Education guidelines was followed and at the previous meeting authority was delegated to the Strategic Director for Children and Young People's Service to seek formal expressions of interest to enhance the education provision in the borough by seeking a sponsor to establish some provision at the site.

Nexus MAT had been identified as the appropriate partner to take forward the use of the Rowan site. This would provide an improved pathway for

14–19-year-olds to access education along with vocational learning and skills for life.

It would improve the outcomes for children and people with SEND and aid to reduce the number of those not in employment, education or training. The proposal would also provide increased capacity within special educational needs provisions within Rotherham by 25 places from September 2023.

The Leader welcomed the ability to continue an education provision on the site.

The Assistant Director: Education and Inclusion noted that this was a culmination of different areas of the Council working in partnership. It was a new and innovative approach to defining provision to meet required needs. It would create a space that allowed growth with would be focused on the best outcomes for all.

A typographical error was noted in section 2.7 of the report which mentioned that *"Twenty-five places at Hilltop Special School will be available from Autumn term 2023 in phase 1 of the project development and a further twenty-five places will be created at Kelford Special School in phase 2 of the transition of pupils in spring term 2023."* The year of the spring term mentioned was corrected to 2024.

Resolved: That Cabinet:

1. Approved the development of the Rowan site to create a new high-quality learning environment for 14-19 SEND students in the Rotherham area.

2. Approved the transfer of the building and funding release from Accessibility funding to support the development of the site to meet the requirement of the SEND needs of pupils.

38. ROTHERHAM MARKETS & CENTRAL LIBRARY

Consideration was given the report which detailed the proposed redevelopment of the Rotherham Markets Complex and new library, located in the town centre of Rotherham. The markets complex was one of the most significant parts of the town centre and supported over 350 businesses. A key aspect of the scheme would be working with existing traders inline with the work carried out with the Improving Places Select Commission. It was highlighted that the Council was committed to supporting existing businesses along with attracting new ones.

The library proposal had been subject to lots of consultation and engagement as part of the new Library Strategy and people were supportive of moving the library to the town centre. It would make it more accessible particularly if travelling in by bus.

It was noted that the Council was determined to see the proposal through. The scheme was a key part of the Council's Master Plan.

The Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment highlighted that section 2.4 of the report highlighted the work that was in front of Cabinet which would enable work to being on site. The full scheme, in terms of design and costing was scheduled to be presented to Cabinet later that year.

The report was considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB), who queried what lessons, if any, had been learned from neighbouring authorities. OSMB were assured that both positive and negative lessons had been taken on board. The relocation of the library was welcomed as it would be located close to its original location, which is where the main footfall was. OSMB reviewed the report and supported the recommendations.

The Leader noted the scale of the scheme proposed for the town centre and welcomed the investment and was keen for the redevelopment to commence as soon as possible.

Resolved: That Cabinet:

1. Noted the progress to date on Rotherham Markets and Library redevelopment.

2. Approved the enabling works for the Rotherham Markets and Library development, as detailed in Appendix 2 of this report.

3. Delegated 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 award contract(s) for the works up to the values detailed in Appendix 2.

39. DINNINGTON PROJECT: CAPITAL REGENERATION GRANT

Consideration was given to the report which noted that the Council had worked closely with MP's, Ward members and the Town Council as part of the bid submission. The scheme in Dinnington would address the blight in the town centre and boost the local economy. The funding would bring privately owned derelict buildings into public sector ownership enabling the creation of a new town square, with purpose built commercial units to diversify the local offer. It was a really exciting scheme.

The Leader noted that this investment sat alongside a suite of other investments in local centres. It was a huge piece of work to ensure those physical improvements across the borough and the proposal was welcomed. He noted that there would be inflationary pressures associated with the scheme which was also replicated across all other

schemes. Funding had been set aside as part of the towns and villages work to support Dinnington and Wath. The funding was still available, and it was expected that some of it would be used as the schemes progressed to ensure the community benefited in the best way possible.

A technical note regarding recommendation number four regarding the delegation to the Assistant Director for Planning, Regeneration and Transport on the acquisition, he clarified that those acquisitions would be within the overall budget that Cabinet agreed for the scheme. The precise prices paid would depend on the valuation given at that time.

Councillor Roche welcomed the project and the benefits it would provide.

Resolved: That Cabinet:

1. Approved an allocation of £11,049,547 to the Dinnington project from the Principal Areas of Growth allocation.

2. Agreed to the development of 'Principal Areas of Growth' projects in Dinnington with further detail provided to Cabinet before commencement of the Scheme.

3. Delegated the commissioning of the design of the project based on the parameters in section 2.2 to the Strategic Director for Regeneration and the Environment in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy and the Section 151 Officer.

4. Approved that the Assistant Director for Planning, Regeneration and Transport be authorised to negotiate and agree the acquisition by agreement of the property interests at exempt Appendix 1, in consultation with the Council's Section 151 Officer and the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy.

5. Approved to grant a Resolution in Principle to investigate the use of Compulsory Purchase Order powers: in the event that terms cannot be agreed in relation to all or any of the property interests or cannot be agreed within the prescribed timeframe. A further report to be submitted to Cabinet seeking a formal resolution to acquire those property interests through the exercise of the Council's Compulsory Purchase Powers.

40. GENERAL ENFORCEMENT POLICY

Consideration was given to the report which set out how the Council approached it regulatory responsibilities. This was achieved through the General Enforcement Policy which was in accordance with the regulatory code set out nationally by Government. The Policy was regularly reviewed by Cabinet and adopt. The main changes to the document centred around data protection and adhering to national surveillance legislation and

frameworks.

Consultation had been undertaken on the document, with internal partners across different services and with the charity sector and police along with others who would have cause to be involved.

Resolved: That Cabinet approved the revised General Enforcement Policy, which will be published in accordance with the Regulators Code (statutory guidance published by the Department for Business Innovation and Skills), a requirement of The Legislative and Regulatory Reform Act 2006.

41. ROTHER VALLEY COUNTRY PARK AND THRYBERGH COUNTRY PARK LEVELLING UP FUND AND IMPLEMENTATION

Consideration was given to the report which sought approval for the implementation of the Levelling Up fund projects at Rother Valley Country Park and Thrybergh Country Park. It represented the continued commitment to green spaces in Rotherham whilst ensuring the public had access to spaces to be active and to relax.

Both Thrybergh and Rother Valley Country Parks were well used by local people and were well visited by people outside of the borough along with providing space for people who organise activities within those parks.

The investment at Thrybergh Country Park would see a new café with a greater seating capacity both indoors and outdoors. The investment at Rother Valley Country Park would see a new waterside café, enabling visitors to enjoy the views. This would also be enhanced by a new children's play area adjoining the new café. It would also include an events space. Improvements would be made to the car parking space including the provision of new spaces to enhance the overall visitor experience.

Consultation was undertaken with ward councillors, staff in the country parks, key stakeholders, local businesses and those who use the parks.

Councillor Beck welcomed the commitment to green spaces within the borough, in particular the investment to Rother Valley Country Park.

Councillor Lelliott expressed appreciation for the government funding received but noted it was not enough, however thanks to the hard work of officers putting funding bids together for the scheme, it was testament to their hard work and commitment to the authority along with their partnership working across directorates to ensure it was a good scheme to benefit the people of Rotherham.

Resolved: That Cabinet:

1. Approved the implementation of the Levelling Up project at Rother

Valley Country Park as shown at Appendix 1, 2 and 3.

2. Approved the implementation of the Levelling Up project at Thrybergh Country Park as shown at Appendix 1,2 and 4.

3. Approved the proposals to mitigate the funding gap as set out in Appendix 1.

4. Requested that a further report on the regeneration plans for both sites be presented within 12 months.

42. MALTBY PROJECT (TOWNS & VILLAGES FUND)

Consideration was given to the report which noted that the Towns and Villages Fund was a £4m Capital Programme, aiming to improve the Borough's local town and village centres. Four phases of work, delivering twenty-two schemes were allocated £3.177m in January 2022, with £823,000 left unallocated. This report provided an update on the proposals being developed for Maltby and provided options on the next steps for the twenty-third scheme within the programme.

It was important to note that the locations for the schemes and their detail was derived from ward members working with their communities and their neighbourhood teams to identify the local priorities.

The report proposed that the unallocated £823,000 be allocated to Maltby. It was explained that some pre-design work had been undertaken which resulted in the Maltby High Street development proposal. The priorities identified for the scheme were pedestrian access, hard and soft landscaping, street furniture and defining the high street. It was expected that those schemes would be delivered using internal schemes wherever possible.

Consultation on the proposals would be undertaken throughout the summer and initial engagement with ward members had already begun. There would be some wider stakeholder engagement with external partners.

The Leader noted that Maltby had been a priority within the scheme. Maltby high street was a large space that needed a lot of investment. He noted that seven schemes had been delivered through the Towns and Villages Fund, with two or three being delivered. He welcomed a prompt delivery of the scheme to benefit the community in Maltby.

Resolved: That Cabinet:

1. Noted the continued progress on the Towns and Villages Fund.

2. Allocated up to £823,000 to the scheme in Maltby East and delegates the delivery of the scheme to the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment, in consultation with the Deputy

Leader and Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Working.

43. UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND - YEARS TWO AND THREE

Consideration was given to the report which was the UK Shared Prosperity fund prospectus for years two and three. He explained that following Brexit, the Government committed to ensuring they continued regional funding under the name of the UK Shared Prosperity fund.

In terms of developing the proposed the first thing considered was what were the EU funded schemes that the borough already benefited from, particularly in terms of business support and skills to ensure that the Council was not disadvantaged, that it was not losing out on some of the work already being carried out across the borough.

The theme around this was how the Council could use the money to advance a more inclusive economy. This meant creating more indigenous businesses, more locally owned businesses creating wealth in the communities, including creating jobs for local people.

He welcomed that in line with the Council's commitment to a real living wage there was a desire to encourage those businesses to increase the rate of pay for those at the bottom end of the income scale.

It meant the Council would go further with it's social value commitments to ensure local businesses were better able to access public procurement and benefit from the work that was created by the public sector spending in the borough.

It meant doing more to help local people to access job opportunities, with a set of skills proposals that would help people of all aspects meaning no one was left behind. This would enable support to be placed within the communities and for it to remain over the next two years.

He felt it was a good package of measures that would help people to move forward.

The Assistant Chief Executive explained the summary of proposals in appendix two included a list of anticipated impacts. A more detailed proposals would be developed, if approved, to clarify those impacts both in terms of outputs and outcomes for the community.

The report was considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB) who welcomed the standalone report covering years two and three. During it's debate OSMB considered how the priorities were chosen, how the impacts were measured, and anticipated impacts and whether the proposal was ambitious enough. OSMB requested to receive an update report before the end of the municipal year. OSMB supported the recommendations.

Councillor Sheppard echoed comments raised regarding the employment solutions which had an effect on people's lives, working with people who were either a long time away from the working environment or were not able to access work. He also mentioned the value from the creation of 40 paid traineeships, and 70% of those going through a six-month traineeship were now either in education or paid employment.

Resolved: That Cabinet:

1. Endorsed the projects for submission to South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority for award of UKSPF for 2023/24 and 2024/25 as follows:

   a) Local Business Support
      i) £1,693,727 for sub-regional business support supporting three strands of "Launchpad" (start-up support); productivity and low carbon.
      ii) £234,870 capital for Rotherham's business incubation centres.
      iii) £234,482 for social value to coordinate and enhance social value activity, focused on increasing local spend through anchor organisations' procurement activity.

   b) People and Skills
      i) £1,291,013 for Rotherham integrated skills programme (RISP) providing four projects covering the journey from initial engagement with those hardest to reach, through to sustainable employment and career progression.
      ii) £421,502 for Children's Capital of Culture to extend and expand the traineeship programme with further capacity building support for partners.

   c) Communities and Place
      i) £471,664 for Children's Capital of Culture, including investment in existing and new events and festivals across the Borough, building capacity in community organisations and groups and creating more resilient models for grass roots programmes.
      ii) £370,094 for Open Arms Rotherham phase 2 for ongoing delivery of fortnightly one-stop shop sessions, in targeted neighbourhoods and further development of community infrastructure, including community leaders.
      iii) £100,000 for Reaching Out Across Communities, establishing local equality networks to ensure that current and future interventions are informed by and effectively reach all of Rotherham's diverse communities.
      iv) £280,000 for town centre events to deliver a regular

programme and increase footfall.

v) £1,068,709 for the visitor and leisure economy, supporting the delivery of capital schemes across Rotherham, focused on major attractions, increasing visitor numbers, and improving skills

vi) £80,000 capital for Active Lives, creating additional multi-sport play zones in local communities.

d) Rural

i) £200,000 for a small grants programme for rural businesses supporting rural micro and small enterprises and tourism and the visitor economy.

2. Agreed to delegate authority to the Assistant Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council to determine revised and final allocations for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, including allocation of funding to the three capital schemes within the 'visitor and leisure economy' proposal. This is to include provision for other eligible actions within the use of the fund should it not be possible to achieve full spend of the grant through the allocations above.

3. That a further report to provide to OSMB in 6 months' time indicating how the impact has been measured and monitored.

44. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Resolved: That the next meeting of the Cabinet be held on Monday 18 September 2023, commencing at 10am.

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Public Report
Cabinet

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting
Cabinet – 18 September 2023

Report Title
Public Health Proposals for Drugs and Alcohol Grant 2022-2025 - Annual update

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
Ian Spicer, Strategic Director of Adult Care, Housing and Public Health

Report Author(s)
Jessica Brooks, Public Health Specialist
Jessica.Brooks@rotherham.gov.uk
Jacqueline Wiltschinsky, Consultant in Public Health
jacqueline.wiltschinsky@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected
Borough-Wide

Report Summary
This report provides Cabinet with an update on the last years activity regarding the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) grant for Drugs and Alcohol. The grant was initially awarded to 50 local authorities as accelerator sites to combat drugs and alcohol. The report outlines the activities to date and the proposals for Year 2 (23/24) of the grant which were agreed by the Combatting Drugs Partnership, an officer decision and OHID.

In July last year Cabinet accepted the Drug and Alcohol Grant funding and the spending proposals outlined in the Cabinet report 'Public Health Proposals for Drugs and Alcohol Grant 2022-2025'. The present paper provides an update on those proposals and an overview of progress and achievements of the grant spend.

Recommendations

1. That this report is accepted as the first annual update on the 3-year outlined grant plan for use of the Supplementary Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery Grant as set out in July the 2022 Cabinet Paper.

2. That Cabinet note that the Council is in year two of the current three year grant commitment. Whilst this has been made as part of a 10-year national strategy, there is currently no certainty of funding beyond 2025.

3. That Cabinet choose to continue to support the reprofiling of spend across the agreed Grant Plan categories to mitigate the risk of underspend and returning unspent grant to the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 Part A Equality Impact assessment for services
Appendix 2 Part B Updated Equality Analysis Form
Appendix 3 Carbon Impact form

Background Papers
Public Health Proposals for Drugs and Alcohol Grant 2022-2025
Dame Carol Black's independent review of drugs: phase two report
From harm to hope: A 10-year drugs plan to cut crime and save lives
Additional drug and alcohol treatment funding allocations: 2022 to 2023
Additional drug and alcohol treatment funding allocations: 2023 to 2024 and 2024 to 2025
Decision details for We Are with You Contract variation

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel
None

Council Approval Required
No

Exempt from the Press and Public
No

Public Health Proposals for Drugs and Alcohol Grant 2022-2025 - Annual update

1. Background

1.1 In July 2022 Cabinet received a report 'Public Health Proposals for Drugs and Alcohol Grant 2022-2025' outlining the availability of 2 grants being made available to Rotherham by the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID), and recommendations on how they could be utilised. These grants are: The Supplemental Substance Misuse Recovery and Treatment Grant (SSMTRG) and the Inpatient Detoxification (IPD) Grant. These grants were detailed in July 2022 Cabinet Report. Cabinet accepted the Drug and Alcohol Grant funding and the proposed Grant Plan and asked to receive an annual update. This report updates Cabinet on the delivery of the Grant Plan to date and outlines the plan for the remaining duration.

1.2 The phased grant allocation for Rotherham is set out in the table below, which shows both the SSMTRG and IPD Grant:
*Figure is indicative

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25*
Supplemental Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery Grant	£688,722	£1,128,684	£2,178,186
Inpatient Detoxification Grant	£64,077	£64,077	£64,077

1.3 The areas of spend for the Supplemental Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery Grant are prescribed to cover the following ten categories:

1. System coordination and commissioning
2. Enhanced harm reduction provision
3. Increased treatment capacity
4. Increased integration and improved care pathways between the criminal justice settings, and drug treatment
5. Enhancing treatment quality
6. Residential rehabilitation and inpatient detoxification
7. Better and more integrated responses to physical and mental health issues
8. Enhanced recovery support Development and expansion of a recovery community
9. Other interventions which meet the aims and targets set in the drug strategy
10. Expanding the competency and size of the workforce

1.4 The original Grant Plan was agreed by OHID and were summarised within and appended to the July 2022 Cabinet paper.

1.5 Delivery of the Grant Plan has coincided with the recommissioning of Rotherham's Alcohol and Drug Treatment Service. This has seen a transition from CGL as the service provider up to 31st March 2023 to We Are With You (WAWY) from 1st April 2023, which created added complexity for the management of the Grant spend.

1.6 Since July 2022 and in response to the National Drugs Strategy; From Harm to Hope Rotherham has established a Combatting Drugs Partnership (CDP) for which the Director of Public Health is the Chair and Senior Responsible Owner. This partnership reports into the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Safer Rotherham Partnership and has taken on oversight of the delivery of the Grant Plan as part of the wider Combatting Drugs Action Plan. The Operational Grant Group which produced the original grant plan continues to be responsible for the Grant Plan implementation and now reports into the CDP. The Year 2 (23/24) Grant Plan has been developed in consultation with these two groups and has been subject to an approval process led by OHID.

2. Key Issues

2.1 **Activity from the Inpatient Detoxification Grant**
The Inpatient Detoxification (IPD) grant, managed by Doncaster MBC as consortia lead on behalf of 11 Yorkshire and Humber Local Authorities, was spent in full for 22/23 by September 2022 with all 14 spaces allocated for Rotherham residents being used. This was primarily for alcohol detoxification. As noted below this was supplemented from the SSMTR Grant to add a further 20 places to meet the needs of Rotherham residents presenting in 2022/23.

2.2 **Activity from the SSMTR Grant funding**
The majority of the SSMTR grant spend has been with the providers of Alcohol and Drug treatment services. Of the year one allocation, £268,514.30 was awarded to Change Grow Live (CGL) (the commissioned treatment provider up to the 31st of March 2023) to deliver harm reduction, criminal justice and recovery activities of the grant spend. This was increased by £60,000 to fund an additional 20 episodes of inpatient detoxification following the full utilisation of the Inpatient Detoxification Grant.

2.3 The contract with the new provider, We are With You (WAWY), commenced on 1st April 2023. An allocation of £532,308 from the 2023/24 SSMTRG has also been made to WAWY through the new non-core framework to enable work started with CGL to continue and expand into Year 2 (23/24) of the Grant.

2.4 The remaining grant spend has been across a range of local providers including RMBC, RDaSH, TRFT, VAR and other voluntary sector organisations, with the focus on creating integrated pathways for service users and building the support capacity required in communities to aid and maintain recovery.

2.5 This table describes progress of the workstreams funded via the SSMTRG as set out in the 2022 Cabinet Paper

Project	Comments
Commissioning support staff	All staff are in place, including an additional Commissioning Officer resource for the remainder of the grant period to further support the delivery of the grant. This is enabling additional focus and scrutiny of the

	providers delivery of the key targets and the setup of all the additional programmes of work.
Drug & Alcohol Related Death (DARD) Review Process	QES Drug and Alcohol related death surveillance system procured. WAWY staff have been trained on the system, with further training of partners to be rolled out. Workshops with partners, and an initial DARD Review panel session have been held to inform the development of the death review process. A Prevention Officer employed by South Yorkshire Police is in post to further support this work to learn from and reduce drug and alcohol related deaths in Rotherham.
Workforce Development	To improve understanding and skills in the wider non-specialist workforce a programme of substance misuse skills and awareness courses was procured. A total of 507 learning places were attended.
Residential Rehabilitation	Pathways and process have been revised. A new approval mechanism (the Rehabilitation Forum) for all applications has been established. WAWY will now lead on the allocation and brokerage of additional grant funded places. This will enable more individuals to benefit and increase successful treatment outcomes.
Treatment provider activity	All 10 grant funded staff posts have been appointed to, delivering on harm reduction, criminal justice, and recovery activities. All of which have carried over into the new contract with WAWY from CGL. A key achievement from provider activity is that Rotherham was the first area in South Yorkshire to achieve Hepatitis C 'micro elimination'[i] via the Harm Reduction worker and outreach provision.
Sexual Health service Substance Misuse link work	Additional two posts in the sexual health service to work with the drugs and alcohol service to identify new clients for both and enhance the service offer in the drugs service.
Early help Substance Misuse Team	Staff team (x3 workers) to support the Family Hubs. This team will help build integrated approaches to parental/family substance misuse for both adults and young people, enhancing early identification and access to specialist services for parents so that harm to children is prevented and addressed effectively.
Dual Diagnosis Social Worker	Unfortunately, two recruitment exercises yielded no successful candidates. Discussions are taking place to determine next steps.
Consultant and Assistant psychologists	These posts did not start during 2022/23 as planned. The options for increased mental health intervention may need to differ from the original proposal. A scoping exercise to develop the model for this provision is currently being undertaken alongside key partners including WAWY and RDaSH.

Alcohol screening and Brief Interventions	Connect Healthcare commissioned to deliver Alcohol Brief Intervention (ABI) in GP practices alongside NHS Health Checks. Connect has delivered over 6000 ABIs. To improve the identification and uptake of support, key partners, including WAWY, Drink Coach and Connect, are developing an Alcohol Pathway in the Primary Care Networks, ensuring Rotherham residents can get help where they live; this a potential area for further investment
Recovery Community	Voluntary Action Rotherham have appointed a Head of Service and a Project Manager to lead on this work. A programme is in place to support the delivery of community recovery grants and the development of a visible Rotherham Recovery Community. Recovery Champions have been identified and are leading on planning recovery activities. This work will provide support for people at various stages of recovery, enabling them improve their lives and reducing the risk of relapse.

2.6 **Inpatient Detoxification activity**

The IPD allocation (14 placements) and additional SSMTRG allocation (20 placements), resulted in total of 34 22/23 grant funded placements. The majority completed the intervention. Ongoing work is being undertaken to understand the outcomes for those receiving this intervention as well as the factors contributing to those outcomes (such as substances involved, the inpatient detox unit attended and whether the person remained in treatment afterwards). This information will help to inform decisions for and improve outcomes of future placements.

2.7 **This table displays the key OHID SSMTRG targets and performance for 2022/23**

Local Target	**Baseline**	**2022/23 ambition**	**2022/23 data**	**2023/24 ambition**	**2024/25 ambition**
2415 adults in treatment by 2025	1957	5%	5.8%	12%	24%
59 Young people in treatment by 2025	34				
Total 52 adults attend rehabilitation over the 3 years 2022-2025	9	14	9	17	26

75% of adults with substance misuse problems leaving prison are engaged with treatment in 2025 (Continuity of Care)	25%	40%	32.1%	60%	75%

2.8 **Areas of focus**

2.9 Residential Rehabilitation:
2022/23 Residential rehabilitation placement targets were not met. This was due to the time needed to establish and promote the new pathway as well as to review caseloads to identify people who would benefit from the intervention. The new pathway will help to identify, process, and approve applications more efficiently. These efforts, along with establishing the Rehabilitation Forum, mapping the residential rehabilitation centres, and having new staff in place, have led to an increase in placements, particularly in Q4. Therefore, there is an expectation that the number of utilised placements will continue to increase, in line with our revised ambitions. The ambition has been negotiated down with OHID to better reflect expected local need.

2.10 Continuity of Care:
In this context continuity of care means adults with substance misuse problems leaving prison and engaging with treatment within 3 weeks. The low figure for continuity of care in Rotherham in 2022/23 is partially attributable to identified data issues, specifically the reconciliation of data between prison and community. Changes to the tracking and reconciliation process between prison and community services in the new providers service model, along with regular meetings with the prison data team have meant that the local 2023/24 and 2024/25 ambitions have been retained.

2.11 Dual Diagnosis and Clinical Psychology roles:
A person with Dual Diagnosis has both a mental health disorder and a substance use disorder at the same time. Both the dual diagnosis worker and clinical psychology roles workstreams aim to create more integrated responses to mental health issues, but there have been difficulties in recruitment to roles which have required a re-think. A new group has been formed to consider sustainable solutions. The Dual Diagnosis and Primary/Community Mental Health Transformation Group meets monthly with representation from We Are WithYou, RDaSH and the Council in order to develop a deliverable plan in light of the recruitment challenges.

2.12 **Grant Plan Reprofiling**
Delays in recruitment and mobilisation within some of the workstreams set out above created the risk of a significant underspend on the Year 1 Grant Plan, and consequential risk of substantial return of the grant to the value of the underspend. However, reprofiling the spend in Year 1, by redistributing the available funds to existing and new workstreams, in line with the original grant plan, achieved a year 1 out-turn of only £23,736 underspend from the £688,722 total SSMTR grant (3.4%).

2.13 Delivery through the reprofiling of spend has included; additional workforce training packages, drug awareness resources for young people, 20 additional places for inpatient detoxifications and an online alcohol intervention tool (DrinkCoach).

2.14 Drink Coach is an online commissioned service that allows people to assess how risky their drinking is and receive personalised advice online. The website also helps residents access local advice and support options. Rotherham residents will be able to access free online coaching sessions which will connect them with a DrinkCoach via video call.

2.15 **Year 2 Priorities**
The Year 2 (23/24) Grant plan sees a continuation of the delivery plans set out in year one (as summarised in the table in 2.5) alongside further workstreams to meet the Councils ambitions. These include working through the Dual Diagnosis and Primary/Community Mental Health Transformation Group to develop pathways for those with co-morbid substance misuse and mental health issues and plans to expand the TRFT Alcohol Care Team.

2.16 Over Years 2 (23/24) and 3 (23/24) the grant will fund additional substance misuse support within the Alcohol Care Team at Rotherham General Hospital to support adults with a drug related concern who attend the Urgent and Emergency Care Centre or are admitted to hospital.

2.17 Plans for Year 3 will also see a continuation and expansion of the existing workstreams set out in the table in 2.5. Further underspend is anticipated as planned projects are mobilised. Where possible any accrued underspend will be reprofiled across the agreed Grant Plan to minimise return of the grant to OHID.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

3.1 As this report provides an update on the delivery of activities previously agreed by Cabinet, the options are as follows:

3.2 Option one and recommended: That cabinet choose to continue to support the reprofiling of spend across the agreed Grant Plan categories to mitigate the risk of underspend and returning unspent grant to OHID.

3.3 Option two: That cabinet do not support reprofiling of spend across the agreed Grant Plan categories. This is not recommended as there is

significant ongoing risk of underspend meaning that funds would effectively be lost to Rotherham, as is explained in sections 13.1 and 13.2.

4. Consultation on proposal

4.1 The Operational grant group, which worked to develop plans for SSMTRG expenditure, continues to contribute to grant plan development and management and now reports to the CDP. Additional groups have been established as appropriate to inform the priorities on the grant allocation.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

5.1 The grant plan was submitted on time to OHID on 10/03/2023. It is assumed that a further plan will need to be submitted to OHID next year to confirm year 3 of the Grant.

5.2 The Memorandum of Understanding which confirms the terms of the Grant was issued by OHID and signed by the DPH and S151 officer on 17/04/2023.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

6.1 From the 2022/23 grant allocation (£688,722), the actual spend was £664,986 resulting in an underspend of £23,736. Any underspend is not carried forward and is returned to OHID.

6.2 Where the Council is unable to deliver grant outcomes, there is a risk future grant may be reduced. Progress is actively monitored and spend redirected within the remit of the conditions of the grant, where possible, to minimise any underspend.

6.3 The completion of procurement activity associated with the expenditure of the Drug and Alcohol grant featured within this report has been undertaken in compliance with the Council's Financial and Procurement Procedure Rules and Public Contract Regulations (as amended).

7. Legal Advice and Implications

7.1 Under the Health and Social Care Act 2012, the Council is responsible for improving the health of the Borough's population and part of this relates to the provision of services relating to the prevention of alcohol and drug misuse. The measures and projects set out within this report contribute to how the Council discharges this function and as such are consistent with the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding relating to the Grant from OHID. These functions are not reserved to Council in legislation or regulations and therefore are executive functions, exercisable by the Cabinet.

7.2 These functions are not reserved to Council in legislation or regulations and therefore are executive functions, exercisable by the Cabinet.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

8.1 All of the roles created by this Grant will potentially be at risk should the expected Grant be discontinued, both within the Council and in provider services. Due Human Resources processes will be complied with should there by a service change.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

9.1 Stakeholders including children's and young people's services, safeguarding, adult care and housing are integral to both the Combatting Drugs Partnership and the Operational Grant group.

9.2 The difficulties in recruiting any of the dual diagnosis and clinical psychology roles have implications for vulnerable adults. Solutions to which will be discussed within the established Dual Diagnosis and Primary/Community Mental Health Transformation Group.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 The equalities impact assessment completed for the 'Public Health Proposals for Drugs and Alcohol Grant 2022-2025' has been updated and can be reviewed in appendices Three and Four.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

11.1 A Carbon Impact Assessment form has been completed and can be reviewed in Appendix Five.

12. Implications for Partners

12.1 . Key Internal partners are Housing, CYPS, Regeneration and Environment and Safeguarding. Key external partners include the current service provider WAWY, South Yorkshire Police (including District Commander of Rotherham, and CDP co-chair, Chief Superintendent), South Yorkshire Probation Service, The Police and Crime Commissioner's Office, Public Health commissioned sexual health services, Voluntary Action Rotherham, Local NHS strategic leads including CCG commissioned Alcohol Care Team at TRFT and RDaSH mental health services.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 The allocation continues to be provided on an annual basis and must be spent in the same financial year. There is a continued risk of underspend for Year two which may also impact on any future funding allocations beyond 2025. Any unspent grant funds from this financial year will be deducted from the 2024/25 allocation and therefore lost to Rotherham.

13.2 To mitigate this, there is flexibility within the plan such that any areas in which spending does not reach the allocated amount. Plans are in place with WAWY to utilise any underspend in Y2 to increase workforce capacity within

the service, which will continue as part of Y3 plans, when the overall budget increases significantly.

13.3 There is a risk that the mobilisation of the new treatment provider will impact initial activity delivered and performance outcomes. There was only a small drop in numbers in treatment resulting from mobilisations, as WAWY reviewed caseloads and exited people appropriately from the service over the first few weeks. There were also several staff posts vacant within the Drug and Alcohol service, which have been recruited to since the start of the contract. While most are now in place these temporary vacancies may, in the short term, have affected the ability to take on new service users.

13.4 The Government have still not released any details about funding beyond the initial 3-year term, so there is an element of risk and uncertainty to service delivery of newly funded schemes after March 2025. Although this should become clearer with further government announcements towards the end of the grant funded period.

14. Accountable Officers

Ian Spicer, Strategic Director, ACH&PH
Ben Anderson, Director of Public Health

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	**Date**
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	04/09/23
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	31/08/23
Assistant Director, Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phillip Horsfield	25/08/23

Report Author: *Jessica Brooks, Public Health Specialist*
Jessica.Brooks@rotherham.gov.uk
This report is published on the Council's website.

[i] When we say an area has micro-eliminated hepatitis C, that means it has reached these targets: 100% of people using the service have been offered a hepatitis C test. 90% of these people have then been tested. 75% of people who were diagnosed with hepatitis C have started treatment

Appendix 1

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: Public Health Proposals for Drugs and Alcohol Grant 2022-2025 - Annual update	
Directorate: Public Health	**Service area: Commissioning**
Lead person: Jessica Brooks	**Contact:** Jessica.Brooks@Rotherham.gov.uk
Is this a: [ ] **Strategy / Policy** [x] **Service / Function** [ ] **Other** **If other, please specify**	

2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening
The Public Health team are providing an annual update regarding the management of an OHID grant to the support the drug and alcohol services. The aims for which include: • reduced likelihood of drug and alcohol related deaths • a reduction in drug and alcohol related reoffending amongst prolific offenders within local areas

- increase in the numbers of drug and alcohol users, especially offenders, engaging in treatment as well as increases in those achieving and sustaining recovery

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? *(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)*		No
Could the proposal affect service users? *(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)*		No
Has there been or is there likely to be an impact on an individual or group with protected characteristics? *(Consider potential discrimination, harassment or victimisation of individuals with protected characteristics)*		No
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns regarding the proposal? *(It is important that the Council is transparent and consultation is carried out with members of the public to help mitigate future challenge)*		No
Could the proposal affect how the Council's services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom? *(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from commissioning or procurement)*		No
Could the proposal affect the Council's workforce or employment practices? *(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from your HR business partner)*		No

If you have answered no to all the questions above, please explain the reason

This is just an update therefore there are no new proposals

Appendix 1

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**
Jessica Brooks	Public Health Specialist	25/07/2023
Jacqui Wiltschinsky	Consultant in Public Health	25/07/2023

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

Appendix 1

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

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

Date screening completed	25/07/2023
Report title and date	Public Health Proposals for Drugs and Alcohol Grant 2022-2025 - Annual update
If relates to a Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision – report date and date sent for publication	Will be submitted to on 21st August to go to Cabinet on 18th September 2023
Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	25/07/2023

Action/Target	State Protected Characteristics as listed below	Target date (MM/YY)	Update
Deliver a service which is sensitive to the needs of all regardless of any protected characteristics. Undertake Equity Audits including service user questionnaires/user experience feedback. Monitor and review equality performance of services. Undertake staff training in equality and diversity and working with people with protected characteristics.	**All**	**Service start date: 01/07/2022**	The service runs a monthly 'Your Voice Matters' session for clients to provide feedback to the service and management team to improve their experience. They accept compliments and complaints and use the learning from these to inform service improvements. All staff have received mandatory training in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. This is revisited yearly and there is a end of module 'test' to ensure the staff member have really absorbed the learning. This training covers how to support people with protected characteristics. The management team have undertaken additional training to learn to support staff members with protected characteristics and to make reasonable adjustments to support them in their work.
Develop an all-age service model with specialised pathways to suit all age groups.	**A**	**Service start date: 01/07/2022**	**COMPLETE**
The service will ensure access to appropriate translation and interpretation service when required.	**D, RE**	**Service start date: 01/07/2022**	ROADS use interpreting services from AA Global who are ISO 18841 Interpreting Services accredited. They provide telephone, virtual and inperson interpreting services for our clients. All literature can be produced in multiple languages.

The service will ensure that interventions are accessible across a range of community venues in culturally appropriate locations.	**D, RE, O**	**Service start date: 01/07/2022**	There is currently piece of work being undertaken which is exploring different community venues across the borough. Some of the potential venues are GP surgeries, leisure centres, free-to-hire space in supermarkets. These venues are generally identified as place and spaces that all members of the community would normally frequent and therefore being seen entering or exiting these venues would not raise suspicion. ROADS will look to offer all interventions from these types of spaces.
Provide written literature which is accessible to all.	**D, RE**	**Service start date: 01/07/2022**	All written literature can be produced in a variety of languages, font sizes at request. The ROADS webpage on the With You website meets accessibility requirements and allows users to: ● change or invert colours ● adjust colour contrast levels ● increase and decrease font size ● zoom in up to 300% ● navigate the website using a keyboard only ● listen to the website using a screen reader (including the most recent versions of JAWS, NVDA and VoiceOver)
Undertake proactive outreach and service promotion amongst traditionally hard to reach groups.	**All**	**Service start date: 01/07/2022**	ROADS have specific outreach workers who respond to local intel where there may be levels of unmet need. They are delivering at upcoming community events such as the upcoming Rotherham Show where they will offer advice and brief interventions to people who may not access traditional treatment services.

			ROADS are preparing joint outreach with Mesmac to deliver interventions to people who are engaged in the sex working industry who would not normally access Carnson House. They have forged a link with an Elder in the Muslim community via outreach and service promotion. Through this link they will receive referrals and are able to deliver advice to people who can benefit from it in a way which is culturally sensitive.
Work with stakeholders to ensure the services have joint care pathways in place for additional needs.	**D,SO,PM,O**	**Service start date: 01/07/2022**	ROADS is expanding the joint care pathways for people with additional needs. This is done individually on a case by case basis e.g. joint home visits with adult social care, community mental health team etc and in more planned approaches such as setting up co-location agreements to support people to access alcohol and drug support. An example of this is their joint working approach with the National Probation Service (NPS). They know that some clients may be more comfortable having their Recovery Worker be of the same sex and/or may not want to engage in a service where they may see a perpetrator of domestic abuse. In partnership with the NPS in Rotherham, ROADs deliver a female only session to women who are on probation orders and are engaged in substance use treatment.
Ensure a service user led approach is developed through a joint care plan as described in the recommissioning of the project is continued throughout the grant work	**ALL**	**Service start date: 01/07/2022**	All ROADs clients are actively involved in their treatment journey from point of assessment to existing the service. They promote this involvement by asking everyone how best they receive information and if there are any adjustments that can be made to improve their experience and chance of getting better. Care plans are completed in conjunction with the client, their lead Recovery Worker and clinician. SMART care planning methods are used by the Recovery Workers to encourage the client to break down their ambitions into smaller more manageable goals. A copy of the care plan is always offered to the client so they can continue to work on this between appointments. Where appropriate and with the clients consent this care plan will be shared with other professionals and/or friends and family members who are supportive of the client's recovery Journey.

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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				
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: The majority of the increases in emissions are likely to be scope 3 related (indirect emissions) – where we are procuring products, services, or people (such as through commuting or service users access to services). These are likely to be minimal.

Please provide a summary of all impacts and mitigation/monitoring measures: As above, minimal impacts expected as a result of this report. A method of monitoring scope 3 emissions from procurement is currently being reviewed as part of the 2023 climate change action plan.

Supporting information:	
Completed by: (Name, title, and service area/directorate).	Jessica Brooks Public Health Specialist Adult Care, Housing and Public Health
Please outline any research, data, or information used to complete this [form].	Qualitative.
If quantities of emissions are relevant to and have been used in this form please identify which conversion factors have been used to quantify impacts.	No measurement available.
Tracking [to be completed by Policy Support / Climate Champions]	CIA119 Louise Preston, Climate Change Manager

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Public Report
Cabinet

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting
Cabinet – 18 September 2023

Report Title
Stag Willow Extra Care Scheme

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

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report
Ian Spicer, Strategic Director of Adult Care, Housing and Public Health

Report Author(s)
Julie Moore
Head of Service – Adult Care Provider Services
julie.moore@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected
Sitwell ward

Report Summary

Oaktrees on Stag Willow Close, Broom, was built and developed as an extra care scheme in 2006, by Together Housing, Housing Association. The Scheme comprised a main building (referred to as the Oak Trees Resource Centre) which contained the typical communal facilities associated with an extra care scheme and 8 individual flats. Adjacent to the Resource Centre are 20 bungalows.

Following a fire risk assessment, the Resource Centre was closed by Together Housing on 30 October 2020, as the assessment identified significant risks to users and occupiers of the building in the event of a fire. The Council's Care and Support Team, which operated from the Centre, were relocated to nearby Bakersfield Court (extra care scheme). Support to tenants has continued to be provided by the care staff travelling to Stag Willow Close if wellbeing visits or a call for assistance is required.

Whilst the buildings are owned by Together Housing, the land is owned by the Council and was transferred under a 125-year lease agreement at the point the original scheme was developed.

Since August 2020, Adult Social Care have continued to provide support to tenants, whilst Together Housing decided the long term future of the Resource Centre.

Following the findings of extensive key reports, specialist risk assessments and legal guidance, Together Housing have made the decision to permanently close the resource centre as the building is unsafe and can no longer be used within the scheme.

It is therefore proposed that Adult Social Care maintain the offsite wrap around care and support service to the remaining tenants who access the service currently, and in accordance with demand.

It is not expected that new tenants will require this level of support as moving forward the scheme will be promoted as retirement living. As such the future status of the scheme should become general housing rather than extracare.

Recommendations

That Cabinet:

1. Note the decision by Together Housing to permanently close the Resource Centre and the change in type of housing scheme from Extra Care to General Housing.

2. Approve the permanent change in service delivery to an offsite wrap around care and support service in line with the current delivery model.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 Together Housing Sustainability Option Appraisal
Appendix 2a Equality initial screening
Appendix 2b Equality analysis
Appendix 3 Carbon impact assessment

Background Papers

Future Need for Accommodation with Support 2020-2030(Campbell Tickell Care and Support)
Accommodation Delivery Plan (Housing Research)

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel
None

Council Approval Required
No

Exempt from the Press and Public
No

Stag Willow Extra Care Scheme

1. Background

1.1 Oaktrees on Stag Willow Close, Broom, was built and developed as an Extra Care scheme in 2006, by Chevin Housing, now Together Housing. There are 28 properties in total at Stag Willow Close. The Scheme comprises a main building (referred to as the Oak Trees Resource Centre) which contained the communal facilities associated with an Extra Care scheme and 8 flats. Adjacent to the main building are 20 bungalows.

The Resource Centre was available for use solely by tenants of the Scheme. Prior to the Centres closure, all tenants paid a building service charge for the running costs of the Centre to Together Housing. This was £28.36 per week and is no longer charged.

The Resource Centre closed on 30 October 2020, as a fire risk assessment identified significant risks to users and occupiers of the building in the event of a fire. The fire risk assessment identified that to mitigate the associated fire risks, extensive remedial works to the Centre would be required.

On identification of the fire risks, tenants of the flats within the Resource Centre were rehoused to alternative permanent housing. All tenants received statutory home loss and disturbance payments.

Following the temporary closure of the Resource Centre, the Council's care and support team, who operated from the Centre, were relocated to nearby Bakersfield Court. Tenants have continued to receive wellbeing visits or can call for assistance from the support team 24/7. Response times are generally 5 minutes by car.

Since the closure of the Resource Centre, the Council have worked with Together Housing and the remaining tenants to identify their needs going forward and support accordingly.

1.2 **Leasehold Arrangements**

The site and buildings are owned by Together Housing, whilst the land is owned by the Council. The land was transferred under a 125-year lease agreement to enable the development of the Extra Care Scheme.

The lease arrangement includes the following pertinent clauses:

- ***Permitted use****: Use of premises only for creation and provision of social units consistent with the objects of the Lease and the requirements of the Housing Corporation.*
- ***'Social Housing Units':*** *Means a unit of accommodation or letting by the Lessee to provide Housing at affordable rents for those who cannot afford to acquire it in the open market and/or the provision of accommodation designed for use by the elderly.*

Any change to the Scheme would need to comply with the terms of the lease.

1.3 **Current Position**

In terms of the Resource Centre, extensive fire safety remedial works would be required to bring the building up to a safe standard. Together Housing have raised concerns about the viability of making this investment and scoped out future strategic options for the Scheme.

Whilst commissioned and built as an extra care scheme, Oaktrees is not currently operating as an extra care scheme as there are no longer communal facilities. Communal facilities are regarded as a key component of extra care schemes.

The Council continues to provide a 24/7 care and support service but now based at Bakersfield Court. Staff provide supportive advice and guidance on daily living and wellbeing matters and reassurance calls, on a responsive basis.

Together Housing now reference the scheme as "*Retirement Livin*g" for marketing purposes, following removal of the onsite care service and closure of the Resource Centre so as not to mislead potential customers by continuing to call it "*Extra Care*".

In addition to the concerns about the Resource Centre, safety concerns were also raised for the 20 adjacent bungalows. Fire safety remedial works were completed by Together Housing in early 2021. These properties continue to be tenanted. However, due to the Scheme not being actively promoted as Extra Care, only limited numbers of the tenants require the type of services an extra care service would offer.

In light of this, it has been identified that the purpose of Oaktrees is to be reconsidered by Together Housing. To ensure the development offers the most appropriate form of accommodation, consideration has been given to:

- The best model of support to meet the needs of the existing residents.
- The most appropriate offer for people with adult care needs who require supported accommodation.
- A sustainable financial model of delivery.
- Future options for wrap-around care and support services.

2. Key Issues

2.1 **Together Housing position**

The Resource Centre required a significant level of investment due to the associated fire risks identified. This led Together Housing to complete a full sustainability options appraisal and from that review Together Housing have decided to close it permanently.

2.2 The Together Housing sustainability options appraisal considered the following options:

Option	Outcome
Undertake the fire safety works to the main building and leave as is	Given the issues with demand and underuse of the facilities, it is not considered viable.
Demolish main building and redevelop as bungalows for rent (older people)	New build option unlikely to be financially viable due to size of site and unlikely that THA could claim further Homes England social housing grant.
Remodel communal areas into older person flats	Not considered viable due to significant investment required and size of Scheme would still be very small and demand questionable.
Remodel communal areas into general needs flats & change the scheme into a general need scheme	Not considered viable due to significant investment required and size of the scheme would still be very small. Demand questionable.
Change use to communal facilities only	Not considered viable as vast majority of remediation works would still be required.
Demolish	Together Housing considers this to be the most realistic option.

2.3 **Demand Analysis**

The latest available demand analysis completed by the Council's Strategic Housing Team reflects that there were 12,329 borough wide bids placed on Council homes for rent by people aged over 55 years in 2021. High level insights include:

- People were mainly retired but some still working.
- Majority are moving from a house.
- Both 1 and 2 bed bungalows were most in demand for this age group.
- Demand for flats was significantly lower.

The data was very similar in the Sitwell ward (nearest to the development):

- 630 bids placed over the year by people over 55 years.
- Mix of retired and working.
- Mainly 1 and 2 bed bungalow demand, with demand for flats much lower.
- Mainly moving from houses –downsizing.

This would suggest demand is for accessible, rented accommodation for people aged over 55 years without support.

2.4 **Support Service**

As Oaktrees no longer operates as an Extra Care Scheme it does not have a core onsite care service nor communal facilities which are regarded as key components of an Extra Care scheme. Furthermore, the Scheme is now being marketed by the provider as a 'retirement living' scheme. Since the move in 2020 to a satellite wrap around service, the following needs of tenants have been identified:

- 13% of tenants make a trigger call for support at least once per week.
- 61% would only make a call in an emergency.
- 26% never make a trigger call.

All tenants have Rothercare equipment installed within the property to respond to emergency situations, in addition to being able to make direct trigger calls related to the scheme. Data reflects that the number of trigger calls direct to the service is very low and the majority are for reassurance only or more akin to housing related support.

It is therefore proposed to maintain the current offsite wrap around offer to the remaining tenants who access the service currently. It is not expected that new tenants will require this level of support as moving forward the scheme will be promoted as retirement living.

The service charges for the care and support provided will continue only for those existing residents who require the support. This would not apply to new tenants, leading over time to a gradual reduction in the number of people requiring the support.

Cabinet is therefore recommended to approve Adult Social Care continuing to operate an offsite wrap around care and support in line with the existing service and according to demand.

The service charge for the Resource Centre to the 20 bungalow tenants has ended. The support charge for care remains in place, for all current tenants.

There is a need to review the way the void properties are relet to ensure active nominations are made to those households with identified needs that align with the current and future housing and care offer. The Council currently has 100% nomination rights.

The Council is not aware of any future plans for the Scheme by Together Housing, beyond the closure and demolition of the Resource Centre.

3 Options considered and recommended proposals

3.1 Option 1

For Cabinet to agree with the Together Housings proposal for the Oaktrees building to permanently close and be demolished. To approve Adult Social Care continuing to operate an offsite wrap around care and support service in line with the existing service and according to demand. This will provide certainty for all tenants as to the future of the Oaktrees building and the provision of care and support. This is the recommended option.

3.2 Option 2

For Cabinet to disagree with Together Housings proposals to close Oaktrees permanently and demolish the building and to not agree to the proposed care and support arrangements. This would leave existing tenants unclear as to the future of the building and contribute to growing anxiety about the future of the scheme and how their support needs will be met. Not recommended.

4. Consultation on proposal

4.1 The proposals within this report have been consulted with all parties involved with strategic decision making regarding the future of the site This includes legal representatives from both Together Housing and the Council.

4.2 Future consideration for the site

Should Cabinet give approval to the recommendations within this report, it is the intention of Together Housing, as the landlord, to consult with tenants of the bungalows regarding future use of the site. This will support Together Housing's strategic decision making and has been advised by their legal representatives.

4.3 Engagement with tenants

Both Rotherham Council Adult Care and Together Housing have produced a series of communications and letters and held several engagement sessions with tenants. These were initially regarding the closure of the Centre and alternative support and activity arrangements, and latterly about the future proposals relating to both the building and to ensure wrap around support is in place with a focus on meeting eligible needs.

Tenants are fully aware that future decisions are being made regarding both the resource centre and the support service and would welcome a timely resolution.

Whilst the Council are the leaseholders of the land, the Centre is the property of Together Housing. It has been agreed that any future proposals would have to be within the conditions of the lease agreement noted in section 1 and Council approval must be sought.

Together Housing will hold a consultation with tenants regarding the future of the site following agreement of the proposals within this report.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

5.1 The decision will be implemented from 1st October 2023.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

6.1 The service currently provides an offsite wrap around care and support service to the existing tenants, which will continue. Tenants are currently charged for this care and support at £33.28 per week. If this element reduces then that source of income will be lost and it is unlikely that there will be savings to offset this. This will introduce a small financial pressure to the service spread over a number of years. The annual cost for each tenant is £1730 which would be the income reduction reflected at each point that a tenant no longer requires the support service.

This charge relates specifically to the wrap around support service and is separate to the service charge for the resource centre that has been removed by Together Housing.

6.2 In the absence of any expenditure with 3rd party providers for goods, works or services there are no procurement implications arising from this report.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

7.1 The report seeks the authority of Cabinet to confirm the current structure of the wrap-around support for tenants at Oaktrees Extra Care Scheme (Stag Willow). Cabinet needs to satisfy itself that this is a decision which appropriately meets the needs of the individuals concerned. Consultation took place with those affected by the changes at the time the original service was remodelled and since that point, there have been no changes in circumstances which would require a further consultation.

7.2 A joint position statement has been prepared by legal advisers for Together Housing Group and the Council in relation to the site at Stag Willow Close. The statement records the joint understanding of the interpretation of the lease of the property. The jointly held view of the legal advisors is that there is no legal obligation under the terms of the lease to remediate the property.

Whilst the Council are the leaseholders of the land, the Centre is the property of Together Housing. It has been agreed that any future proposals would have to be within the conditions of the lease agreement noted in section 1 and Council approval must be sought.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

8.1 Should any Human Resources matters arise from this report the Council will follow due processes.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

9.1 The recommendations in this report are inclusive for vulnerable adults within the Borough. There are no implications for children and young people.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 The proposals in this report support the Council to comply with legal obligations encompassed in the:

- Human Rights Act (1998), to treat everyone equally with fairness dignity and respect with a focus on those who are disadvantaged as a result of disability and Page 12 of 13.
- Equality Act (2010) to legally protect people from discrimination in the wider society.

The Equality Analysis provides further detail and can be reviewed in appendix 4.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

11.1 A Carbon Impact Assessment form has been completed and can be reviewed in Appendix 3.

12. Implications for Partners

12.1. Our partners have been consulted and engaged throughout the process of identifying and understanding proposals for the longer term viability of the scheme. All partners are in agreement with the recommendations of this report.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 Risk - There is a risk of anti-social behaviour on the site whilst the resource centre remains closed.
Mitigation - Together Housing will hold a consultation with tenants regarding the future of the site following agreement of the proposals within this report.

13.2 Risk – There is a financial risk due to loss of income as the current tenancies begin to reduce over coming years.
Mitigation – alignment with reduced service delivery.

14. Accountable Officers

Ian Spicer, Strategic Director of Adult Care, Housing and Public Health
ian.spicer@rotherham.gov.uk

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	**Date**
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	04/09/23
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	30/08/23
Assistant Director, Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phil Horsfield	25/08/23

Report Author: Julie Moore
Head of Service – Adult Care Provider Services
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This report is published on the Council's website.

APPENDIX 1

Stag Willow Close, Rotherham, S60 3NY

Sustainability Options appraisal

As at July 2021










1. Introduction

1.1 Stag Willow Close (aka Oak Trees) in Rotherham was built and developed as an extra care scheme in 2006 by Chevin, commissioned by RMBC. This is one of three of THG “extra care” schemes in Rotherham. There are 28 properties in total at Stag Willow Close. The scheme comprises a main building (referred to as the Oak Trees centre) which contains all the typical facilities associated with an extra care scheme but with only 8 flats within the main building. Adjacent to the main building are 20 bungalows. The main building is promoted as a community centre (referred to as a resource centre in the nominations agreement) and is available for use by all tenants of the scheme. All tenants pay a service charge for the running costs of the main building. A nominations agreement is in place, on a 100% nominations basis via RMBC but as noted later in the report, there are long-standing issues with nominations being made.

1.2 It is worthy of note from the outset that whilst commissioned and built as an extra care scheme, in practice, this isn't an extra care scheme as there is no longer a core onsite care service which is regarded as a key component of extra care housing. This was removed several years ago by RMBC (as it was in THA' s other two schemes in Rotherham which were also commissioned and built as "extra care"). Whilst the council still provides an on-site 24/7 support service, this does not include any kind of personal care. Staff provide supportive advice and guidance on daily living and wellbeing matters and reassurance calls, including on a responsive basis. The service is more akin to a traditional sheltered housing scheme i.e. having the reassurance of a member of staff being close by but providing support only. A 24/7 care alarm is also provided

1.3 THA changed its reference to the scheme to "*Retirement Livin*g" for marketing purposes following removal of the onsite care service so as not to mislead potential customers by continuing to call it "*extra care*". It is also intended that the scheme is reclassified as such on THA's housing management system (QL) as part of THA's stock reclassification project (as is the case with the other two schemes in Rotherham, Bakersfield Court and Potteries Court which were also commissioned and built as extra care but like Stag Willow Close, no longer has an onsite care service)

1.4 The housing management function is provided directly by THA by one of the Housing officers in the Supported Housing team.

1.5 There are key performance issues with the scheme:

- the flats are, and have been for many years, difficult to let
- the communal facilities are extensive and very underused
- nominations for the flats are not (and never have been) forthcoming, and applicants are typically identified by default, not through active nominations
- emerging issues now with the letting of the bungalows

1.6 Most recently, significant defects were identified in the main building in relation to fire safety following a report by THG's specialist consultants, Trident who were commissioned by THA to undertake intrusive investigations of Stag Willow Close as part of an initial programme of more detailed examination of supported housing schemes. Stag Willow was included in the

initial priority list as it is of **timber frame construction.** As a result of Trident's findings, tenants were moved out as a matter of urgency late last year, given it was not safe to remain.

1.7 Tenants were rehoused on a permanent move basis, given the complexity relating to the building and the need to undertake a full strategic review, including with RMBC. Therefore, given the uncertainty including of the timeline and the age/frailty of tenants, it was considered that moves should be arranged on a permanent basis. Each tenant received a Home Loss payment of £6400 and relocation costs of up to £1200.

1.8 The main building was closed in its entirety immediately after the last tenant moved out. The RMBC support team were relocated on a temporary basis to Bakersfield Court (one of THA's other schemes) nearby. The closure of the main building is pending full option appraisal including a further strategic review by RMBC about its future purpose and associated services in relation to its original purpose as an extra care housing scheme. This has been communicated to tenants of the bungalows and reinforced recently following some enquires about what is happening with the main building.

1.9 Since the closure of the building and consequential impact on the overall service offer, there are now emerging issues about the lettability of the bungalows. Whilst access to the communal facilities in the main building is currently affected pending review, this has in part been mitigated for both current and new customers by a significant reduction in the associated service charge. However, RMBC's support charge has remained the same and hasn't been adjusted to reflect the temporary changes to their service, pending review. Whilst the support service is still available, staff are no longer based on site and therefore visits are either planned or on an emergency response basis only. This is now affecting nominations and allocations of the bungalows which had previously been fairly popular. This has been raised with RMBC colleagues and we are awaiting response. Although the future offer will be considered as part of the wider strategic review, interim consideration needs to be given by RMBC to providing greater clarity on the support service offer and associated charge, both for current tenants in the bungalows and potential new customers.

1.10 Initially, the fire safety remedial works have been estimated at £400,000 for the main building. However, it is now considered that this is quite an underestimation, given the complexities of remediating timber framed buildings are now becoming even more apparent and the remediation works could be much more extensive than initially indicated. Revised est

of £800k has now been made within this report. The report also identified some remedial works to the bungalows. The latter were completed (early 2021) at the cost of £225,000

1.11 Given the number of flats in the main building, their lack of demand and the very low use of the facilities, there are significant questions about the cost/benefit to undertaking the remedial works. This has initiated a full option appraisal to determine future options. A steer was sought from THG's Strategic Investment Group prior to any further investigations being commissioned in May 21. It was agreed not to commission more detailed investigations at this point given there are significant concerns about remediation and remodelling being a viable option and pending detailed discussion about options with RMBC.

1.12 Options are set out at the end of this document. A recent review of the estimated costs has highlighted that a significant level of investment would be required to make the building safe. Additional investment would also be needed to remodel to increase the number of units. However, even with remodelling, the scheme would still be very small. Following discussions at THA's Strategic Investment Group in May, investment is not considered viable and other options need to be considered.

1.13 Consultation with tenants about the future of the communal facilities will be a key part of the review and a consultation plan needs to be developed.

2. Wider strategic review

2.1 Issues with Stag Willow Close have been raised with RMBC over recent years. As have concerns about THA's other two schemes which were commissioned and built as extra care schemes but no longer have any onsite care service. Whilst THA is understanding that an onsite care team at Stag Willow Close was not felt to be sustainable due to size and profile of tenants, the other two schemes are a different design and of a bigger size and lend themselves to being extra care schemes. However, although all three schemes have effectively been decommissioned from being extra care following RMBC decision to remove on onsite care services, the associated operational arrangements remain in place ie RMBC still have 100% nomination rights. Although, in reality, RMBC is unable to fulfil the terms of the nominations agreement.

2.2 Over the last five years, RMBC have commissioned a number of strategic reviews and THA has contributed on each occasion. However, no conclusion has been forthcoming. The discovery of the fire safety defects at Stag Willow Close has brought forward the need for a further review and RMBC colleagues are in full agreement that this be done jointly with THA. RMBC has initiated a wider strategic review of housing and care for its ageing population. However, given the particular issues concerning Stag Willow Close, RMBC has agreed that the review of Stag Willow Close will be undertaken ahead of their Borough-wide strategic review but with reference to the wider strategic review.

2.3 The review will include the current RMBC support service as the service and the building/facilities are integrally linked and form part of the overall offer to tenants. The timeline relating to the support service element of the review still needs to be determined by RMBC. This is now pressing given the main building has been closed for some months and understandably there is an expectation from tenants to know what is happening with the main building and support service.

2.4 A joint approach is also required as the land is leased to THA by RMBC (for 125 years) and options need to consider the terms of the current lease for land. Any proposed changes to the building would require RMBC's agreement should they be contrary to the terms of the current lease which includes a restrictive use clause relating to use of the land. That being "to *provide social housing units at affordable rents for those who cannot afford to acquire it in the open market and/or the provision of accommodation designed for use by the elderly*"

2.5 There is also a nominations agreement in place - further details at 8.2.

2.6 It is worth noting that the review of THA's other two schemes in Rotherham (Bakersfield Court and Potteries Court) will be included in RMBC's wider strategic review, given that the schemes were commissioned but no longer operating as such and within the wider context that there isn't any extra care housing in the Borough.

3. Context of the model

3.1 Stag Willow Close is unusual as it's a very small scheme, given it comprises 28 properties in total. Typically, when it was commissioned as an extra care scheme, at that time, a typical extra care scheme would have been in region of 40+ apartments and now typically 60+ apartments. A scheme of such a small size inevitably bring challenges around best use of extensive communal facilities.

3.2 Moreover, in addition to size, is the actual model itself. Whilst a *core and cluster* model isn't per se unusual, what makes Stag Willow Close atypical is its proportions. There is extensive communal space/facilities within the main building but only 8 flats. In a more typical *core and cluster* model, there would be a main scheme, with the usual number of apartments eg 40-60 , with some bungalows nearby where the residents could use the facilities to help build the concept of a wider supportive community. Commonly, those who live in bungalows in this type of model tend to be more independent and have chosen to live in a home that is also by its very nature more independent, rather than an apartment within an enclosed setting. It is therefore fairly typical that residents of bungalows tend not to utilise the core building a great deal although some may appreciate and benefit from joining in social activities.

3.3 Supported housing staff also advise that residents of the apartments don't use the facilities much either. Again, this is probably reflective of the disproportionate size of the facilities for the overall scheme of 28 properties i.e. the main building won't be a lively, busy, welcoming place, given the general lack of people/things going on.

3.4 The model at Stag Willow is arguably fundamentally flawed in terms of its long-term sustainability. In terms of the communal facilities, this is mitigated in part as the tenants of the bungalows pay an equal service charge for the main building albeit don't use it much. Whilst the charging model brings in service charge income from all 28 properties, this is a poor use of public money (for those who are entitled to benefits) and self-funders paying for facilities that they aren't using much, if at all.

4. Facilities

4.1 The facilities in the main building include:

- Laundry
- Kitchen

- Café
- Lounge
- Treatment room
- 3 ground floor toilets (1 disabled)
- 1 staff room with toilet, kitchen area and 2 offices.
- 1 large office on ground floor
- 1 reception office on ground floor
- Second floor - Assisted bathing suite, Activity room, 2 blocks of toilets
- Multiple storage rooms across all three floors.

4.2 Numerous attempts have been made over the years to find a caterer for the restaurant but without success due to a lack of take up of the service. Again, the overall size of the scheme and the model would never make a catering service viable. Furthermore, THA's Fire safety team has recently advised that it would not be possible to retain a catering kitchen given that this is now deemed to be too high a risk within a timber framed building.

4.3 The communal laundry was only being used by a handful of tenants, although every tenant was liable for a service charge associated with laundry use.

4.4 Although not used much, the service charges associated with the communal facilities amounted to £28.36 per week. This part of the service charge ceased on 1st November when the building was closed.

5. Support Service- RMBC

5.1 As mentioned above, when the scheme was first built, RMBC provided 24-hour care onsite according to assessed care needs and a housing-related support service Monday to Friday. This changed in 2017 when the care element was removed and replaced with "Enablers". Whilst staff are still on site 24/7, they do not provide personal care. The Enablers assist the Housing Support staff in their role.

5.2 Following the closure of the main building, the Enablers and Housing Support staff have been based at Bakersfield Court which is a ten-minute walk from Stag Willow Close. The tenants of the bungalows are contacted over the warden call system via an intercom or visited if necessary. Emergency calls are dealt with via the intercom system, with staff responding from Bakersfield Court. Whilst the arrangement is for the designated team for Stag willow respond to all calls 24/7, RMBC also has a 24/7 response service as part of their community alarm service.

5.3 Since the onsite staff presence has been removed, RMBC staff advise that there has been a significant drop in intercom calls for assistance, both inside and outside of office hours.

5.4 The weekly charge for the RMBC support service remains at £30.06/week. This is in addition to rent and service charge and is entirely separate to THA's charges.

6. Service Charges

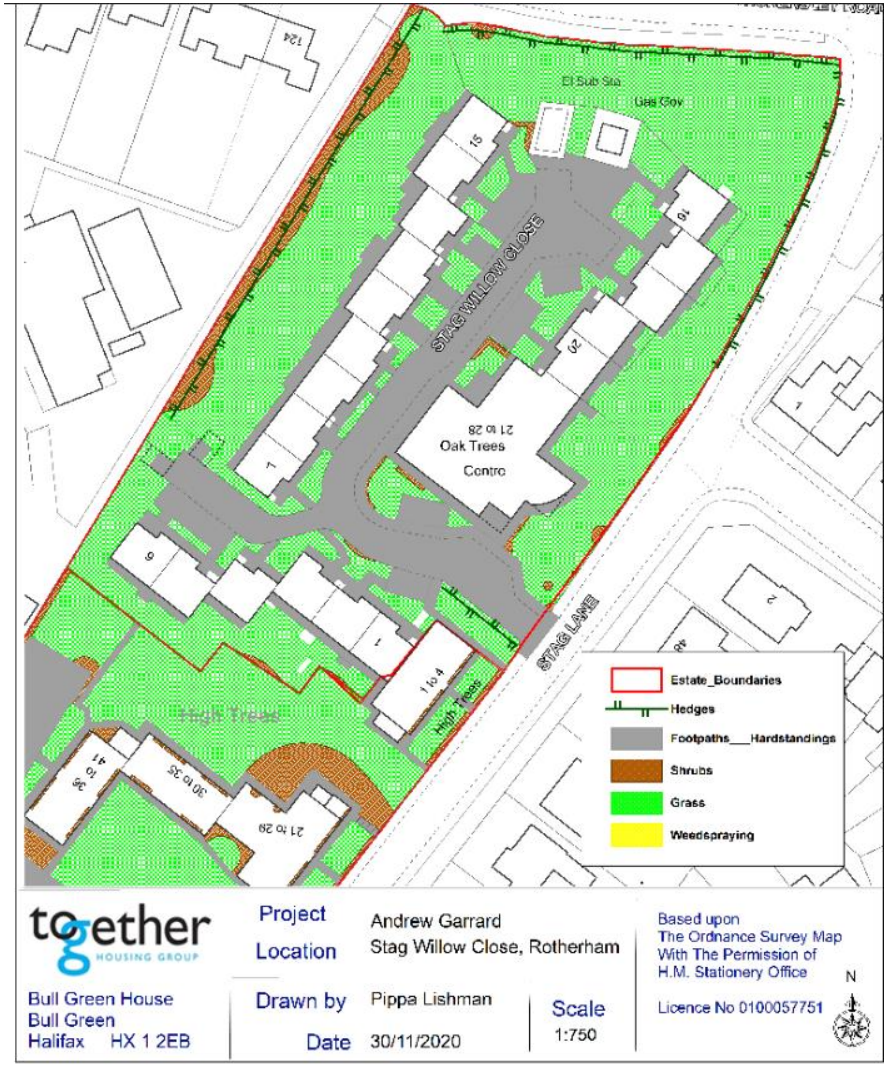
6.1 The Stag Willow Close flats (no 21-28) are all empty so there are no charges. The 20 bungalows are being charged £84.81 rent plus the adjusted service charge now £7.81 per week service charge since the main building was closed. The adjusted service charge currently covers general services only:

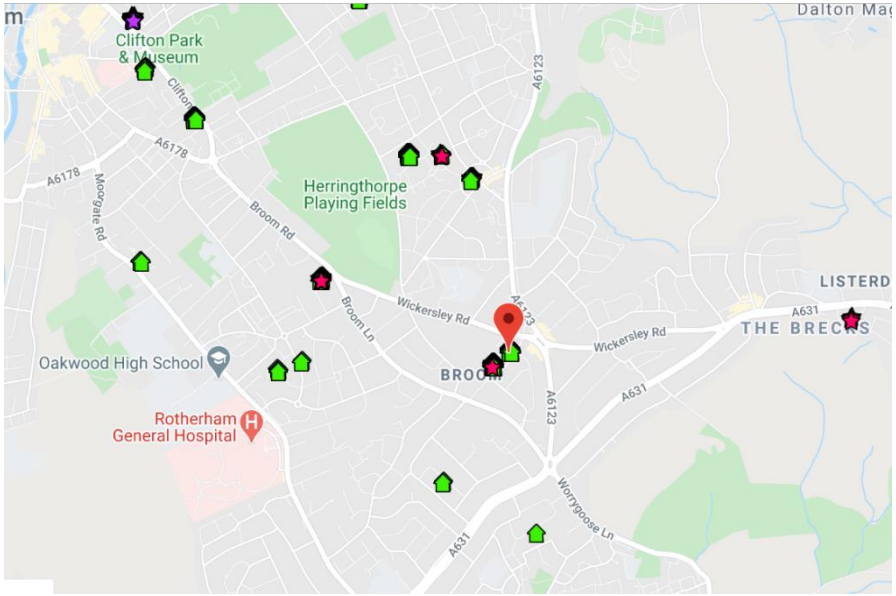
- Admin fee
- CCTV
- External light maintenance
- Grit bins
- Grounds maintenance
- Pest control
- Tv aerial
- Door entry

6.2 For information, the table below itemises the full charges that were applied when the main building was open. This totalled £36.17

Admin Fee 15% Other	£4.72
Automated Access Maintenance	£0.27
CCTV Charge	£0.21
Communal Cleaning	£10.28
Communal Equipment	£0.52
Communal Heating and Lighting	£2.75
Communal Internal Decorations	£1.89
Communal Lighting	£3.91
Door Entry	£0.41
External Light Maintenance	£0.69
Fire Alarm Maintenance	£0.57
Fire Safety Equipment	£0.55
Grit Bins / Rock Salt	£0.10
Grounds Maintenance	£5.03
Laundry Maintenance & Run cost	£1.68
Lift Maintenance	£0.77
P. A. Testing	£0.07
Pest Control	£0.25
Replacement Provision	£0.86
TV Aerial	£0.10
Window Cleaning	£0.54
Rent	£84.81
TOTAL CHARGE	£120.98
* These are your current charges *	

6. GIS plan of the scheme





An aerial view



There are internal layout plans (held at the scheme) but are very large paper copies so not attached to this report. Asset Management colleagues have managed to obtain copies on a disc from the architect and can be made available if required.

7. The Neighbourhood

7.1 Stag Willow Close is located in a **mixed tenure area**.

- 32% are owner occupiers,
- 55% are in Social Rented and
- 13% in Private Rented.

7.2 The breakdown of property types in the area are;

- 61.9% of properties are flats,
- 23.8 semi detached and
- 7% detached
- 7% terrraced.

7.3 The **population** in the area is 40% of working age, 3.6% below 15 yrs and 56% over 65 yrs. 43% are Pensioner households, 25.6% are one person households under 65 yrs, 25% lone parents with dependant children & 20.7% are Married/Co-habiting (Source: Census 2011). 100% that live in this area are within the **20% most deprived in England** (Source: Communities & Local Government (Index of Multiple deprivation 2019).

7.4 **Crime rates** in the area are low to average at 54.5 per 1000 population overall in the period Sept 19 to August 20. (Source: Reported crimes Police 2019/20)

7.5The rent at Stag Willow's flats and bungalow's (including service charges) charged by Together Housing are higher than the Local Housing Allowance. Housing benefits currently pay the full rent and service charge as the properties are classed as

Supported housing & exempt from LHA. However, if the properties were changed to general needs, then the properties would no longer fall under supported housing (specified accommodation) and would fall within UC, subject to LHA rate of £86 pw for a one bed.

7.6 Local Housing Allowance Rates for Rotherham

Weekly LHA rate for February 2021

Rotherham BRMA

Shared Accommodation Rate:	**£61.50 per week**
One Bedroom Rate:	**£86.30 per week**
Two Bedrooms Rate:	**£97.81 per week**
Three Bedrooms Rate:	**£110.47 per week**
Four Bedrooms Rate:	**£157.64 per week**

7.7 There have not been any property sales in S60 3NY this year however Zoopla estimate the average value of all properties is £189,842 and £132,599 for flats. Average house prices (all types of housing) for the Broom area in the past 12 months were £193,599 and £105,000 for flats. The latter compares to £101,000 in the wider Rotherham area.

8 Agreements

8.1 Lease for land (125 years). The key clauses in the lease are listed below:

Permitted use*: Use of premises only for creation and provision of social units consistent with the objects of the Lessee and the requirements of the Housing Corporation.*

'Social Housing Units': *Means a unit of accommodation or letting by the Lessee to provide Housing at affordable rents for those who cannot afford to acquire it in the open market and/or the provision of accommodation designed for use by the elderly.*

8.2 Nomination Agreement

*"In consideration of the Council granting a Lease of the Property to the Association for a term of 125 years (**the Term**) at an annual rent of one pound (£1.00) the Association agrees with the Council that the Council shall have the right to **nominate one hundred percent (100%) of the initial lettings of the flats and bungalows and one hundred percent (100%) of such tenancies on re-letting**. The latter percentage shall be reviewed from time to time by the parties and may be revised in light of the operation of this Agreement upon the written agreement of both parties.*

Nominations shall be made by the Allocation Panel who shall submit details of nominees to the Association upon being satisfied that such nominees are interested in the available dwellings and meet the lettings criteria set out by the Council and the Association.

When selecting nominees, the Council shall take into account any specialist nature or purpose of the available Units and any particular requirements of the nominee so as to ensure the best possible use is made of available Units.

For the purpose of the development of twenty, two bedroomed bungalows, three one bedroomed flats, five two bedroomed flats and a resource centre for people over the age of fifty five with more than four care hours per week'

8.3 The agreement needs to be reviewed given the Council is unable to meet its nomination obligations including that associated with having a care requirement of more than 4 hours/week. And as noted earlier, for tenants who do have a care need, this would be provided on a domiciliary care basis by community providers, in the same way it would be met for those living in general housing, given the scheme no longer offers an onsite core care service.

9. Tenant Profile

9.1 Below is a breakdown of the tenant profile and household composition of the tenants currently living at the bungalows:

- The average length of tenancy of the tenants living in the 20 bungalows is 6.7 years ranging between 1.3 yrs to 14.6 yrs.

- Six tenants have lived there for 10+ years, six between 5 & 10 years and eight between 1 to 5 years.

Age

Age band	Number	Average of Age
50-59	2	57.5
60-79	3	65.7
70-79	10	75.4
80-89	7	84.1
90+	3	93.3
Grand Total	25	77.4

10. Sustainability indicators

10.1 Oct Insight Matrix - the below tables summarise the NPV, Service Performance and Overall scores and rankings from the Oct 20 Insight matrix and highlight the main issues around service performance for the period 1st Oct 19 to 30th Sept 20.

Area	Region	Team	Stock	NPV	Score	Ranking	Service Performance	Ranking	Total score	Ranking	Insight
Stag Willow Close	Y & H	Karen Roscoe-Bail	28	£99,493	23.1	691	32	244	55	510	Ongoing Options Appraisal

Service Performance Score: 32.1 Rank: 242 out of 738

	Turnover (lets per year)	% tenancies terminated < 12 months	Abandonments & evictions	Av length current tenancy (years)	Av void period (days)	% rent loss from voids	% under-occupied by working age tenants	ASB density	Current arrears (% of debit)	% Tenants with arrears >13 wks
Stag Willow Close	25.0%	14.3%	0.0%	5.6	38.0	3.6%	3.6%	0.0%	-2.0%	0.0%
Stock average	7.6%	11.9%	0.7%	10.0	52.3	1.6%	8.8%	4.3%	2.1%	4.0%

	Responsive repair costs (annual)	Void repair costs (annual)	Cyclical costs (annual)	SAP	IMD	Satisfaction with home	Satisfaction with neighbourhood	HMA-popularity	HMA-management issues
Stag Willow Close	£480	£39	£0	71.1	3309	0.0%	0.0%	7.0	8.0
Stock average	£355	£238	£39	72.4	7827	0.0%	0.0%	6.8	6.9

10.2 Terminations in 2018 to 2020

	2019		2020		(blank)	Grand Total
Vacation reason	BUNG	FLAT	BUNG	FLAT	BUNG	
DECEAS	1	1	1		1	4
EVIASB	1					1
MOVRES		1		1		2
MTRANS				5		5
TRANSF				2		2
Grand Total	2	2	1	8	1	14

Of the 14 terminations in the past 2 years, 11 were in the flats and 3 in the bungalows. The 8 in 2020 in flats were due to THA having to move tenants out due to the fire safety issues identified. The 3 tenancies ended in the bungalows due to 2 deaths and one eviction for ASB**.**

10.3 Relets

Property type	Number	Av days
BUNG	3	21.7
FLAT	2	28
Grand Total	5	24.2

There have been 5 lets in the period 2019 to 2020, (3 bungalows & 2 flat). The average days to relet has been 21 in bungalows

11. Demand

11.1 Flats at Stag Willow Close

In terms of demand, the Supported Housing officer has advised that no one has been nominated to join the waiting list for the flats for many years. All the tenants that apply to Stag willow close have applied for bungalows only and choose not to consider a flat in the main building. This has happened for the duration of the past ten years. Allocations to the scheme are made via a nominations process through RMBC. Once nominated by RMBC and following an assessment by Together Housing to confirm eligibility,

applicants are placed on a waiting list for a property at one of the three Rotherham schemes dependent upon their individual preferences. During the ten years of the Housing Officer managing the scheme, only two applicants have expressed an interest in a flat in the main building at Stag Willow Close. The other tenants that have been housed there during this period have been awaiting a bungalow or a flat in one of THA's other schemes. However, as there has been no waiting list for the integral building, they have been encouraged to view a vacant property when one has been available, and they have accepted the offer

11.2 Bungalows at Stag Willow

Historically the bungalows have all been allocated without issue. However, now that the 'support' is not on site and the Housing Officer can no longer refer to the well-being activities etc being in place and available at the offer stage, prospective tenants are declining the offer purely based on the continuing large support charge.

11.3 THA general needs flats in the locality

The lettings team have reviewed lets of both one and two bed flats in blocks nearby at Brinsworth Court, High Trees and Broom Court. There were a mixture of lets to council nominations and via Homes Direct. The conclusion of the Lettings team is as follows:

> "*looking at previous lets, we do have demand for 1 & 2 bed flats and they look to be let on the 1st lists, with no need for re-advertising. We'd support the remodelling to 1 & 2 bed flats but the above schemes do not currently have any age restrictions set to them so unable to comment if we would have demand if this was marketed at an over 50's scheme for example*"

Below is an age profile of tenants and household members living on 3 of our general needs schemes in S60 postcode. As can be seen 52 of the 70 are over 50 years old. All of these properties are flats (1, 2 & 3 bed)

Age bands	Brinsworth Court	Broom Court	High Trees	Grand Total
Under 16			3	3
16-19	1			1
20-29	2		1	3
30-39			1	1
40-49	2	1	7	10
50-59	1	1	6	8
60-69	2	4	7	13
70-79	2	3	10	15
80-89		5	6	11
90+		3	1	4
Not Known		1		1
Grand Total	10	18	42	70

The below table shows the number of lets 2018 to 2020 with the age band profile. 6 of the 14 were let to tenants over 50 years, 4 of which were at High Trees (2 bed flats) and 2 at Broom Court (1 bed flats).

Age band	Brinsworth Court	Broom Court	High Trees	Grand Total
Under 16			1	1
16-19	1			1
20-29	1		1	2
40-49	1	1	2	4
50-59		1	1	2
60-69		1	1	2
70-79			2	2
Grand Total	3	3	8	14

Demand information has been requested from RMBC but have not provided to date.

Insight Matrix Oct 20 – Performance of surrounding schemes

Area	Region	Team	Stock	NPV	Score	Ranking	Service Performance	Ranking	Total score	Ranking
Broom Court	Y & H	Shaun Nolan	16	£58,901	35.3	306	16	693	51	598
High Trees	Y & H	Shaun Nolan	29	£66,150	33.2	416	25	491	58	452
Northfield Court	Y & H	Shaun Nolan	22	£83,335	28.0	609	18	653	46	663

11.4 the wider marker

A recent *Hometrack report show the market analytics for the area. A summary is below* .

Executive Summary

This desktop report provides the latest information on new housing supply, the profile and drivers of demand and detailed pricing data for the market around the S60 3NY site. The report draws on unique data held by Hometrack and NHBC in order to provide the market context to inform land acquisition, land strategy and planning related decisions.

A summary of the key findings is set out below:

The new development market

- 10 competitor schemes were selected for this report, located within an 3.0 mile radius of the site. These schemes average 38 units and contain a total of 382 units.
- 42% of the units on these schemes are completed[1] and 52% (199) are currently under construction.
- Construction has started on 106 units in the last 6 months (of which 92% are houses and 8% flats). There are a further 22 units yet to be started.
- The average price of units under construction is £240,000.
- The most common type of property under construction are houses (89%) followed by flats (11%).

Pricing of housing across the local market area

- Across the local market area median £psf values are £140 for flats and £150 for houses.
- Upper quartile prices are £171psf for flats and £183psf for houses.
- Average prices across the local market area range from £98,000 for 2 bed flats to £152,000 for 3 bed houses and £239,000 for 4 bed houses.

Demand, affordability and rental market

- There are 39,739 households within the local market area. 12,270 of these households are categorised as Financially Stretched with a further 10,819 categorised as Comfortable Communities. The most common groups in these two categories are Poorer Pensioners (15% of total) and Steady Neighbourhoods (14% of total) respectively.
- Average household incomes in the catchment are £35,000. A household buying with a 3.5x income mortgage at 70% LTV could afford to pay £175,000.
- The unemployment rate (claimant count) in Rotherham District (B) is 0.9% compared to 0.9% six months ago.
- The average weekly rental is £114 per week and the cost of a buying with an 85% mortgage £97 per week. The average gross yield is 6.0% for a two bed property.

12. Asset Management

12.1 One option that has been explored is the remodelling of the main building to design-out the communal facilities and increase the number of flats. Initial indications would be that an additional 7 flats could be included if the block was remodelled, making 15 in total. If necessary, space could still be provided for a staff office without comprising the number of flats.

12.2 Key costs relating to the options are estimated as follows:

- fire safety remedial works - £800,000 (see 12.3 below)
- remodel to maximise number of flats - £1,300,000
- demolish & make good - £400,00

12.3 In the first stages of the option appraisal, the costs of the fire safety remedial works were estimated at £400,000. However, given the insight being gained from similar issues that have since emerged in another of THA's schemes which is also of timber-framed construction, it is now considered that the works required could be a lot more extensive than originally thought. Whilst not directly comparable with the other scheme (which has 42 flats within that building), the cost estimates above have been amended to reflect the likelihood that, if further details investigations are undertake for Stag Willow, the est costs will be considerably higher than originally estimated. Noting that the revised estimate of £800,000 is still subject to further intrusive investigations by specialist fire safety engineers. Further investigations have not been commissioned at this stage given viability of the option to remediate and remodel isn't considered viable.

12.4 Any option relating to disposal would also need to consider that there would be an additional net impact of £95k (ie costs on the books) that would need to be accounted for. Head of Accountancy double- checking to make sure all liabilities have been captured

12.4 Home loss and disturbance allowance have already been paid as tenants were moved out on a permanent basis given the considerable uncertainty regarding the future of the building

Financial Appraisal – as above - Head of Accountancy double-checking to make sure all liabilities have been captured

Stag Willow Close
Flats only (inc communal area)
Based on FAR as at 30/09/2020

	Cost											Grant		Depreciation	Grant amortisation		
Asset Name	BATH	HEAT	KITC	LAND	LIFT	ROOF	SECU	STRU	WIND	WIRE	Total cost	STRG	Cost less grant		STRG	Total Dep/Amort	Net Book Value
21 Stag Willow Close, ROTHERHA	1,142.15	3,589.63	886.97	3,934.10	406.41	2,875.63	143.14	20,159.89	4,562.42	2,729.04	**40,429.38**	(20,527.84)	**19,901.54**	(14,588.82)	3,001.57	**(11,587.25)**	**8,314.29**
22 Stag Willow Close, ROTHERHA	1,142.15	3,589.63	886.97	3,934.10	406.41	2,875.63	143.14	20,159.89	4,562.42	2,729.04	**40,429.38**	(20,527.84)	**19,901.54**	(14,588.82)	3,001.57	**(11,587.25)**	**8,314.29**
23 Stag Willow Close, ROTHERHA	1,142.15	3,589.63	886.97	3,934.10	406.41	2,875.63	143.14	20,159.89	4,562.42	2,729.04	**40,429.38**	(20,527.84)	**19,901.54**	(14,588.82)	3,001.57	**(11,587.25)**	**8,314.29**
24 Stag Willow Close, ROTHERHA	1,142.15	3,589.63	886.97	3,934.10	406.41	2,875.63	143.14	20,159.89	4,562.42	2,729.04	**40,429.38**	(20,527.84)	**19,901.54**	(14,588.82)	3,001.57	**(11,587.25)**	**8,314.29**
25 Stag Willow Close, ROTHERHA	1,142.15	3,589.63	886.97	3,934.10	406.41	2,875.63	143.14	20,159.89	4,562.42	2,729.04	**40,429.38**	(20,527.84)	**19,901.54**	(14,588.82)	3,001.57	**(11,587.25)**	**8,314.29**
26 Stag Willow Close, ROTHERHA	1,142.15	3,589.63	886.97	3,934.10	406.41	2,875.63	143.14	20,159.89	4,562.42	2,729.04	**40,429.38**	(20,527.84)	**19,901.54**	(14,588.82)	3,001.57	**(11,587.25)**	**8,314.29**
27 Stag Willow Close, ROTHERHA	1,142.15	3,589.63	886.97	3,934.10	406.41	2,875.63	143.14	20,159.89	4,562.42	2,729.04	**40,429.38**	(20,527.84)	**19,901.54**	(14,588.82)	3,001.57	**(11,587.25)**	**8,314.29**
28 Stag Willow Close, ROTHERHA	1,142.15	3,589.63	886.97	3,934.10	406.41	2,875.63	143.14	20,159.89	4,562.42	2,729.04	**40,429.38**	(20,527.84)	**19,901.54**	(14,588.82)	3,001.57	**(11,587.25)**	**8,314.29**
Oaktrees Block-Stag Willow Clo	-	-	-	-	29,171.40	-	-	-	-	-	**29,171.40**	-	**29,171.40**	(729.30)	-	**(729.30)**	**28,442.10**
	9,137.20	28,717.04	7,095.76	31,472.80	32,422.68	23,005.04	1,145.12	161,279.12	36,499.36	21,832.32	**352,606.44**	(164,222.72)	**188,383.72**	(117,439.86)	24,012.56	**(93,427.30)**	**94,956.42**

12.5 Original development costs - for information only:

Records provided by the Development team (which are in the original name of Dalton House) refer to HC grant & RMBC contribution for the full scheme (flats and bungalows):

- HC Grant of £1,642,922
- RMBC contribution = £142,856

Stag Willow Close
Flats and Bungalows

		Cost											Grant		Depreciation	Grant amortisation		
Master asset number	Asset Name	BATH	HEAT	KITC	LAND	LIFT	ROOF	SECU	STRU	WIND	WIRE	Total cost	STRG	Cost less grant		STRG	Total Dep/Amort	Net Book Value
P-206614	1 Stag Willow Close, ROTHERHAM	1,142.15	3,589.63	886.97	3,934.10	406.41	2,875.63	143.14	20,159.89	4,562.42	2,729.04	**40,429.38**	(20,527.84)	**19,901.54**	(14,588.82)	3,001.57	**(11,587.25)**	**8,314.29**
P-206615	2 Stag Willow Close, ROTHERHAM	1,142.15	3,589.63	886.97	3,934.10	406.41	2,875.63	143.14	20,159.89	4,562.42	2,729.04	**40,429.38**	(20,527.84)	**19,901.54**	(14,588.82)	3,001.57	**(11,587.25)**	**8,314.29**
P-206616	3 Stag Willow Close, ROTHERHAM	1,142.15	3,589.63	886.97	3,934.10	406.41	2,875.63	143.14	20,159.89	4,562.42	2,729.04	**40,429.38**	(20,527.84)	**19,901.54**	(14,588.82)	3,001.57	**(11,587.25)**	**8,314.29**
P-206617	4 Stag Willow Close, ROTHERHAM	1,142.15	3,589.63	886.97	3,934.10	406.41	2,875.63	143.14	20,159.89	4,562.42	2,729.04	**40,429.38**	(20,527.84)	**19,901.54**	(14,588.82)	3,001.57	**(11,587.25)**	**8,314.29**
P-206618	5 Stag Willow Close, ROTHERHAM	1,142.15	3,589.63	886.97	3,934.10	406.41	2,875.63	143.14	20,159.89	4,562.42	2,729.04	**40,429.38**	(20,527.84)	**19,901.54**	(14,588.82)	3,001.57	**(11,587.25)**	**8,314.29**
P-206619	6 Stag Willow Close, ROTHERHAM	1,142.15	3,589.63	886.97	3,934.10	406.41	2,875.63	143.14	20,159.89	4,562.42	2,729.04	**40,429.38**	(20,527.84)	**19,901.54**	(14,588.82)	3,001.57	**(11,587.25)**	**8,314.29**
P-206620	7 Stag Willow Close, ROTHERHAM	1,142.15	3,589.63	886.97	3,934.10	406.41	2,875.63	143.14	20,159.89	4,562.42	2,729.04	**40,429.38**	(20,527.84)	**19,901.54**	(14,588.82)	3,001.57	**(11,587.25)**	**8,314.29**
P-206621	8 Stag Willow Close, ROTHERHAM	1,142.15	3,589.63	886.97	3,934.10	406.41	2,875.63	143.14	20,159.89	4,562.42	2,729.04	**40,429.38**	(20,527.84)	**19,901.54**	(14,588.82)	3,001.57	**(11,587.25)**	**8,314.29**
P-206622	9 Stag Willow Close, ROTHERHAM	1,142.15	3,589.63	886.97	3,934.10	406.41	2,875.63	143.14	20,159.89	4,562.42	2,729.04	**40,429.38**	(20,527.84)	**19,901.54**	(14,588.82)	3,001.57	**(11,587.25)**	**8,314.29**
P-206623	10 Stag Willow Close, ROTHERHA	1,142.15	3,589.63	886.97	3,934.10	406.41	2,875.63	143.14	20,159.89	4,562.42	2,729.04	**40,429.38**	(20,527.84)	**19,901.54**	(14,588.82)	3,001.57	**(11,587.25)**	**8,314.29**
P-206624	11 Stag Willow Close, ROTHERHA	1,142.15	3,589.63	4,500.00	3,934.10	406.41	2,875.63	143.14	20,159.89	4,562.42	2,729.04	**44,042.41**	(20,527.84)	**23,514.57**	(14,068.12)	3,001.57	**(11,066.55)**	**12,448.02**
P-206625	12 Stag Willow Close, ROTHERHA	1,142.15	3,589.63	886.97	3,934.10	406.41	2,875.63	143.14	20,159.89	4,562.42	2,729.04	**40,429.38**	(20,527.84)	**19,901.54**	(14,588.82)	3,001.57	**(11,587.25)**	**8,314.29**
P-206626	13 Stag Willow Close, ROTHERHA	1,142.15	3,589.63	886.97	3,934.10	406.41	2,875.63	143.14	20,159.89	4,562.42	2,729.04	**40,429.38**	(20,527.84)	**19,901.54**	(14,588.82)	3,001.57	**(11,587.25)**	**8,314.29**
P-206627	14 Stag Willow Close, ROTHERHA	1,142.15	3,589.63	886.97	3,934.10	406.41	2,875.63	143.14	20,159.89	4,562.42	2,729.04	**40,429.38**	(20,527.84)	**19,901.54**	(14,588.82)	3,001.57	**(11,587.25)**	**8,314.29**
P-206628	15 Stag Willow Close, ROTHERHA	1,142.15	3,589.63	886.97	3,934.10	406.41	2,875.63	143.14	20,159.89	4,562.42	2,729.04	**40,429.38**	(20,527.84)	**19,901.54**	(14,588.82)	3,001.57	**(11,587.25)**	**8,314.29**
P-206629	16 Stag Willow Close, ROTHERHA	1,142.15	3,589.63	886.97	3,934.10	406.41	2,875.63	143.14	20,159.89	4,562.42	2,729.04	**40,429.38**	(20,527.84)	**19,901.54**	(14,588.82)	3,001.57	**(11,587.25)**	**8,314.29**
P-206630	17 Stag Willow Close, ROTHERHA	1,142.15	3,589.63	886.97	3,934.10	406.41	2,875.63	143.14	20,159.89	4,562.42	2,729.04	**40,429.38**	(20,527.84)	**19,901.54**	(14,588.82)	3,001.57	**(11,587.25)**	**8,314.29**
P-206631	18 Stag Willow Close, ROTHERHA	1,142.15	3,589.63	886.97	3,934.10	406.41	2,875.63	143.14	20,159.89	4,562.42	2,729.04	**40,429.38**	(20,527.84)	**19,901.54**	(14,588.82)	3,001.57	**(11,587.25)**	**8,314.29**
P-206632	19 Stag Willow Close, ROTHERHA	1,142.15	3,589.63	886.97	3,934.10	406.41	2,875.63	143.14	20,159.89	4,562.42	2,729.04	**40,429.38**	(20,527.84)	**19,901.54**	(14,588.82)	3,001.57	**(11,587.25)**	**8,314.29**
P-206633	20 Stag Willow Close, ROTHERHA	1,142.15	3,589.63	886.97	3,934.10	406.41	2,875.63	143.14	20,159.89	4,562.42	2,729.04	**40,429.38**	(20,527.84)	**19,901.54**	(14,588.82)	3,001.57	**(11,587.25)**	**8,314.29**
P-206634	21 Stag Willow Close, ROTHERHA	1,142.15	3,589.63	886.97	3,934.10	406.41	2,875.63	143.14	20,159.89	4,562.42	2,729.04	**40,429.38**	(20,527.84)	**19,901.54**	(14,588.82)	3,001.57	**(11,587.25)**	**8,314.29**
P-206635	22 Stag Willow Close, ROTHERHA	1,142.15	3,589.63	886.97	3,934.10	406.41	2,875.63	143.14	20,159.89	4,562.42	2,729.04	**40,429.38**	(20,527.84)	**19,901.54**	(14,588.82)	3,001.57	**(11,587.25)**	**8,314.29**
P-206636	23 Stag Willow Close, ROTHERHA	1,142.15	3,589.63	886.97	3,934.10	406.41	2,875.63	143.14	20,159.89	4,562.42	2,729.04	**40,429.38**	(20,527.84)	**19,901.54**	(14,588.82)	3,001.57	**(11,587.25)**	**8,314.29**
P-206637	24 Stag Willow Close, ROTHERHA	1,142.15	3,589.63	886.97	3,934.10	406.41	2,875.63	143.14	20,159.89	4,562.42	2,729.04	**40,429.38**	(20,527.84)	**19,901.54**	(14,588.82)	3,001.57	**(11,587.25)**	**8,314.29**
P-206638	25 Stag Willow Close, ROTHERHA	1,142.15	3,589.63	886.97	3,934.10	406.41	2,875.63	143.14	20,159.89	4,562.42	2,729.04	**40,429.38**	(20,527.84)	**19,901.54**	(14,588.82)	3,001.57	**(11,587.25)**	**8,314.29**
P-206639	26 Stag Willow Close, ROTHERHA	1,142.15	3,589.63	886.97	3,934.10	406.41	2,875.63	143.14	20,159.89	4,562.42	2,729.04	**40,429.38**	(20,527.84)	**19,901.54**	(14,588.82)	3,001.57	**(11,587.25)**	**8,314.29**
P-206640	27 Stag Willow Close, ROTHERHA	1,142.15	3,589.63	886.97	3,934.10	406.41	2,875.63	143.14	20,159.89	4,562.42	2,729.04	**40,429.38**	(20,527.84)	**19,901.54**	(14,588.82)	3,001.57	**(11,587.25)**	**8,314.29**
P-206641	28 Stag Willow Close, ROTHERHA	1,142.15	3,589.63	886.97	3,934.10	406.41	2,875.63	143.14	20,159.89	4,562.42	2,729.04	**40,429.38**	(20,527.84)	**19,901.54**	(14,588.82)	3,001.57	**(11,587.25)**	**8,314.29**
P-C00046	Oaktrees Block-Stag Willow Clo	-	-	-	-	29,171.40	-	-	-	-	-	**29,171.40**	-	**29,171.40**	(729.30)	-	**(729.30)**	**28,442.10**
TOTAL		31,980.20	100,509.64	28,448.19	110,154.80	40,550.88	80,517.64	4,007.92	564,476.92	127,747.76	76,413.12	**1,164,807.07**	(574,779.52)	**590,027.55**	(408,695.56)	84,043.96	**(324,651.60)**	**265,375.95**

13. Options

13.1 The following options that have been considered are outlined in the table below, including comments about viability of each option. The draft was shared with RMBC in May 2021 and views have been sought, including any implications for the lease for land and nominations agreement. Tenant consultation will need to take place about options that are considered to be realistic.

Option	Details	Implications/Comments
Undertake the fire safety works to the main building and leave as is	Flats are very difficult to let Would require est £800k to make building safe Facilities are underused	The fire safety remedial works will not address the issue with lack of demand for the flats. The flats will remain a liability and likely continue to accrue rent loss. **Given the issues with demand and underuse of the facilities, it is not considered viable** Implications need to be considered re the review of RMBC's support service
Demolish main building and redevelop as bungalows for rent (older people)	Newbuild options being explored by Development team eg age-proof block of flats to maximise number of units, given size of site as well as bungalows	Would be in line with terms of lease Est cost of demolition - £400k Net impact of £95k (costs on the books) – Head of Accountancy double-checking to make sure all liabilities have been captured Bungalows - not considered to be financially viable – given cost and size of site limited (to approx. 7 bungalows). redevelopment costs est to be approx. £120k x 7 units RMBC need to resolve the support charge issue (transparency about the service, associated charge and flexibility rather than one-size-fits all) emerging issues with letting bungalows **New build option unlikely to be financially viable due to size of site and very questionable that THA could claim further Homes England social housing grant.**
Remodel communal areas into older person flats	Remediate and remodel the existing building-design out the communal areas and create an additional 7 flats Loss of facilities – subject to tenant consultation, noting usage very low	Estimated cost of redesigning the main scheme and maximising the layout would be £1, 300,000. Does not include cosmetic improvements noting overall look and appeal of scheme is poor

		Would require a full design and more detailed assessment needed including other additional fire measures not yet identified Limited number of additional units Current flats are hard to let – questionable if enough demand for more flats Gross rents lower as communal facilities charge would be removed Need to consider impact on rents – Local Housing allowance if not designated as supported housing N**ot considered viable due to significant investment required and size of scheme would still very small and demand questionable**
Remodel communal areas into General needs flats & change the scheme into a general needs scheme	As per above	As above Already quite a lot of supply in area and query over sufficient demand Implications for rent levels re LHA if undesignated from supported Potential impact on bungalows and possible concerns from current tenants about a mixed age scheme Loss of base for RMBC support service (subject to RMBC review) Would be in line with terms of lease as would remain as social housing N**ot considered viable due to significant investment required and size of scheme would still very small . Demand questionable**
Change use to communal facilities only	Original purpose was as a resource centre with 8 flats above.	THA's fire safety team has advised whilst a change of use from residential to communal facilities only would change

	Retain as a resource centre only and close off the flats	requirements to some degree, the vast majority of the remediation works would still be required. Building control approval would be required for any change of use proposal - could mean additional safety measures in line with current standards as well as remediation Legal implications re terms of the lease relating to any change of use Impact of service charges - 8 less properties to spread running costs over (which couldn't be reapportioned onto current tenants); and charges were high and lack of use . Running costs couldn't reasonably be levied to tenants if the building was to be promoted as a wider community resource centre. **Not considered viable as vast majority of remediation works would still be required**
Demolish	Landbank site	Legal implications re terms of the lease Loss of facilities for tenants Loss of base for RMBC support staff (subject to outcome of RMBC review) **At this juncture (July 21), THA considers this to be the most realistic option** Subject to discussion with RMBC and confirmation of newbuild viability (still in progress)

Appendix 4a.

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: The Future of Oaktrees Extra Care Scheme (Stag Willow)	
Directorate: Adult Care, Housing and Public Health	**Service area:** Adult Care
Lead person: Julie Moore – Head of Service, Provider Services	**Contact:** julie.moore@rotherham.gov.uk
Is this a: [ ] **Strategy / Policy** [X] **Service / Function** [ ] **Other** **If other, please specify**	

2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening
Oaktrees on Stag Willow Close, Broom, was built and developed as an Extra Care scheme in 2006, by Together Housing, Housing Association. The scheme comprised a main building (referred to as the Oak Trees Resource Centre) which contained the typical communal facilities associated with an Extra Care Scheme and 8 individual flats. Adjacent to the Resource Centre are 20 bungalows.

Following a fire risk assessment, the resource centre was closed by Together Housing on 30 October 2020, as the assessment identified significant risks to users and occupiers of the building in the event of a fire.

The Council's care and support team, which operated from the Centre, were relocated to nearby Bakersfield Court (Extra Care Scheme). Support to tenants has continued to be provided by the care staff travelling to Stag Willow Close if wellbeing visits or a call for assistance is required.

Since August 2020, Adult Social Care have continued to provide support to tenants, whilst Together Housing decide the long term future of the Resource Centre. After review, and further fire risk assessments Together Housing have decided to permanently close the building.

As such, the report recommends that Cabinet note:

- The decision by Together Housing to permanently close the Resource Centre and the change in type of housing scheme from Extra Care to General Housing.

- Approve the permanent change in service delivery to an offsite wrap around care and support service in line with the current delivery model.

Future consideration for the site

Following cabinet approval of the recommendations within the report, it is the intention of Together Housing, as the landlord, to consult with tenants of the bungalows regarding future use of the site. This will support Together Housing's strategic decision making and has been advised by their legal representatives.

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?		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 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? Regular communication, public meetings and engagement with tenants
Key findings The current off site service delivery model is meeting the support needs of those tenants who require this. This includes wellbeing calls/visits and emergency responses. A range of activities have been offered at nearby Bakersfield Court; details of local community events have been shared
Actions

The offsite wrap around care and support service will continue in line with the current delivery model. Following the closure of the resource centre, the service will continue to support tenants to access other activities and opportunities in the community and at nearby Bakersfield Court

Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	1st August 2023
Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	11th August 2023
Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title):	Julie Moore, Head of Service Adult Care Provider Services

5. Governance, ownership and approval

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

Name	Job title	Date
Ian Spicer	Strategic Director	14th August 2023

6. Publishing

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

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

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

Date screening completed	14th August 2023
Report title and date	The Future of Oaktrees Extra Care Scheme (Stag Willow) 18th September 2023
If relates to a Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision – report date and date sent for publication	18th September 2023
Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	14th August 2023

Appendix 4b.

PART B – Equality Analysis Form

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

This form:

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

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

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

1. Title	
Equality Analysis title: The Future of Oaktrees Extra Care Scheme (Stag Willow)	
Date of Equality Analysis (EA): 11th August 2023	
Directorate: **Adult Care, Housing and Public Health**	**Service area:** **Adult Care**
Lead Manager: **Julie Moore**	**Contact number:** **07900 165605**
Is this a: ☐ **Strategy / Policy** ☒ **Service / Function** ☐ **Other** **If other, please specify**	

2. Names of those involved in the Equality Analysis (Should include minimum of three people) - see page 7 of Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance		
Name	**Organisation**	**Role (eg service user, managers, service specialist)**
Julie Moore	RMBC	Head of Service – Provider Services Adult Care, Housing and Public Health
Donna Wilkinson	RMBC	Operations Manager – Provider Services Adult Care, Housing and Public Health
Kirsty Littlewood	RMBC	Assistant Director, Adult Care & Integration

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

Aim/Scope (who the Policy/Service affects and intended outcomes if known)

The recommendations within this cabinet report will only directly impact current tenants of Oaktrees (Stag Willow) Extracare Scheme. These key stakeholders are people who are currently accessing the offsite wrap around care and support service which will remain in place as a delivery model.

Following the closure of the resource centre, the service will continue to support tenants to access other activities and opportunities in the community and at nearby Bakersfield Court

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

There are 22 tenants who live at the Oaktrees site. They are all aged 55+

Communication, engagement and public meetings have been held with all tenants to understand their current support needs.

The services are available to all who have an assessed need regardless of the Protected Characteristics.

Data in relation to Gender Reassignment, Pregnancy and Maternity and Sexual Orientation have not been captured

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

- Tenant satisfaction surveys
- Regular engagement sessions
- Regular updates and communications

• Support referrals to Adult Care and other organisations regarding any changes in need and circumstance	
Engagement undertaken with customers. (date and group(s) consulted and key findings)	Public meetings August 2022, January 2023, August 2023 Tenant surveys Letters 2021,22,23 Activities arranged at nearby Bakersfield Court
Engagement undertaken with staff (date and group(s)consulted and key findings)	Staff groups consulted in 2020 when the service base relocated to Bakersfield Court Staff meetings and regular updates regarding the future of the scheme

4. The Analysis - of the actual or likely effect of the Policy or Service (Identify by protected characteristics)
How does the Policy/Service meet the needs of different communities and groups? The current service model is inclusive of all communities and groups and the recommendations in this report are that this will remain the same
Does your Policy/Service present any problems or barriers to communities or Groups? No
Does the Service/Policy provide any positive impact/s including improvements or remove barriers? Continuation of support for those who need this, and promotion of activities and events to ensure social inclusion
What affect will the Policy/Service have on community relations? (may also need to consider activity which may be perceived as benefiting one group at the expense of another) There is no change to the current situation

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

5. Summary of findings and Equality Analysis Action Plan

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

Title of analysis: The Future of Oaktrees Extra Care Scheme (Stag Willow)
Directorate and service area: Adult Care, Housing and Public Health
Lead Manager: Julie Moore – Head of Service, Adult Care Provider Services
Summary of findings:
The recommendations within this cabinet report will only directly impact current tenants of Oaktrees (Stag Willow) Extracare Scheme. These key stakeholders are people who are currently accessing the offsite wrap around care and support service which will remain in place as a delivery model. Following the closure of the resource centre, the service will continue to support tenants to access other activities and opportunities in the community and at nearby Bakersfield Court. Thorough communication and engagement has taken place and will continue. The current service model is inclusive of all communities and groups and the recommendations in this report are that this will remain the same

Action/Target	State Protected Characteristics as listed below	Target date (MM/YY)
Final pre cabinet engagement session	All	23.08.23
Report taken to Council Cabinet	All	19.09.23
Recommendations of cabinet report implemented	All	01.10.23
The services continue to be available to all who have an assessed need regardless of the Protected Characteristics.	All	01.10.23

***A = Age, D= Disability, S = Sex, GR Gender Reassignment, RE= Race/ Ethnicity, RoB= Religion or Belief, SO= Sexual Orientation, PM= Pregnancy/Maternity, CPM = Civil Partnership or Marriage. C= Carers, O= other groups**

6. Governance, ownership and approval

Please state those that have approved the Equality Analysis. Approval should be obtained by the Director and approval sought from DLT and the relevant Cabinet Member.

Name	Job title	Date
Ian Spicer	Strategic Director	14.08.22
Cllr David Roche	Cabinet Member	14.08.22

7. Publishing

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

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

A copy should also be sent to equality@rotherham.gov.uk For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file and also published on the Council's Equality and Diversity Internet page.	
Date Equality Analysis completed	11.08.23
Report title and date	The Future of Oaktrees Extra Care Scheme (Stag Willow)
Date report sent for publication	
Date Equality Analysis sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	

Appendix 5

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?	*No impact on emissions*				
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)?	*No impact on emissions*				

Identify any emission impacts associated with this decision that have not been covered by the above fields:
It should be noted that the building referred to in this report is not owned by the Council and therefore the emissions are outside of the scope of the Council's operational emissions. Similarly, the current scope of this report does not currently include the demolition of the building or its future use, though demolition is highlighted as a potential option that Together Housing might consider following tenant engagement. Therefore, the impact on Council carbon emissions and the immediate Borough emissions is likely to be minimal. From a Borough and therefore the Council's target to achieve a net zero Borough by 2040 perspective, the end use or demolition of the property could result in increases in carbon emissions, and it is worth considering these within the wider context of the decision and in future discussions with Together Housing. For example, for replacement with residential housing the resulting carbon emissions could be in the region of approximately 250 - 350 tCO_2e per annum, assuming the new build properties were compliant with current standards. There would also be embodied carbon emissions as a result of demolition which in general means that a refurbishment and retrofit option is usually the least carbon intensive. However, as outlined above, this would be a consideration for the provider and a decision is not being sought within this paper as it is outside the scope of the remit of RMBC.

Please provide a summary of all impacts and mitigation/monitoring measures:.
None required.

Supporting information:	
Completed by: (Name, title, and service area/directorate).	Julie Moore – Head of Service, Provider Services ACHPH Adult Care
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]	Louise Preston, Climate Change Manager CIA132

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Public Report
Cabinet

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting
Cabinet – 18 September 2023

Report Title
Re-procurement of a local Healthwatch Service

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

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report
Ian Spicer, Strategic Director of Adult Care, Housing and Public Health

Report Author(s)
Jacqueline Clark – Head of Prevention Early Intervention, Strategic Commissioning
01709 822358 or Jacqueline.clark@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected
Borough-Wide

Report Summary
The current contract for the provision of a local Healthwatch service is in place until 31 March 2024. The service is due to come to the end of the contractual term with the extension clause having been exercised. A formal procurement procedure is now required in line with the Council's Financial and Procurement Procedure Rules (FPPRs) and procurement law to secure continued service.

The service was remodeled having previously been part of a contract arrangement which combined the Healthwatch and an advocacy service. The Healthwatch contract was re-let in 2020 to deliver a standalone service. This arrangement has achieved a successful service with a focus on all aspects of health and social care capturing peoples' needs, concerns and experiences.

The Healthwatch service is currently delivered under the brand, Healthwatch Rotherham, by Citizens Advice Rotherham and District.

In line with the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 it is the role of the Council to set up a contract or grant agreement with a social enterprise to ensure the service acts for the needs of the Rotherham community. The Council must now pursue commissioning activity to secure ongoing arrangements post the 31st March 2024.

The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet approval for the Council to enter into a competitive tender to secure ongoing service from April 2024.

Recommendation

Cabinet to approve Option 2 to procure a local Healthwatch Service for a contract period of 3 years from 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2027 (with an option to extend for a further year) and Cabinet to note the increase in the contract value.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1.	Part A Initial Equality Screening Assessment.
Appendix 2.	Part B Full Equality Assessment.
Appendix 3	Carbon Impact Assessment.

Background Papers

B3. Factsheet - Greater voice for patients (300512).doc (publishing.service.gov.uk)
Decision - (ACH&PH) Healthwatch - Rotherham Council

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

No

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Re-procurement of a local Healthwatch Service

1. Background

1.1 The Health and Social Care Act 2012 amended the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 to make provision for a national Healthwatch England and for a local Healthwatch. This is a statutory service, and each Local Authority is mandated to have a local Healthwatch.

1.2 Healthwatch Rotherham is expected to be the local consumer champion for patients, service users and the public, covering both health and social care for all ages, including children. It is also expected that they are a member of the Integrated Care Partnership, as part of the Integrated Care System, and Health and Wellbeing Board.

Their main statutory functions are to:

- Obtain the views of people about their needs and experience of local health and social care services and make these views known to those involved in the commissioning and scrutiny of care services.
- Make reports and recommendations about how those services could or should be improved.
- Promote and support the involvement of people in the monitoring, commissioning and provision of local health and social care services.
- Provide information and advice to the public about accessing health and social care services and the options available to them.
- Make the views and experiences of people known to Healthwatch England, helping them to carry out their role as national champion. Healthwatch England may use this evidence to advise the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to carry out special reviews or investigations into areas of concern.

1.3 Changes brought about by the Health and Care Act 2022 require locally funded Healthwatch to collaborate with counterparts in other areas to ensure that their statutory functions are delivered effectively across Integrated Care Systems and respond to, and play an active part in, the new health and care landscape and be involved in:

- Integrated Care Partnerships to develop the Integrated Care Strategy and attend partnership meetings.

- Sharing system-wide relevant reports and recommendations, including annual reports, with the Integrated Care Boards.

- Working with neighbouring Healthwatch to develop and deliver a system-wide strategy for engaging with people and communities.

1.4 In this contractual period the Healthwatch manager has attended strategic meetings including the Health and Wellbeing Board and Health Select Commission. The service has undertaken ‘enter and view’ visits in local care

homes and assisted the Council in its co-production work with unpaid carers to meet the priorities set out in the Borough that Cares Strategy.

1.5 Healthwatch Rotherham has also undertaken research and published wide ranging reports covering subjects such as: accessing dentistry, accessing GP services, how Rotherham residents access health and social care information, mental health (as a result of covid 19) changes to services brought about by the pandemic and barriers to accessing health and social care services when English is not the first language. Healthwatch also highlighted issues with accessing defibrillators in Rotherham Town Centre and were tasked by the Health Select Commission to find out about Rotherham residents experiences of Rotherham maternity services.

2. Key Issues

Contract:

2.1 The current contracted provision for the local Healthwatch Service is delivered by Citizen's Advice Rotherham and District and will end on 31st March 2024. There are no ongoing arrangements in place for service continuity of this statutory function.

2.2 In line with the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 it is the role of the Council to set up a contract or grant agreement with a social enterprise to ensure the service acts for the needs of the Rotherham community. The Council must now pursue commissioning activity to secure ongoing arrangements post the 31st March 2024.

Contract Value:

2.3 To ensure the local Healthwatch service is able to carry out its statutory function a budget of £161,262 is required to sustain a responsive local Healthwatch service in Rotherham.

2.4 In the current contract period, Healthwatch Rotherham was unable to attract and retain a manager as the salary was perceived to be non-competitive. In February 2022 an Officer Executive Decision approved the increase of the contract value to stabilise the service.

2.5 Whilst this intervention brought some stability there is a risk that the contract value may impede the capacity and capability of the Service especially at the advent of the changes brought about by the Health and Care Act 2022 (see 1.3).

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

3.1 **Option 1 – Not recommended**
Undertake a competitive grant process to establish a local Healthwatch Service:

This approach would offer an opportunity to the local Voluntary and Community Sector to apply to deliver the service within the expectation as prescribed under the Health and Social Care Act 2012, the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, and the Health and Care Act 2022.

3.2 In this option, the opportunity will be advertised locally and may attract a limited pool of potential competitors. There will be a reasonable expectation and no legal obligation that the subsequent grant funded service will deliver against the requirement.

Given the statutory nature of the service, Option 1 carries significant risks to the Council should the service performance deviate from the standard required.

Therefore, for the reasons set out in 3.1 and 3.2, Option 1 is not recommended.

3.3 **Option 2 – Recommended**
Undertake a competitive procurement exercise to establish a contract to deliver a local Healthwatch Service:

In this option, a competitive tender exercise to VCS organisations would be pursued. Applicant submissions will be assessed on their track record and achievements, approaches for delivery of the new contract and against the objectives of Integrated Care Partnerships/Boards and working with neighbouring Healthwatch in addition to how they:

- Engage with all people, including those with disabilities or disadvantage.
- Collect and analyse data and use this to effect change.
- Utilise and manage volunteers to expand the service reach.
- Engage local citizens in the work of the service.
- Train and manage staff.
- Understand local Safeguarding Procedures and how they will safeguard those people they come into contact with.

3.4 Following the tender, a legally enforceable contract will be established with the successful applicant as a means for robust contract management. This arrangement will ensure clarity around what is required from the provider, stimulate adherence to the terms of the arrangement and increase their level of accountability to the Council.

In line with 3.3 and 3.4, Option 2 is therefore the recommended option.

4. Consultation on proposal

4.1 As set out above the Local Authority is required by law to procure a Healthwatch service and to have it in place by 1st April 2024. There is no requirement for the Council to consult on the proposed procurement exercise.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

5.1 The tender will be published late September 2023 and will be awarded in December 2023 to allow any transition to a new organisation to take place by 1st April 2024.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

6.1 The Healthwatch Service is funded within the Adult Social Care revenue budget through the Local Reform and Community Voices (LRCV) grant and mainstream funding. The current budget is £101,000. This is made up of £90,000 LRCV grant and £11,000 mainstream funding.

6.2 The new contract value of £161,262. This will be funded by £90,000 of LRCV grant, £11,000 of current mainstream budget and £60,262 of Adult Social Care Commissioning funding and will be subject to ongoing discussions with partners.

6.3 Procurement:
The services described in this report would be classified as Social and Other Specific Services ("SOSS") as defined in the Public Contracts Regulations (as amended) 2015 ("the Regulations"). The threshold for SOSS is £552,950 (net of VAT), £663,540 (inclusive of VAT). The estimated contract value of £161,262 per annum, equates to a total of £645,048 (net of VAT) and therefore above the SOSS threshold. As such, a competitive process in compliance with the Regulations should be undertaken and the recommendations detailed in this report align with this.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

7.1 Pursuant to the Health and Social Care Act 2012 the Local Authority is required to ensure that a local Healthwatch Service is in place for its area.

7.2 According to section 222 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, the Council must make arrangements with a body corporate that is a social enterprise and meets certain other requirements (if any) set out in regulations made by the Secretary of State.

7.3 The contract value of £645,048 is below the threshold requiring public procurement exercises for the purposes of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (that threshold is £663,540). However, it is above the threshold for an invitation to tender exercise for the purposes of the Council's own Contract Procedure Rules.

Accordingly, the proposed procurement route described in this report is appropriate.

Panel Officers may wish to consult with Legal Services regarding the preparation of an appropriate contractual document.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

8.1 There are no implications for the Council. The Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE), may apply from the existing provider to the new provider should they not be successful. The Council would not be directly involved in this process but would ensure that the TUPE information is available at the point of publishing the tender opportunity.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

9.1 The service is available to all ages and although procured by Adult Care, Housing and Public Health will support Children and Young People's Services by engaging the local community and influencing change in relation to services accessed by children and young people.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 The service is available to all Rotherham residents. The requirements of the service specification ensures that the service monitors and provides evidence how it has reached and is available to all groups particularly those that are underrepresented. This is evidenced in the attached Equality Analysis.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

11.1 The carbon impact assessment demonstrates that the recommendations in this report will have minimal impact.

12. Implications for Partners

12.1. NHS partners, the SY ICP, the SY ICB, Rotherham Place ICB and Independent Sector partners will benefit from the work of a local Healthwatch Service proactively working with them to improve services as the consumer champion.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 Any changes to the Local Reform and Community Voices Grant funding may impact on the future funding of the service.

13.2 The Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE) may apply which may affect an organisation's ability to put forward a financially viable application to provide the service. Without any effective engagement with interested parties, then the tender may fail due to insufficient interest.

13.3 In order to mitigate the risk of a lack of interested bids TUPE information will also be sought to clarify the position. An event will also be held with the market to stimulate interest in the opportunity prior to the tender being published. This approach, known as 'soft market testing', will let potential providers know about the Rotherham context, requirements, and expectations to help encourage credible bids.

14. Accountable Officers

Ian Spicer – Strategic Director Adult Care, Housing and Public Health
Scott Matthewman – Assistant Director, Strategic Commissioning, ACHPH

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	**Date**
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	04/09/23
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	30/08/23
Assistant Director, Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phil Horsfield	25/08/23

Report Author: *Jacqueline Clark – Head of Prevention and Early Intervention. Strategic Commissioning, ACHPH.*
Jacqueline.clark@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: Procurement of a local Healthwatch Service	
Directorate: **Adult Care, Housing and Public Health**	**Service area:** **Strategic Commissioning**
Lead person: Joanne Bell – Strategic Commissioning Manager	**Contact number:** 01709 823942

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Is this a:

	Strategy / Policy		Service / Function		Other
		X			

If other, please specify

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

The Health and Social Care Act 2012 amended the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 to make provision for a national Healthwatch England and for a local Healthwatch. This is a statutory service and each Local Authority is mandated to have a local Healthwatch.

Healthwatch Rotherham is expected to be the local consumer champion for patients, service users and the public, covering both health and social care for all ages, including children. It is also expected that they be a member of the Integrated Care Partnership and Health and Wellbeing Board.

Their main statutory functions are to

- Obtain the views of people about their needs and experience of local health and social care services and make these views known to those involved in the commissioning and scrutiny of care services.
- Make reports and recommendations about how those services could or should be improved.
- Promote and support the involvement of people in the monitoring, commissioning and provision of local health and social care services.
- Provide information and advice to the public about accessing health and social care services and the options available to them.
- Make the views and experiences of people known to Healthwatch England, helping them to carry out their role as national champion. Healthwatch England may use this evidence to advise the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to carry out special reviews or investigations into areas of concern.

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Existing contractual arrangements for the provision of a Local Healthwatch Service is due to reach the end of its current contractual term on 31 March 2024. Approval processes are currently underway to commission the service post March 2024.

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?	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 explain the reason		

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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).
The service is a statutory function, required by the Health and Social Care Act 2012, it must be available to all and make arrangements to meet the needs of people with protected characteristics that may wish to use the service, such a people with a sensory impairment. Contractual terms require the providing organisation to monitor the equality and diversity of the people using the service. Any indication that the service is not reaching people with protected characteristics will be dealt with in the Contract Monitoring and Compliance Process. A remit of the service is to ensure that health and social care services meet the needs of the local community they serve. They make the views and experiences of people known to Healthwatch England, helping them to carry out their role as national champion. Healthwatch England may use this evidence to advise the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to carry out special reviews or investigations into areas of concern.

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• **Key findings** The proposal to re-commission a Healthwatch service will not have a negative impact on the different equality characteristics of the people accessing the service. -
• **Actions** The tender method statement and the service specification requires that the service fully understands and its role in promoting equality and diversity in the provision of the service and can describe how it will monitor and evidence this. This will be monitored by the Council over the length of the contract as part of its contract monitoring and quality assurance processes.

Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	17/7/23
Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	25/7/23
Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title):	Joanne Bell, Strategic Commissioning Manager

5. Governance, ownership and approval		
Please state here who has approved the actions and outcomes of the screening:		
Name	**Job title**	**Date**
Ian Spicer	Strategic Director – Adult	

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	Care, Housing and Public Health	
Cllr David Roche	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health	

6. Publishing	
This screening document will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given. If this screening relates to a **Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision** a copy of the completed document should be attached as an appendix and published alongside the relevant report. A copy of **all** screenings should also be sent to equality@rotherham.gov.uk For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file and also published on the Council's Equality and Diversity Internet page.	
Date screening completed	17/7/2023
Report title and date	Procurement of a Local Healthwatch Service
If relates to a Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision – report date and date sent for publication	
Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	

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PART B – Equality Analysis Form

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

This form:

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

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

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

1. Title	
Equality Analysis title: Re- procurement of a Local Healthwatch Service	
Date of Equality Analysis (EA): 17/7/23	
Directorate: **Adult Care Housing and Public Health**	**Service area:** **Strategic Commissioning**
Lead Manager: Joanne Bell – Strategic Commissioning Manager	**Contact number:** 01709 823942
Is this a: ☐ **Strategy / Policy** ☒ **Service / Function** ☐ **Other** **If other, please specify**	

2. Names of those involved in the Equality Analysis (Should include minimum of three people) - see page 7 of Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance		
Name	**Organisation**	**Role (eg service user, managers, service specialist)**
Jacqueline Clark	Rotherham MBC	Head of Prevention Early Intervention – Strategic Commissioning
Jo Bell	Rotherham MBC	Strategic Commissioning Manager -
Scott Matthewman	Rotherham MBC	Assistant Director – Strategic Commissioning

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

Aim/Scope (who the Policy/Service affects and intended outcomes if known)

Proposed re-tender of a local Healthwatch (a statutory service)

The Health and Social Care Act 2012 makes provision for a national Healthwatch England and for a local Healthwatch. This is a statutory service.

Healthwatch Rotherham is expected to be the local consumer champion for patients, service users and the public, covering both health and social care for all ages. Their statutory activities should include gathering local views and making these known to providers and commissioners, monitoring and scrutinising the quality of provision of local services, and a seat on the local Health and Wellbeing Board.

A 3 year contract with an option for extension of up to a further 12 months is proposed to start on 1st April 2024

Funding is proposed at £165,000 per annum.

What equality information is available? Include any engagement undertaken and identify any information gaps you are aware of. What monitoring arrangements have you made to monitor the impact of the policy or service on communities/groups according to their protected characteristics? See page 7 of guidance step 2.

The Healthwatch Service Specification requires that the service is open to all groups it therefore can apply to the whole population. It is a major function of a local Healthwatch to ensure equal access to services, both their own service and that provided by health and social care organisations in the Borough. They must monitor the access to their service by people according to their protected characteristics and specifically target these groups in their engagement activity.

The current provider of the Healthwatch services collates data on equality and diversity.

Rotherham has a steadily growing population which reached a level of 265,800 in 2021. Rotherham has 140,874 people of working age (53%). This is lower than the English average (55.7%).

Rotherham has an ageing population whereby the number of older people is increasing fastest, and their health and social care needs place increasing pressure on care and support services. There are 52,096 people aged 65+ including 6,113 people aged 85+

In 2021, 5.3% of Rotherham residents identified their ethnic group within the "Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh" category, up from 4.1% in 2011. The 1.2 percentage-point change was the largest increase among high-level ethnic groups in this area.

In 2021, 91.0% of people in Rotherham identified their ethnic group within the "White" category (compared with 93.6% in 2011), while 1.4% identified their ethnic group within the "Mixed or Multiple" category (compared with 1.0% the previous decade).

The percentage of people who identified their ethnic group within the "Other" category ("Arab" or "Any other ethnic group") increased from 0.5% in 2011 to 1.1% in 2021.

Health in Rotherham has long been poorer than average with life expectancy below that in England as a whole, although rising. Life expectancy for males in Rotherham is 1.4 years below the national average and for females the gap is greater at 1.9 years. Health inequalities within the Borough are illustrated by the 9.5 year gap in life expectancy for men living in the most deprived areas and the least deprived, and a 7 year gap for women.

Particular health and lifestyle concerns in Rotherham are obesity, alcohol and smoking related illness, cancer smoking in pregnancy and low breastfeeding initiation. Older people in Rotherham are far more likely to be disabled and be in poor health than average.

The Census In 2021, 43.7% of Rotherham residents described their health as "very good", increasing from 41.8% in 2011. Those describing their health as "good" rose from 34.2% to 34.4%. These are age-standardised proportions.

The proportion of Rotherham residents describing their health as "very bad" was 1.6% (similar to 2011), while those describing their health as "bad" fell from 6.2% to 5.4%.

These data reflect people’s own opinions in describing their overall health on a five point scale, from very good to very bad.

Census 2021 was conducted during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. This may have influenced how people perceived and rated their health, and therefore may have affected how people chose to respond.

Monitoring:

The service specification requires the provider to monitor the use of the service, act if it is not reaching all the communities and ensure hard to reach groups or those with protected

characterises have an equal voice in shaping health and social care services in the borough.
Are there any gaps in the information that you are aware of? **No**
What monitoring arrangements have you made to monitor the impact of the policy or service on communities/groups according to their protected characteristics? The incumbent service provider is required to routinely collect/collate specific data around the protected characteristics of people accessing the service and the trend data enables the service to consider demand and gaps in delivering the service to people with protected characteristics.

Engagement undertaken with customers. (date and group(s) consulted and key findings)	Healthwatch service users will generally benefit through accessing the website for information and indirectly through the work of Healthwatch in improving services through work with local Health and Social are Commissioners.
Engagement undertaken with staff (date and group(s)consulted and key findings)	The proposed procurement of a local Healthwatch function has no detrimental effect on service users. The service is there to support the voice of the public. An effective service will be an asset to the whole community and will involve volunteers in supporting the Service.

4. The Analysis - of the actual or likely effect of the Policy or Service (Identify by protected characteristics)
How does the Policy/Service meet the needs of different communities and groups? (Protected characteristics of Age, Disability, Sex, Gender Reassignment, Race, Religion or Belief, Sexual Orientation, Civil Partnerships and Marriage, Pregnancy and Maternity) - see glossary on page 14 of the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance) The service is open to all and the service specification requires that a local Healthwatch engage with underrepresented and hard to reach groups, these include those with a sensory and or physical disability, ethnic minorities and carers. The role of the service is to gather the views of residents of the borough and act on their behalf to effect changes and improvements in the local provision of health and social care services. Engagement activities must reach those hard to reach groups and not discriminate against any person.

Healthwatch currently use a range of access channels and referrals to ensure that this duty is discharged.

The tender method statement and the service specification requires that the service fully understands its role in promoting equality and diversity. This is the context of the provision of the service and it must describe how it will monitor and evidence engagement and adherence to equality requirements. Evidence of how hard to reach groups will be accessed will also be a key factor in determining suitability.

The revised service specification will expect the successful organisation to provide clear and robust equality monitoring data.

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

No.

Healthwatch is designed to remove barriers and will do this by ensuring their engagement activities reach all communities. An effective local Healthwatch. An effective local Healthwatch will act on information gathered from local people about what is stopping them accessing services and effect the necessary change assuring health and social care services are accessible to all.

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

The remit of a Local Healthwatch service is to give local residents a voice and to improve health and social care services.

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

There are no negative impacts on community relations to note.

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

5. Summary of findings and Equality Analysis Action Plan

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

Title of analysis: **Re- procurement of a Local Healthwatch Service**
Directorate and service area: **Adult Care – Strategic Commissioning**
Lead Manager:
Summary of findings:
The remit of a Local Healthwatch service is to give local residents a voice and to improve health and social care services. There are no negative impacts on community relations to note.

Action/Target	State Protected Characteristics as listed below	Target date (MM/YY)
The procurement exercise will ensure that the provider undertakes their duties in relation to the Equalities Act. The service specification will require equalities training and equality monitoring to be undertaken.	A, D, S, GR, R, RoB, SO, PM, CPM. C	31 December 2023

***A = Age, D= Disability, S = Sex, GR Gender Reassignment, RE= Race/ Ethnicity, RoB= Religion or Belief, SO= Sexual Orientation, PM= Pregnancy/Maternity, CPM = Civil Partnership or Marriage. C= Carers, O= other groups**

6. Governance, ownership and approval		
Please state those that have approved the Equality Analysis. Approval should be obtained by the Director and approval sought from DLT and the relevant Cabinet Member.		
Name	**Job title**	**Date**
Ian Spicer	Strategic Director of Adult Care, Housing and Public Health.	
Cllr Roche	Cabinet Member – Adult Social Care and Health	

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

If this Equality Analysis relates to a **Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision** a copy of the completed document should be attached as an appendix and published alongside the relevant report. A copy should also be sent to equality@rotherham.gov.uk For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file and also published on the Council's Equality and Diversity Internet page.	
Date Equality Analysis completed	31 July 2023
Report title and date	Re-procurement of a local Healthwatch Service – 18 September 2023
Date report sent for publication	
Date Equality Analysis sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	1 August 2023

Appendix 4

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?	Minimal	Where engagement sessions are held in-person, there will be a small carbon impact from energy use at the building. This impact is negligible, compared with Business as Usual.			
Emissions from transport?	Minimal	Officers/volunteers travelling to in-person engagement sessions. Carbon emissions from commuting and business travel are scope 3 emissions, in the Council's environmental reporting.	Attendees travelling to in-person engagement sessions. These emissions are outside the scope of the Council's environmental reporting.	Activity will mainly be conducted online and through virtual meetings, minimizing the carbon emissions impact from transport.	
Emissions from waste, or the quantity of waste itself?	Nil				
Emissions from housing and domestic buildings?	Nil				

Emissions from construction and/or development?	Nil				Ongoing review of carbon impacts, in line with wider activity.
Carbon capture (e.g. through trees)?	Nil				

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

The carbon emissions impact from construction and development are Nil, since this carbon impact assessment only considers carbon emissions arising from engagement activity the provider will undertake. This is in agreement with advice received from colleagues in Asset Management, Policy and Strategic Housing.

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

- Access to Multiple buildings to reduce extensive travel during engagement with people
- Car sharing where possible
- Look at different travel methods for example buildings being near shared transport routes (bus, train routes) or cycle and walkable routes.
- Complete engagement activity online such as surveys, questionnaires, large meetings to reduce travel and emissions.
- When using equipment in the consultations investigate recycling materials and ways in which materials can be re used after the event.
- Consider if face to face events is near to electrical car charging points.

Supporting information:	
Completed by: (Name, title, and service area/directorate).	Joanne Bell Strategic Commissioning Manager, Strategic Commissioning, ACH&PH Joanne Fellows Strategic Commissioning Officer, Strategic Commissioning, ACH&PH

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]	Tracking Reference: CIA 124 Arthur King Principal Climate Change Officer, Strategic Asset Management, R&E

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Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Public Report
Cabinet

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting
Cabinet – 18 September 2023

Report Title
New Applications for Business Rates Discretionary Relief

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)
Rob Cutts – Head of Service, Revenues, Benefits and Payments
01709 823320 or robert.cutts@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected
Borough-Wide

Report Summary

To consider the applications for the award of Discretionary Business Rate Relief for Labre's Hope Community Interest Company, Beacon South Yorkshire Ltd, Miramar Judo Academy Ltd and Unity Boxing Centre CIC. This is in accordance with the Council's Discretionary Business Rates Relief Policy (approved by Cabinet on 12th December 2016).

Recommendations

That Cabinet:

1. Approve the applications for Discretionary Business Rate Relief for Labre's Hope Community Interest Company, Beacon South Yorkshire Ltd, Miramar Judo Academy Ltd and Unity Boxing Centre CIC in accordance with the details set out in Section 6 to this report for the 2022/23 and 2023/24 financial years.

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 12th 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

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**
Labre's Hope Community Interest Company, Labre's House, Coleman Street, Parkgate, Rotherham S62 6EL and FusionMagna, Magna Way, Rotherham S60 1FE

1.3.1 Labre's Hope Community Interest Company is an organisation which seeks to end homelessness by offering employment and bespoke job coaching and developing life skills.

1.3.2 Individuals experiencing homelessness are employed to hand-produce plant-based, biodegradable, luxury vegan soap products, while receiving a living

wage. Service users regain stability via routine, income, and purpose through a creative career which is also a relaxing activity.

1.3.3 The organisation delivers one to one employment support via employment coaches. Classroom based well-being sessions ranging from mindfulness to therapeutic crafts are offered as a means of fostering healthy habits to promote good physical and mental wellbeing.

1.3.4 Individuals experiencing homelessness are identified via the organisation's partners, Crisis Skylight Rotherham, and South Yorkshire Housing Association. Both these organisations facilitate various activities within the project with a view to filling any gaps in beneficiaries' skillsets which are inhibiting them from progressing in life. The activities and support on offer help beneficiaries build the tools and skills needed to better manage future issues while increasing their chances of progressing careers into a job that is well-aligned with their personal profile and interests.

1.3.5 The organisation was previously selected by the Mayoral Combined Authority to receive a grant from the Government's Community Renewal fund. This funding was for a specified period and has now ended.

1.3.6 Labre's Hope Community Interest Company's application is considered to be in line with the Council's qualifying criteria as set out in its policy. The organisation provides access to facilities for vulnerable adults experiencing homelessness with a view to supporting them, developing their skills and easing them back into employment.

1.3.7 The organisation is applying for discretionary relief with regards to their 2022/23 and 2023/24 rates liability having moved from the original premises in Parkgate in December 2022 to their new premises at Fusion@Magna. The financial implication of awarding the relief is set out in Section 6 of the report.

1.4 **Application 2**
Beacon South Yorkshire Ltd, Suite 1 at Unit 1, Phoenix Riverside, Sheffield Road, Rotherham S60 1FL

1.4.1 Beacon South Yorkshire Ltd is a registered charity which aims to help and support families and carers. The charity offers a free service to anyone providing care for the elderly or caring for a person with addiction, mental health issues, disabilities or dementia. The organisation also works to raise awareness and educate the wider community on related issues.

1.4.2 The property is used for 1 to 1 support sessions, telephone support, monthly coffee mornings, meetings with other organisations and weekly drop-in sessions. Carers can refer themselves or they can be referred by other organisations.

1.4.3 The organisation now works in Rotherham and Barnsley but they do receive some referrals from further afield. Although the charity's work is not currently commissioned by RMBC, work has taken place with Public Health

commissioning team to link the organisation to other local services and a future review of the services they provide and any additional support they may require has been agreed. Work is ongoing to ensure that Rotherham communities know the service is available having only secured their Rotherham premises earlier this year.

1.4.4 Beacon South Yorkshire Ltd'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. The organisation is open to any carer in need of support. There are no charges for the service although donations are welcome. All income goes back into the organisation to further its work within the community.

1.4.5 The organisation is applying for discretionary relief with regards to their 2022/23 and 2023/24 rates liability. The financial implication of awarding the relief is set out in Section 6 of the report.

1.5 **Application 3**
Miramar Judo Academy Ltd, 1st Floor Terrapin Aldwarke Developments, Aldwarke Lane, Parkgate, Rotherham S65 3SR

1.5.1 Miramar Judo Academy Ltd is a not for profit organisation which was set up in July 2012 and affiliated to the British Judo Association from its inception. The organisation initially offered classes in a Rotherham church hall and since then have trained out of various premises in Rotherham and Sheffield. When the pandemic struck all equipment had to be moved and put into storage.

1.5.2 The organisation moved to its current location in February 2022 and started to offer classes again from March 2022. Players range in age from 5 years old to 62 years old bridging generational, cultural and ethnicity gaps. Every person who helps with the club does so purely as a volunteer.

1.5.3 The organisation currently has a membership of 61 and is aiming to increase that to 100 members by next year. Some members compete at international level and several players are on the England and Great Britain development programs. The organisation is seeking support with the business rates in order to allow it to continue to offer classes to all.

1.5.4 Miramar Judo Academy Ltd'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. It is open to anyone who wants to practice judo. There are no restrictions. The organisation actively encourages membership from disadvantaged groups and amongst their regular club members they have players with behavioural, learning and motor difficulties as well as visual impairment. Costs are kept low at £5 per session and a family discount is also available.

1.5.5 The organisation is applying for discretionary relief with regards to their 2022/23 and 2023/24 rates liability. The financial implication of awarding the relief is set out in Section 6 of the report.

1.6 **Application 4**
Unity Boxing Centre CIC, Ground Floor Terrapin, Aldwarke Developments, Aldwarke Lane, Parkgate, Rotherham S65 3SR

1.6.1 Unity Boxing Centre CIC is a not for profit organisation which registered as a CIC on 19 December 2022. Prior to that it was a constituted group known as Unity Boxing Centre (Unity Boxing and Fitness). The organisation took over the existing premises on 1 December 2021.

1.6.2 The organisation began offering classes in March 2022 and is registered with England Boxing which is the governing body for the sport of boxing in England. Sessions are offered throughout the week and include those for children and young people, women and girls, men's mental health and 1 to 1's.

1.6.3 The building is used in line with CIC objectives as not for profit and benefiting local communities.

1.6.4 The organisation uses the vehicle of boxing to engage communities, positively supporting families, children and young people in health and wellbeing. Boxing sessions encourage good mental health, accountability, respect, inclusion and positive health for all. The organisation is seeking support with the business rates to allow it to continue to offer classes to all.

1.6.5 Unity Boxing Centre CIC'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. It is open to anyone over the age of six who wants to practice boxing. There are no restrictions. The organisation actively encourages membership from disadvantaged groups including the Black, Asian, Minority, Ethnic communities and anyone living with a disability.

1.6.6 Unity Boxing Centre CIC were this year awarded two grants of £1,350.00 towards gym equipment from Rotherham East and the Boston Castle capital ward funding.

1.6.7 The organisation is applying for discretionary relief with regards to their 2022/23 and 2023/24 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 the organisations listed in Section 1 of the report 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 the organisations listed in Section 1 of the report.

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 value of the relief for the financial years 2022/23 and 2023/24 is £27,136.56 and £27,558.94 respectively. The cost to the Council is £13,296.92 (2022/23) and £13,503.88 (2023/24) based on the Council's 49% share. Paragraph 6.3 below shows the value of the relief for each applicant alongside the specific cost to the Council.

6.3

Year	Total Amount of Relief	Cost to RMBC
Labre's Hope Community Interest Company		
2022/23	£7,450.82	£3,650.90
2023/24	£4,453.59	£2,182.26
Beacon South Yorkshire Ltd		
2022/23	£99.99	£49.00
2023/24	£581.73	£285.05

Miramar Judo Academy Ltd

2022/23	£9,730.50	£4,767.95
2023/24	£11,190.08	£5,483.14

Unity Boxing Centre CIC

2022/23	£9,855.25	£4,829.07
2023/24	£11,333.54	£5,553.43

6.4 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.

6.5 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 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: -

	Named Officer	**Date**
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	01/09/23
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	29/08/23
Head of Legal Services (Deputy Monitoring Officer)	Bal Nahal	29/08/23

Report Author: *Rob Cutts – Head* of Service, Revenues, Benefits and Payments

01709 823320 or robert.cutts@rotherham.gov.uk

This report is published on the Council's website.

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Appendix 1

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 **Labre's Hope Community Interest Company** **Beacon South Yorkshire Limited** **Miramar Judo Academy Ltd** **Unity Boxing Centre CIC**	
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

Appendix 1

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? *(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)*		✓
Could the proposal affect service users? *(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)*		✓
Has there been or is there likely to be an impact on an individual or group with protected characteristics? *(Consider potential discrimination, harassment or victimisation of individuals with protected characteristics)*		✓
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns regarding the proposal? *(It is important that the Council is transparent and consultation is carried out with members of the public to help mitigate future challenge)*		✓
Could the proposal affect how the Council's services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom? *(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from commissioning or procurement)*		✓
Could the proposal affect the Council's workforce or employment practices? *(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from your HR business partner)*		✓
If you have answered no to all the questions above, please explain the reason		

Appendix 1

The recommendation in the report is to award discretionary relief to the organisations which will positively impact the organisation ensuring continuity of access to facilities, 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**

Appendix 1

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 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	2/8/2023
Report title and date	**New Applications for** Error! Reference source not found.
If relates to a Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision – report date and date sent for publication	
Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	8/8/2023

- Carbon Impact Assessments are to be appended to the associated cabinet reports
- Prior to publishing reports, Carbon Impact Assessments should be sent to climate@rotherham.gov.uk for feedback
- Report authors may also use the above email address to direct any further queries or to access further support regarding completing the assessment

Appendix 2

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]	Tracking Reference: CIA 123 Arthur King, Principal Climate Change Officer, Regeneration and Environment

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Public Report
Cabinet

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting
Cabinet - 18 September 2023

Report Title
Polling Districts and Polling Places Review 2023

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

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report
Sharon Kemp, Chief Executive

Report Author(s)
Mike Thomas, Electoral Services Manager
01709 823268 or Mike.thomas@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected
Borough-Wide

Report Summary
The purpose of this report is to provide Cabinet Members with information about the Statutory Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places that must take place within the 16-month window between 1 October 2023 and January 2025 and seek approval for the timetable.

Following the consultation, a recommendations report will be produced that will be reported to Cabinet. It is a function of Council to approve the Cabinet recommendations arising from the polling places review.

Recommendations

That Cabinet:

1. Note the information in this report regarding the scope of the review.

2. Approve the timetable for the review, as set out in Appendix 2.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 - Borough Wards by Current and New Parliamentary Constituencies
Appendix 2 - Review Timetable
Appendix 3 - Current Scheme
Appendix 4 - Main Changes Being Considered for The Review
Appendix 5 - Draft notice of review
Appendix 6 - Part A - Initial equality screening assessment form

Appendix 7 - Carbon impact Statement

Background Papers
Electoral Commission guidance on the review of polling districts and polling places

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

Council Approval Required
No

This consultation has been brought for Member information. Approval of the final report following public consultation is a function of Full Council.

Exempt from the Press and Public
No

Polling Districts and Polling Places Review 2023

1. Background

1.1 Under the Representation of the People Act 1983, the Council has a duty to divide its area into polling districts and to designate a polling place for each district.

1.2 The following definitions may be helpful when reading the report and Appendices:-

- "Polling districts" are geographical electoral areas into which wards and constituencies may be sub-divided.
- "Polling places" are the buildings or areas designated by the Council where electors in a polling district go to vote in person.
- "Polling stations" are the number of issuing desks in the building that is the designated polling place.

1.3 The Electoral Administration Act 2006, as amended, introduced a duty on all Local Authorities in Great Britain to review their polling districts and polling places at least once every five years. The Council undertook the last full review between October 2018 and December 2019. This review took into account changes to the Borough ward boundaries. The next review must take place within a 16-month window between 1 October 2023 and 25 January 2025.

1.4 Ward boundaries cannot be changed as part of this review. Ward and constituency boundaries are the responsibility of the Local Government and Parliamentary Boundary Commissions respectively. This review can only consider the internal boundaries of polling district within wards.

1.5 The Boundary Commission for England (BCE) have carried out a review of the Parliamentary constituencies in England and have submitted their recommendations report to the Speaker of the House of Commons on 27 June 2023. This will impact on the review of wards. The Government will draft an Order containing the recommendations for all four Parliamentary Boundary Commissions. Once that draft Order is approved by the Privy Council, the new constituencies will be used for the next General Election following that date. Any by-elections taking place beforehand would use the existing constituency boundaries.

1.6 Rotherham's review will consider the changes to the Parliamentary constituencies covering the Rotherham Council area, to ensure the polling districts and polling places allow for the smooth administration of local government and Parliamentary elections. The BCE recommendations for the new Parliamentary constituencies will mean the boundaries will be coterminous with ward boundaries, meaning there will not be any Borough wards split into different Parliamentary constituencies. This means it is not necessary to make changes to any polling district boundaries; it will just be necessary to reallocate whole polling districts from one constituency to another. The breakdown of Borough wards by current and new Parliamentary constituencies can be seen in Appendix 1.

1.7 The review will be governed by the provisions of Schedule 1A to the Representation of the People Act 1983 and follow the Electoral Commission guidance on the review of polling districts and polling places.

1.8 Preparation work is currently being undertaken by Council Officers to inform the Returning Officer's initial proposals ahead of public consultation.

2. Key Issues

2.1 Time to conduct the statutory review is severely restricted with scheduled elections and a Parliamentary General election due to take place within the 16-month review window. Due to the electoral events due to take place, it is necessary to conduct the review at the earliest opportunity in order to be in a position to prepare and administer the May 2024 schedule elections as well as the Parliamentary General election. The timetable for this review is set out in Appendix 2.

2.2 A small number of the current polling places will not be available in future or are no longer suitable, so alternatives must be sought. The main issues being considered in the development of the initial proposals are:

(a) Identifying new polling places in areas where the existing provision is unsuitable or unavailable.
(b) To consider, as appropriate, feedback received following recent elections raised by members of the public, Elected Members and other stakeholders.
(c) To ensure that any new polling places are accessible to people with disabilities.
(d) To ensure that all electors have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances.
(e) To try and minimise disruption to schools. It should be noted that the Returning Officer is entitled to use schools and academies free of charge. However, where alternative premises exist which can provide better facilities for voting, they may be considered.
(f) To ensure polling stations have sufficient space to allow for checking Voter ID in private.
(g) Ensuring that as far as possible, the number of polling station electors allocated to a polling station does not exceed 2,250.
(h) Consider the impact of new building developments on projected electorate numbers.

2.3 Due to the introduction of Voter ID requirements, the Electoral Commission has lowered the recommended maximum number of polling station electors that should be allocated to a polling station. The recommended maximum has reduced from 2,750 to 2,250. Currently seven polling districts exceed this new lower maximum and therefore changes will need to be considered as part of the review.

2.4 The existing polling scheme can be seen in Appendix 3. The main changes being considered for the Returning Officer's initial proposals can be seen in Appendix 4.

2.5 Following this initial assessment of the current issues and proposals of change, the process for designating new polling places should be robust and allow input from interested parties. There are five key stages in the review process.

2.5.1 Notification of the review - the Council will give public notice of the review, using the (draft) Notice attached at Appendix 5, and will publicise the review via the Council website, press releases and social media.

2.5.2 Consultation - As well as making details of the consultation available on the website, the consultation paper will be sent to Borough ward members, parish councillors, MPs, and local political parties. It will also be sent to any other interested persons or groups, including local disability groups.

2.5.3 Concluding the review - All representations will be considered, and a further report will be brought to Cabinet and Council with final proposals for determination.

2.5.4 Publishing the conclusion of the review - The final decisions will be published, along with the reasons for those decisions and along with all representations received during the consultation period.

2.5.5 Appeals process - Certain persons, on specific grounds, can appeal to the Electoral Commission about the alteration of polling places. Further detail will be provided in the next paper.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

3.1 Option 1 - This is the recommended Option. Carry out a full review as early as possible and complete in time for 1 December 2023 register publication. This option would allow the review to be completed in plenty of time for the scheduled May 2024 elections and before the next Parliamentary General election, which will be based on the new Parliamentary constituency boundaries. Whilst it can't be ruled out, in the current political climate, it is unlikely the next General Election would be called in 2023.

3.2 Option 2 - Carry out the full review in time to republish the Electoral Register on 1 February 2024. Whilst providing more time to conduct the review, re-publishing the register close to the scheduled local elections in May 2024 will pose a significant risk to the planning and delivery of the election, particularly with these elections being the first with Voter ID requirements. There is also an increased risk that the review would not be completed in time, should the next Parliamentary General election be called in the first four months of 2024.

3.3 Option 3 - Carry out a full review after the May 2024 elections. This option would carry an increased risk that the review is not completed in time for the next Parliamentary General election, which would be based on the new constituency boundaries.

3.4 It is recommended that Option 1 is followed as it has the least risk in terms of impacting on the planning and delivery of the schedule local elections in May 2024. It will also mean the Rotherham Electoral Register will reflect the new Parliamentary constituency boundaries at the earliest opportunity in readiness for administering the next General Election.

3.5 The recommendation of Option 1 is reinforced by the Electoral Commission's advice to undertake and complete the review as early in the compulsory period as possible, due to the Parliamentary boundary changes and the uncertainty of when the next General Election will take place.

4. Consultation on proposal

4.1 As outlined in paragraph 2.5 (2), certain stakeholders will be consulted directly. The review will be widely publicised, and any elector will be entitled to respond.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

5.1 An outline timetable for the review is given at Appendix 2, commencing with the notice of review on 2 October 2023. The work involves seeking comments on the existing arrangements and initial proposals for change, preparing final proposals, Council determination of the final proposals, publishing the conclusions and altering the electoral register as required.

5.2 The Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 provides for decisions on polling districts and places to be made by the Council.

5.3 The Assistant Director for Legal Services will be responsible for implementing the decisions.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

6.1 The cost of conducting the review will be funded from within the existing Electoral Services budget. The cost of local elections is approved as part of the Council's Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy. Other elections are funded by Central Government.

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

7. Legal Advice and Implications

7.1 The Council has a legal duty to review polling districts and polling places, as described in this report. The legislative framework for reviews of polling districts and places consists of: (i) sections 18A to 18E and Schedule A1 of the Representation of the People Act 1983, as inserted by section 16 of the Electoral Administration Act 2006; (ii) section 17 of the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 introduced a change to the timing of compulsory reviews.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

8.1 None arising directly from this report.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

9.1 None arising directly from this report.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 The Council must seek to ensure that, so far as is reasonable and practical, every polling place for which it is responsible is accessible to people who are disabled. Provision of reasonably convenient polling arrangements is an essential element of the free and fair elections required under Protocol 1, Article 3 of the Human Rights Act. The Initial Equality Screening Assessment can be found at Appendix 6.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

11.1 There are some unavoidable, but limited implications on CO2 emissions and climate change. The carbon impact assessment can be seen in Appendix 7.

12. Implications for Partners

12.1. None arising directly from this report, but partners and other directorates will be engaged as appropriate through the consultation.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 Polling places are essential for the conduct of elections. Inadequate provision of polling places and polling stations could have a detrimental effect on voter turnout and could be the source of an election challenge.

13.2 The Council's Constitution allows for the Returning Officer to make temporary short notice changes to the designated polling places, should a premises be unavailable for a particular election. However, any permanent changes would require a review to be conducted.

14. Accountable Officers

Phil Horsfield, Assistant Director of Legal Services

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	**Date**
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	04/09/23
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	29/08/23
Head of Legal Services (Deputy Monitoring Officer)	Bal Nahal	29/08/23

Report Author: *Mike Thomas, Electoral Services Manager*
01709 823268 or Mike.thomas@rotherham.gov.uk

This report is published on the Council's website.

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Appendix 1 – Borough wards by current and new Parliamentary constituency

Current Parliamentary Constituencies

Rother Valley	Rotherham	Wentworth & Dearne
Anston & Woodsetts	Boston Castle	Bramley & Ravenfield *(all but BRA polling district)*
Aston & Todwick	Brinsworth	Dalton & Thrybergh *(DAA & DAB polling districts)*
Aughton & Swallownest	Dalton & Thrybergh *(all but DAA & DAB polling districts)*	Hoober
Bramley & Ravenfield *(BRA polling district)*	Greasbrough	Kilnhurst & Swinton East
Dinnington	Keppel	Rawmarsh East
Hellaby & Maltby West	Rother Vale *(RVA & RVB polling districts)*	Rawmarsh West
Maltby East	Rotherham East	Swinton Rockingham
Rother Vale *(RVC & RVD polling districts)*	Rotherham West	Wath
Sitwell *(all but SIH polling district)*	Sitwell *(SIH polling district)*	Wickersley North *(all but WYB & WYC polling districts)*
Thurcroft & Wickerlsey South	Wickersley North *(WYB & WYC polling districts)*	Dearne North *(Take on from Barnsley MBC)*
Wales		Dearne South *(Take on from Barnsley MBC)*

New Parliamentary Constituencies

Rother Valley	Rotherham	Rawmarsh & Conisbrough
Anston & Woodsetts	Boston Castle	Bramley & Ravenfield
Aston & Todwick	Brinsworth	Hoober
Aughton & Swallownest	Dalton & Thrybergh	Kilnhurst & Swinton East
Dinnington	Greasbrough	Rawmarsh East
Hellaby & Maltby West	Keppel	Rawmarsh West
Maltby East	Rother Vale	Swinton Rockingham
Sitwell	Rotherham East	Wath
Thurcroft & Wickersley South	Rotherham West	Conisbrough *(Take on from Doncaster MBC)*
Wales	Wickersley North	Edlington & Warmsworth *(Take on from Doncaster MBC)*

Appendix 2 – Review Timetable

Review of Polling Places 2023 – Timetable	
Preliminary review work	July-September 2023
Briefing on the review to Cabinet	Monday 18 September 2023
Notice of Review published and elected members, MPs and Parish Clerks notified	Monday 2 October 2023
Commencement of Consultation on current provision and proposed changes	Monday 2 October 2023
End of Consultation	Monday 30 October 2023
Consider comments and if necessary revise proposals	Ongoing and completed by Tuesday 31 October 2023
Final proposals published via Agenda papers and website	6 November 2023
Cabinet Meeting	20 November 2023
Council Agenda published	21 November 2023
Council meeting – approval of polling district and polling place scheme	29 November 2023
Publication of review result	30 November 2023
Publish Electoral Register on new wards and polling districts	1 December 2023
Borough, Parish and Police & Crime Commissioner elections using new polling districts and polling places scheme	Thursday 2 May 2024
Parliamentary General election on new constituency boundaries and new polling districts and polling places scheme.	By January 2025

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Appendix 3 – Existing Polling District and Polling Station Scheme

ROTHER VALLEY CONSTITUENCY		
Borough Ward	**Polling District**	**Polling Place**
Anston & Woodsetts	ANA Greenlands	Anston Greenlands Primary School, Edinburgh Drive, North Anston, Sheffield, S25 4HD
Anston & Woodsetts	ANB Whitegate	Anston Park Junior School, Park Avenue, North Anston, Sheffield, S25 2QZ
Anston & Woodsetts	ANC Anston Brook	Anston Parish Hall, 15A Ryton Road, North Anston, Sheffield, S25 4DL
Anston & Woodsetts	AND South Anston	South Anston Methodist Community Hall, Sheffield Road, South Anston, Sheffield, S25 5DW
Anston & Woodsetts	ANE Woodsetts	Woodsetts Village Hall, Gildingwells Road, Woodsetts, Worksop, S81 8QB
Anston & Woodsetts	ANF Park Avenue	Anston Park Junior School, Park Avenue, North Anston, Sheffield, S25 2QZ
Anston & Woodsetts	ANG Thorpe Salvin	Harthill Village Hall, Winney Hill, Harthill, Sheffield, S26 7YL
Aston & Todwick	ASA Rose Garth	Aston-cum-Aughton Parish Hall, Rosegarth Avenue, Aston, Sheffield, S26 2DB
Aston & Todwick	ASB Aston Park	Aston Hall Junior & Infant School, Church Lane, Aston, Sheffield, S26 2AX
Aston & Todwick	ASC Lodge Lane	Aston Lodge Primary School, Lodge Lane, Aston, Sheffield, S26 2BL
Aston & Todwick	ASD Todwick	Todwick Village Hall, Kiveton Lane, Todwick, Sheffield, S26 1HJ
Aughton & Swallownest	AUA Springwood	Aston-cum-Aughton Parish Hall, Rosegarth Avenue, Aston, Sheffield, S26 2DB
Aughton & Swallownest	AUB Orgreave	Aston Fence J&I School, Sheffield Road, Woodhouse Mill, Sheffield, S13 9ZD
Aughton & Swallownest	AUC Wetherby	Swallownest Community Centre, Rotherham Road, Swallownest, Sheffield, S26 4UR
Aughton & Swallownest	AUD Fence	Aston Fence J&I School, Sheffield Road, Woodhouse Mill, Sheffield, S13 9ZD
Aughton & Swallownest	AUE Ulley	Ulley Village Hall, Main Street, Ulley, Sheffield, S26 3YD
Aughton & Swallownest	AUF Swallownest	Swallownest Community Centre, Rotherham Road, Swallownest, Sheffield, S26 4UR
Aughton & Swallownest	AUG Aughton	Aughton Early Years Centre, Main Street, Aughton, Sheffield, S26 3XH
Bramley & Ravenfield	BRA Flash Lane	Bramley Youth Centre, Flash Lane, Bramley, Rotherham, S66 1TS
Dinnington	DIA Laughton-en-le-Morthen	Laughton Village Hall, Firbeck Avenue, Laughton-en-le-Morthen, Sheffield, S25 1YD
Dinnington	DIB Laughton Common	Monksbridge Community Centre, Monksbridge Road, Dinnington, Sheffield, S25 3QS
Dinnington	DIC Monksbridge	Monksbridge Community Centre, Monksbridge Road, Dinnington, Sheffield, S25 3QS
Dinnington	DID Lordens	Dinnington Resource Centre, Laughton Road, Dinnington, Sheffield, S25 2PS
Dinnington	DIE	St Joseph's RC Church Hall,

ROTHER VALLEY CONSTITUENCY		
Borough Ward	**Polling District**	**Polling Place**
	St Leonards	Swinston Hill Road, Dinnington, Sheffield, S25 2RX
Dinnington	DIF Gildingwells	Woodsetts Village Hall, Gildingwells Road, Woodsetts, Worksop, S81 8QB
Dinnington	DIG Letwell	Letwell Village Hall, Barker Hades Road, Letwell, Worksop, S81 8DF
Dinnington	DIH Firbeck	Firbeck Village Hall, New Road, Firbeck, Worksop, S81 8JY
Hellaby & Maltby West	HEA Hellaby	Centenary Hall, Bateman Road, Hellaby, Rotherham, S66 8HB
Hellaby & Maltby West	HEB Addison Road	Hilltop School, Larch Road, Maltby, Rotherham, S66 8AZ
Hellaby & Maltby West	HEC Braithwell Road West	Maltby Linx Youth Centre, Lilly Hall Road, Maltby, Rotherham, S66 8BE
Hellaby & Maltby West	HED St Bartholomews	The Grange Neighbourhood Centre, St Bartholomew's Close, Maltby, Rotherham, S66 8NH
Hellaby & Maltby West	HEE Hooton Levitt	The Grange Neighbourhood Centre, St Bartholomew's Close, Maltby, Rotherham, S66 8NH
Maltby East	MAA Braithwell Road East	Maltby Manor Academy School, Davy Drive, Maltby, Rotherham, S66 8JN
Maltby East	MAB Maltby Market	The Wesley Centre, Blyth Road, Maltby, Rotherham, S66 8JD
Maltby East	MAC Maltby Wood	Edward Dunn Memorial Hall, Tickhill Road, Maltby, Rotherham, S66 7NQ
Maltby East	MAD Queens	Maltby St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Muglet Lane, Maltby, Rotherham, S66 7JU
Maltby East	MAE Maltby Craggs	Ascension Close Neighbourhood Centre, Ascension Close, Maltby, Rotherham, S66 7HQ
Maltby East	MAF Highfield Park	Charles Foster Community Centre, Woodland Gardens, Maltby, Rotherham, S66 7NW
Rother Vale	RVC Treeton	Treeton Village Community & Resource Centre, Pit Lane, Treeton, Rotherham, S60 5UY
Rother Vale	RVD Waverley South	AMP Technology Centre, Brunel Way, Catcliffe, Rotherham, S60 5WG
Sitwell	SIA Stag	Herringthorpe United Reformed Church, Wickersley Road, Rotherham, S60 4JN
Sitwell	SIB St Cuthberts	St Cuthberts Church Hall, Bent Lathes Avenue, Rotherham, S60 4BN
Sitwell	SIC Broom	Broom Methodist Church, Broom Lane, Rotherham, S60 3NW
Sitwell	SID Sitwell	Newman Additional Resource (next to Newman School) East Bawtry Road, Whiston, Rotherham, S60 3LX
Sitwell	SIE Hungerhill	Whiston J&I School, Saville Road, Whiston, Rotherham, S60 4DX
Sitwell	SIF Worry Goose	Whiston Worry Goose J&I School, Hall Close Avenue, Whiston, Rotherham, S60 4AG
Sitwell	SIG	Whiston Parish Hall, Well Lane, Whiston,

ROTHER VALLEY CONSTITUENCY		
Borough Ward	**Polling District**	**Polling Place**
	Whiston Brook	Rotherham, S60 4HX
Thurcroft & Wickersley South	THA Wickersley	The Church Barn, Church Lane, Wickersley, Rotherham, S66 1ES
Thurcroft & Wickersley South	THB Thurcroft	Gordon Bennett Memorial Hall, Green Arbour Road, Thurcroft, Rotherham, S66 9DD
Wales	WAA Harthill-with-Woodall	Harthill Village Hall, Winney Hill, Harthill, Sheffield, S26 7YL
Wales	WAB Wales	Wales-Kiveton Methodist Church, School Road, Wales, Sheffield, S26 5QJ
Wales	WAC Kiveton Park	Old Colliery Offices (training room), Colliery Road, Kiveton Park, Sheffield, S26 6LR
Wales	WAD Walesmoor	Kiveton Park & Wales Village Hall, Walesmoor Avenue, Kiveton Park, Sheffield, S26 5RF
Wales	WAE Peregrine Way	Peregrine Way Neighbourhood Centre, Peregrine Way, Harthill, Sheffield, S26 7UP
Wales	WAF Viking Way	Viking Way Neighbourhood Centre, Viking Way, Kiveton Park, Sheffield, S26 6RX

ROTHERHAM CONSTITUENCY		
Borough Ward	**Polling District**	**Polling Place**
Boston Castle	BCA St Anns	MyPlace Rotherham, St Ann's Road, Rotherham, S65 1PH
Boston Castle	BCB Feoffees	Talbot Lane Methodist Church, Moorgate Street, Rotherham, S60 2EY
Boston Castle	BCC Park	United Methodist Church Clifton, Lister Street, Rotherham, S65 2AX
Boston Castle	BCD Clifton	Beeversleigh Community Centre, Clifton Lane, Rotherham, S65 2AD
Boston Castle	BCE Broom Valley	Broom Valley Club Room, Guest Place, Rotherham, S60 2SE
Boston Castle	BCF Oakwood	Boston Castle, Boston Castle Grove, Rotherham, S60 2BA
Boston Castle	BCG Canklow	Canklow Woods Primary School, Wood Lane, Rotherham, S60 2XJ
Boston Castle	BCH Parkfield	Garden Building, Clifton Park, Clifton Lane, Rotherham, S65 2AA
Boston Castle	BCI Alma	The Hub, 103 Canklow Road, Rotherham, S60 2JF
Brinsworth	BWA Phoenix	Rotherham West Community Centre, Brinsford Road, Brinsworth, Rotherham, S60 5DT
Brinsworth	BWB Manor	The Centre, Brinsworth Lane, Brinsworth, Rotherham, S60 5BU
Brinsworth	BWC Howarth	Brinsworth Howarth Primary School, Whitehill Lane, Brinsworth, Rotherham, S60 5JR
Brinsworth	BWD Howlett	Brinsworth Whitehill Primary School, Howlett Drive, Brinsworth, Rotherham, S60 5HT
Brinsworth	BWE Bonet Lane	St Andrews Church, Bonet Lane, Brinsworth, Rotherham, S60 5NF
Dalton & Thrybergh	DAC Whinney Hill	Thrybergh Parish Hall, Park Lane, Thrybergh, Rotherham, S65 4BP

ROTHERHAM CONSTITUENCY		
Borough Ward	**Polling District**	**Polling Place**
Dalton & Thrybergh	DAD Foljambe	Dalton Willow Tree Children's Centre, Foljambe Drive, Dalton, Rotherham, S65 4HQ
Dalton & Thrybergh	DAE Dalton Parva	Trinity Croft CE J&I School (Parish Room), Dalton Lane, Dalton Parva, Rotherham, S65 3QJ
Dalton & Thrybergh	DAF Dalton Brook	Dalton Parish Hall, Doncaster Road, Dalton, Rotherham, S65 3EW
Dalton & Thrybergh	DAG East Herringthorpe	High Greave Junior School (Sports Hall), High Greave Road, Rotherham, S65 3LZ
Greasbrough	GRA Greasbrough	Greasbrough Primary School, Munsborough Rise, Rotherham, S61 4RB
Greasbrough	GRB Rockingham	Rockingham Professional Development Centre, Roughwood Road, Rotherham, S61 4HY
Greasbrough	GRC Wingfield	Youth Centre, Wingfield Academy, Wingfield Road, Rotherham, S61 4AU
Keppel	KEA Thorpe Hesley	Trinity Community Centre, Sough Hall Avenue, Thorpe Hesley, Rotherham, S61 2QJ
Keppel	KEB Scholes	Scholes Cricket Pavilion, Scholes Village, Rotherham, S61 2RQ
Keppel	KEC Roughwood	Roughwood Primary School, Roughwood Road, Rotherham, S61 3HL
Keppel	KED Redscope	Chislett Centre, Kimberworth Park Road, Rotherham, S61 3JT
Keppel	KEE Kimberworth Park	St John's Church, St John's Green, Rotherham, S61 3JL
Keppel	KEF Keppel	ArtWorks Community Centre, Brook Hill, Thorpe Hesley, Rotherham, S61 2QF
Rotherham East	ROEA Milton	Eastwood Village Community Centre (Zone 2) Erskine Road, Rotherham, S65 1RF
Rotherham East	ROEB St Stephens	The Unity Centre, St Leonards Road, Rotherham, S65 1PD
Rotherham East	ROEC St James	St James Vestry (St Francis Room), Cambridge Street, Rotherham, S65 2SX
Rotherham East	ROED Badsley Moor	Rotherham Baptist Church Hall, Badsley Moor Lane, Rotherham, S65 2QR
Rotherham East	ROEE Mowbray Gardens	Mowbray Gardens Community Centre, Mowbray Gardens, Rotherham, S65 2UH
Rotherham East	ROEF Eastwood View	Springwell Gardens Community Centre, Eastwood View, Rotherham, S65 1NH
Rotherham East	ROEG Eastwood	The Place Young Peoples Centre (next to Coleridge Primary School), Coleridge Road, Rotherham, S65 1LW
Rotherham East	ROEH Bakersfield	Bakersfield Neighbourhood Centre, Longfellow Drive, Rotherham, S65 2LH
Rotherham East	ROEI Chaucer	St Mary's Catholic Church (parish room), Herringthorpe Valley Road, Rotherham, S65 3BA
Rotherham East	ROEJ Shenstone	Herringthorpe Infants School, Chatterton Drive, Rotherham, S65 2JW
Rotherham West	ROWA Toll Bar	St Thomas Community Hall, High Street, Rotherham, S61 2BH
Rotherham West	ROWB Blackburn	Blackburn Primary School, Baring Road, Blackburn, Rotherham, S61 2BU
Rotherham West	ROWC	Meadow View Primary School, (Community

ROTHERHAM CONSTITUENCY		
Borough Ward	**Polling District**	**Polling Place**
	Kimberworth	Room) Meadowhall Road, Rotherham, S61 2JD
Rotherham West	ROWD Kelford	Kelford School, Oakdale Road, Rotherham, S61 2NU
Rotherham West	ROWE Holmes	Ferham Primary School, Ferham Road, Rotherham, S61 1AP
Rotherham West	ROWF Henley Grove	Henley Neighbourhood Centre, Oates Close, Rotherham, S61 1TP
Rotherham West	ROWG Thornhill	Thornhill Primary School, Clough Bank, Rotherham, S61 1TD
Rotherham West	ROWH Millmoor	Masbrough & Thornhill Community Centre, College Road, Rotherham, S60 1JE
Rotherham West	ROWI Bradgate	Kimberworth Community Primary School, Kimberworth Road, Rotherham, S61 1HE
Rother Vale	RVA Catcliffe	Catcliffe Memorial Hall, Old School Lane, Catcliffe, Rotherham, S60 5SP
Rother Vale	RVB Waverley North	AMP Technology Centre, Brunel Way, Catcliffe, Rotherham, S60 5WG
Sitwell	SIH St Bernards	St Bernards Catholic High School, Herringthorpe Valley Road, Rotherham, S65 3BE
Wickersley North	WYB Woodlaithes	Sunnyside Community Centre, Flanderwell Lane, Sunnyside, Rotherham, S66 3RL
Wickersley North	WYC Brecks	Listerdale Primary School, Beech Avenue, Brecks, Rotherham, S65 3HN

WENTWORTH and DEARNE CONSTITUENCY		
Borough Ward	**Polling District**	**Polling Place**
Bramley & Ravenfield	BRB Belvedere	Bramley Parish Hall, Cross Street, Bramley, Rotherham, S66 2SA
Bramley & Ravenfield	BRC Bramley North	Bramley Parish Hall, Cross Street, Bramley, Rotherham, S66 2SA
Bramley & Ravenfield	BRD Ravenfield	Ravenfield Parish Hall, Birchwood Drive, Ravenfield, Rotherham, S65 4PT
Bramley & Ravenfield	BRE Hooton Roberts	Thrybergh Parish Hall, Park Lane, Thrybergh, Rotherham, S65 4BP
Bramley & Ravenfield	BRF Bramley Grange	Bramley Grange Primary School (The Grange Zone), Howard Road, Bramley, Rotherham, S66 2SY
Dalton & Thrybergh	DAA Fullerton	Thrybergh Parish Hall, Park Lane, Thrybergh, Rotherham, S65 4BP
Dalton & Thrybergh	DAB Reresby	Staple Green Neighbourhood Centre, Staple Green, Thrybergh, Rotherham, S65 4DA
Hoober	HOA	Brampton Bierlow Parish Hall, Knollbeck Lane,

WENTWORTH and DEARNE CONSTITUENCY		
Borough Ward	**Polling District**	**Polling Place**
	Brampton Bierlow	Brampton Bierlow, Barnsley, S73 0TX
Hoober	HOB Hoober	Wentworth Mechanics Institute, Main Street, Wentworth, Rotherham, S62 7TL
Hoober	HOC Oaklea	West Melton Primary School, Stokewell Road, Wath upon Dearne, Rotherham, S63 6NF
Hoober	HOD West Melton	Christchurch Hall, Christchurch Road, Wath upon Dearne, Rotherham, S63 6NW
Hoober	HOE Wentworth	Wentworth Mechanics Institute, Main Street, Wentworth, Rotherham, S62 7TL
Hoober	HOF Harley	Harley Church, Harley Road, Harley, Rotherham, S62 7UD
Hoober	HOG Barley Hole	Trinity Community Centre, Sough Hall Avenue, Thorpe Hesley, Rotherham, S61 2QJ
Hoober	HOH Nether Haugh	Wentworth Mechanics Institute, Main Street, Wentworth, Rotherham, S62 7TL
Hoober	HOI Manvers	Wath upon Dearne RUFC Clubhouse, Moor Road, Wath upon Dearne, Rotherham, S63 7RT
Kilnhurst & Swinton East	KIA Kilnhurst	Kilnhurst Community Resource Centre, Victoria Street, Kilnhurst, Mexborough, S64 5SQ
Kilnhurst & Swinton East	KIB Brookfield	The Brookfield Centre, Lime Grove, Swinton, Mexborough, S64 8TQ
Kilnhurst & Swinton East	KIC Highthorn	St Thomas CE Primary School, Meadow View Road, Kilnhurst, Mexborough, S64 5UA
Kilnhurst & Swinton East	KID Piccadilly	Piccadilly Methodist Church, Wentworth Road, Swinton, Mexborough, S64 8JZ
Rawmarsh East	RAEA Roundwood	Rawmarsh Customer Service Centre, Barbers Avenue, Rotherham, S62 6AA
Rawmarsh East	RAEB Ryecroft	Rawmarsh Ryecroft Infants School, South Street, Rawmarsh, Rotherham, S62 5QW
Rawmarsh East	RAEC Marshall Close	Marshall Close Neighbourhood Centre, Marshall Close, Rawmarsh, Rotherham, S62 6DB
Rawmarsh East	RAED Sandhill	Rawmarsh Sandhill Primary School, Kilnhurst Road, Rawmarsh, Rotherham, S62 5LH
Rawmarsh West	RAWA Upper Haugh	Manor Farm Community Centre, Harding Avenue, Upper Haugh, Rotherham, S62 7ED
Rawmarsh West	RAWB Monkwood	Monkwood Primary Academy, Monkwood Road, Rawmarsh, Rotherham, S62 7JD
Rawmarsh West	RAWC Rosehill	Salvation Army Hall, Quarry Street, Rawmarsh, Rotherham, S62 7DB
Rawmarsh West	RAWD Rockliffe	Rawmarsh Methodist Church, High Street, Rawmarsh, Rotherham, S62 6LN
Rawmarsh West	RAWE Ashwood	Rawmarsh Ashwood Primary School, Ashwood Road, Parkgate, Rotherham, S62 6HT
Swinton Rockingham	SWA Rookery	Swinton Fitzwilliam Primary School, Broadway, Swinton, Mexborough, S64 8HF
Swinton Rockingham	SWB Bow Broom	Swinton Queen Primary School, Queen Street, Swinton, Mexborough, S64 8NE
Swinton Rockingham	SWC Harrop	Swinton Civic Hall, Station Street, Swinton, Mexborough, S64 8PZ
Swinton	SWD	Swinton Fitzwilliam Primary School, Broadway,

WENTWORTH and DEARNE CONSTITUENCY		
Borough Ward	**Polling District**	**Polling Place**
Rockingham	Racecourse	Swinton, Mexborough, S64 8HF
Wath	WHA Montgomery	Wath Community Library, Montgomery Square, Wath, Rotherham, S63 7RZ
Wath	WHB Sandygate	The Base Community Hub, Fir Close, Wath, Rotherham, S63 7NU
Wath	WHC Sandymount	St Joseph's Catholic Church Hall, Carr Road, Wath upon Dearne, Rotherham, S63 7AA
Wath	WHD Newhill	Newhill Chapel, Varney Road, Wath upon Dearne, Rotherham, S63 7HS
Wath	WHE South Manvers	Wath upon Dearne RUFC Clubhouse, Moor Road, Wath upon Dearne, S63 7RT
Wickersley North	WYA Jenkin Wood	Sunnyside Community Centre, Flanderwell Lane, Sunnyside, Rotherham, S66 3RL
Wickersley North	WYD Flanderwell	Flanderwell Early Excellence Centre, Flanderwell Primary School, Greenfield Court, Flanderwell, Rotherham, S66 2JF
Wickersley North	WYE Sunnyside	Sunnyside Community Centre, Flanderwell Lane, Sunnyside, Rotherham, S66 3RL
Wickersley North	WYF Bramley West	Bramley Parish Hall, Cross Street, Bramley, Rotherham, S66 2SA
Wickersley North	WYG Northfield	Blessed Trinity Catholic Church, Northfield Lane, Wickersley, Rotherham, S66 2HF

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Appendix 4 - Main changes being considered

Considerations for physical changes

Ward	Polling District	Current polling place	Electorate	Station electorate	Issues being considered
Boston Castle	BCA	Myplace Rotherham	461	386	New owners do not wish the premises to be used in future. Alternative premises are being investigated.
Boston Castle	BCG	Canklow Woods Primary School	708	607	Consider changing the polling district boundary to include properties currently in BCI polling district (See comments for BCI)
Boston Castle	BCI	The Hub	519	443	The Hub is no longer available for use. Given the close proximity and low electorate numbers, consideration given to merging BCI into BCG (using Canklow Woods Primary School) or alternatively, splitting BCI across the different neighbouring polling districts.
Bramley & Ravenfield	BRC	Bramley Parish Hall	345	246	Bramley Parish Hall is the polling place for BRB, BRC and WYF. Due to the need for social distancing in 2021 and 2022, BRC polling district was temporarily relocated to St Francis Church, which is just across the road from the parish hall. There were no issues in 2021 or 2022, therefore it is proposed that St Francis Church becomes the polling place for BRC.
Bramley & Ravenfield	BRF	The Zone, Bramley Grange School	1260	901	School requested not to be used in 2021 due to COVID. St Francis Church, whilst just outside the polling district, but in the ward, was used in 2021 and 2022 without any issues. Propose to make St Francis Church the polling place for BRF.

Greasbrough	GRC	Youth Centre, Wingfield Academy	1283	981	The Youth Centre is no longer available; therefore, the main school would have to be used. The School have requested not to be used, if an alternative can be found. Alterative options are being investigated, which includes the Community Centre on Nidderdale Road.
Hellaby & Maltby West	HEB	Hilltop School	3464	2607	Station electorate exceeds the new maximum number of electors. Usually has two issuing desks and two ballot boxes. Polling district to be split into two polling districts. Added to this, it is not possible to use the school main building due to the impact on the SEN pupils if the school closed. Therefore, only a Portakabin is available for use. The Portakabin is not big enough, especially when considering the additional space required for voter ID privacy checks. An alternative is being investigated, which includes Redwood School and Lilly Hall School.
Maltby East	MAF	Charles Foster Community Centre	588	480	Owners have not wished for the premises to be used since 2021. Temporarily used Edward Dunn Community Centre, which is already used for MAC, in 2021 and 2022 without issues. Due to the low electorate figure, consideration is given to merging MAF with MAC.
Rotherham West	ROWH	Masbrough & Thornhill Community Centre	611	522	Taken over by Sea Cadets who do not wish the premises to be used. Utilised Liberty Church in 2022 without any issues. Propose to make Liberty Church permanent polling place for the polling district.

Rother Vale	RVB	AMP Technology Centre	815	666	The size of the room used at AMP is quite small and the electorate is increasing. The premises is also away from the residential properties. Investigating the potential of using Waverley School. Currently RVB and RVD are in different constituencies, but will be in the same constituency under the new boundaries. Therefore consideration could be given to merging the polling districts, as they are the in the same unwarded parish. However, the electorate would be close to the maximum, which could be exceeded should the population continue to increase.
Rother Vale	RVD	AMP Technology Centre	1725	1413	
Wickersley North	WYA	Sunnyside Community Centre	955	733	WYA and WYB are in the same polling place and have low electorates. Currently separate as the two polling districts are in different Parliamentary constituencies. They will be in the same constituency under the new boundaries. Therefore WYA & WYB could be combined to become one polling district.
Wickersley North	WYB	Sunnyside Community Centre	487	381	

Considerations for administrative changes which do not impact electors

Ward	Polling District	Current polling place	Electorate	Station electorate	Issues being considered
Boston Castle	BCE	Broom Valley Club Room	3435	2577	Station electorate exceeds the new maximum number of electors. Usually has two issuing desks and two ballot boxes. Polling district to be split into two polling districts. Both polling districts to use the existing polling place.
Dinnington	DID	Dinnington Resource Centre	3408	2617	Station electorate exceeds the new maximum number of electors. Usually has two issuing desks and two ballot boxes. Polling district to be split into two polling districts. Both polling districts to use the existing polling place.

Greasbrough	GRA	Greasbrough Primary School	2960	2313	Station electorate exceeds the new maximum number of electors. Usually has two issuing desks and two ballot boxes. Polling district to be split into two polling districts. Both polling districts to use the existing polling place.
Hoober	HOA	Brampton Bierlow Parish Hall	3546	2805	Station electorate exceeds the new maximum number of electors. Usually has two issuing desks and two ballot boxes. Polling district to be split into two polling districts. Both polling districts to use the existing polling place.
Keppel	KEE	St John's Church	3688	2863	Station electorate exceeds the new maximum number of electors. Usually has two issuing desks and two ballot boxes. Polling district to be split into two polling districts. Both polling districts to use the existing polling place.
Thurcroft & Wickersley South	THB	Gordon Bennett Memorial Hall	4348	3524	Station electorate exceeds the new maximum number of electors. Usually has two issuing desks and two ballot boxes. Polling district to be split into two polling districts. Both polling districts to use the existing polling place.

Appendix 5

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

ROTHERHAM METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

Notice of Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council is carrying out a review of polling districts and polling places in the Borough.

This is in accordance with the requirements of section 18C of the Representation of the People Act 1983.

Details of the current arrangements and the Returning Officer's proposals for changes can be viewed:

- on the Council's website at www.rotherham.gov.uk/elections
- at the Customer Service Centre, Riverside House, Main Street, Rotherham
- at Aston Library & Neighbourhood Hub, Worksop Road, Aston
- at Maltby Library and Neighbourhood Hub, Braithwell Road, Maltby
- at Wath Library, Montgomery Square, Wath
- at Dinnington Library and Neighbourhood Hub, Laughton Road, Dinnington
- at Rawmarsh Library & Neighbourhood Hub, Barbers Avenue, Rotherham

Any registered elector may make representations on the current and proposed arrangements. We welcome comments and suggestions from anyone who has expertise in access for people with any type of disability.

Where possible, people making representations should suggest alternative places that may be used as polling places.

Representations should be made in writing by no later than **Monday 30 October 2023** to Electoral Services by using the online form on the Council's Website, or by post to Riverside House, Main Street, Rotherham S60 1AE, or by email to electoral.services@rotherham.gov.uk.

The results of the review will be published by the Council in November 2023 and will be available for inspection on the Council's Website and the above-mentioned offices. Persons or groups making submissions need to be aware that, upon completion of the review, all correspondence/representations received must by law, also be published.

Dated 2 October 2023

Sharon Kemp, Chief Executive

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Appendix 6

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: Polling District and Polling Places Review 2023	
Directorate: Finance & Customer Services	**Service area:** Electoral Services
Lead person: Mike Thomas	**Contact:** Mike.thomas@rotherham.gov.uk 01709 823 268
Is this a: ☐ **Strategy / Policy** ☐ **Service / Function** ☒ **Other** **If other, please specify:** Statutory public consultation	

2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening
The Council has a statutory duty to carry out a review of its Parliamentary polling districts and polling places between 1 October 2023 and 31 January 2025. A polling district is a small electoral area with a clearly defined boundary. A polling place is a building, plot of land or area within a polling district which is designated as the location for polling to take place. A polling station is a room within the designated building, or, for example, a portable building on a designated plot of land. This review involves public consultation where interested parties can make representations about an electoral area, or polling station. Examples of this could be a proposal to include a newly built housing estate in an existing polling district, which would allow electors easier access to polling.

When carrying out the review, regard must be given to the Electoral Commission's Polling place reviews guidance, which includes the consideration of accessibility issues.

Following the review, the final recommendations must go to Full Council for approval.

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? *(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)*	x	
Could the proposal affect service users? *(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)*	x	
Has there been or is there likely to be an impact on an individual or group with protected characteristics? *(Consider potential discrimination, harassment or victimisation of individuals with protected characteristics)*	x	
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns regarding the proposal? *(It is important that the Council is transparent and consultation is carried out with members of the public to help mitigate future challenge)*	x	
Could the proposal affect how the Council's services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom? *(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from commissioning or procurement)*	x	
Could the proposal affect the Council's workforce or employment practices? *(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from your HR business partner)*		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 review will affect all eligible electors in Rotherham who are registered to vote and are of voting age (18 or over).

The main element of the review relating to equality is the location of polling stations and the accessibility of the premises designated for polling. The primary considerations for a review of this type are set in electoral law:

- The Council must seek to ensure that all electors have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances; and
- The Council must seek to ensure that so far as is reasonable and practicable every polling place is accessible to electors who are disabled.

It is important to ensure access to the consultation process is available to everyone, and support is provided to those who may requiring assistance to respond.

The current polling station arrangements have been designated following a polling district review in 2018 ahead of the implementation of new borough ward boundaries that came into force in May 2021.

At each major election, the Returning Officer employs Polling Station Inspectors (PSI's) to visit each polling station. Part of the PSI's duties is to inspect each polling station and provide feedback to the Returning Officer in relation to access for disabled people. We will also be considering complaints/comments received from electors in relation to their polling station which have been made as a result of elections in 2021 and 2022.

We will be publishing a notice of the review which will inform all interested parties of how and when to make representations, and what will happen at each step of the process.

The notice will be published in on the Council website and in Riverside House. Direct communication will be sent to inform relevant and interested parties of the review including Borough Councillors, Rotherham MPs, Parish Clerks and community groups and organisations representing stakeholders with disabilities.

Representations will be accepted via online form, email, post or hand delivered to the Electoral Services Office.

- **Key findings**

We will be taking into account the following key points:

- The comments/feedback from polling station inspectors from elections.
- Comments/complaints from electors.
- The representations submitted during the consultation stage of the review.

- **Actions**

The information above will inform the review, and assist us in identifying areas of particular concern and where possible, consider alternative locations.

The Returning Officer will continue to monitor all polling stations after every election annually through the inspections carried out by PSI's and any comments or complaints made by electors.

Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	01/08/2023
Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	20/11/2023
Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title):	Mike Thomas Electoral Services Manager

5. Governance, ownership and approval

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

Name	Job title	Date
Phil Horsfield	Assistant Director, Legal Services	08/08/23
Steve Eling	Policy and Equalities Manager	03/08/23

6. Publishing

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

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

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

Date screening completed	01/08/2023
Report title and date	Polling Districts and Polling Places Review 2023 - 18 September 2023
If relates to a Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision – report date and date sent for publication	Polling Districts and Polling Places Review 2023 - 18 September 2023 - Publication Date: 4th September 2023
Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	02/08/2023

- Carbon Impact Assessments are to be appended to the associated cabinet reports
- Prior to publishing reports, Carbon Impact Assessments should be sent to climate@rotherham.gov.uk for feedback
- Report authors may also use the above email address to direct any further queries or to access further support regarding completing the assessment

Will the decision/proposal impact…	Impact	If an impact or potential impacts are identified			
		Describe impacts or potential impacts on emissions from the Council and its contractors.	Describe impact or potential impacts on emissions across Rotherham as a whole.	Describe any measures to mitigate emission impacts	Outline any monitoring of emission impacts that will be carried out
Emissions from non-domestic buildings?	*impact unknown but minimal due to one day*		Emissions created by the use of heating and lighting in buildings used as polling stations on election days, from 07:00 to 22:00	No practical mitigations possible	Where polling stations are located in buildings whose energy is supplied through the Council's energy procurement portfolio, annual greenhouse gas emissions will already be monitored. Since there is no other option available - polling stations must be open from 7:00 to 22:00 on polling days - it is not proposed to monitor emissions on specific polling days

Emissions from transport?	*impact unknown but minimal due to one day*	Emissions from vehicles from staff travelling to and from polling stations. Emissions from vehicles travelling to and from polling stations to delivering and collecting polling booths and other electoral equipment.	Emissions from vehicles if electors choose to travel to the polling station by car.	Where possible staff are allocated to work in a polling station near to their home address, therefore limiting the impact of vehicle emissions from travelling. The contractor used to deliver and collect the polling station equipment plan their route, to ensure it is efficient as possible. No other practical mitigations possible.	None
Emissions from waste, or the quantity of waste itself?	Not applicable				
Emissions from housing and domestic buildings?	Not applicable				
Emissions from construction and/or development?	Not applicable				
Carbon capture (e.g. through trees)?	Not applicable				

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:
The Council is legally required to designate poling districts and polling stations for Parliamentary elections, which are also used for local elections. On polling day, polling stations must legally be open between 07:00 and 22:00 and therefore it is necessary for lighting and sometimes heating to be used to ensure staff have suitable working conditions and electors have a comfortable environment in which to vote. There will be emissions from polling staff travelling to and from the polling station. Where possible staff are allocated to a polling station to limit the travel time and emissions, however, this is not always possible. A Council contractor used to deliver and collect the polling station equipment plans its routes to ensure journeys are as efficient as possible. Whilst polling districts and polling stations are generally local to electors, it is not possible to control or manage the method of travel they use to go to the polling station. If some electors drive, there will be emissions relating to their journey.

Supporting information:	
Completed by: (Name, title, and service area/directorate).	Mike Thomas, Electoral Services Manager, Electoral Services, Finance and Customer Services
Please outline any research, data, or information used to complete this [form].	Not applicable
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]	*Louise Preston, Climate Change Manager* *CIA126*

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Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Public Report
Cabinet

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting
Cabinet - 18th September, 2023

Report Title
Digital Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?
No

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report
Judith Badger, Strategic Director of Finance and Customer Services

Report Author(s)
Luke Sayers, Assistant Director of Customer, Information and Digital Services
01709 823249 or Luke.Sayers@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected
Borough-Wide

Report Summary
Digital inclusion remains a challenge for some people in Rotherham and a lack of digital access can have a detrimental impact on residents. The associated problems can be significant for citizens and families contributing to educational and economic disadvantage, health inequalities and increased social isolation.

The Rotherham Place Digital Inclusion programme was established in 2021 to gain a better understanding of the extent to which digital exclusion affects our local communities; and to identify the barriers that prevent people accessing and benefiting from online services and digital channels.

Through consultations held with a wide range of local people, the cross-organisational Digital Inclusion Stakeholder group has since co-created a Digital Inclusion strategy and action plan that has been designed to target those in the borough that are most at risk of digital exclusion.

The purpose of this report is to provide Cabinet with an update on the progress of the Rotherham Place Digital Inclusion programme and to seek their endorsement and support to the approach being taken.

Recommendations

That Cabinet:

1. Notes the work undertaken to date as part of the Digital Inclusion programme.

2. Endorse the co-designed Digital Inclusion Strategy and support the approach being taken to help people and communities who are most at risk from digital exclusion.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 Rotherham Place Digital Inclusion strategy
Appendix 2 Digital Inclusion Action Plan
Appendix 3 Equality Analysis – Part A
Appendix 4 Equality Analysis – Part B
Appendix 5 Carbon Impact Assessment

Background Papers
N/A

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel
None –

Council Approval Required
No

Exempt from the Press and Public
No

Digital Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan

1. Background

1.1 The Rotherham Place Digital Inclusion Programme was established in June 2021 to achieve the following outcomes:

- Tackle inequalities within our communities that digital exclusion contributes to.
- Work with the third sector to develop and support community engagement and a sustainability model.
- Maintain and build the Digital Inclusion Partnership.
- Identify and capitalise on social accountability across health and social care.
- Establish a temporary 'digital inclusion group' to support the above outcomes and ensure all interested parties and organisations are involved.
- Work with partners to improve and expand their digital offers.
- Identify and pool potential match funding to support the programme and future sustainability.
- Increase the take up of online services across the borough and sustain and grow digital engagement to the benefit of all.

1.2 The programme funding was secured through the NHS Digital Aspirant Programme grant (£200,000), RMBC Capital Digital Strategy (£200,000) and 2021/22 Council revenue budget (£50,000).

1.3 A cross organisational stakeholder working group was established to jointly input into and shape the aims and outcome of the Digital Inclusion programme; ensuring the needs of all customers and communities within the Rotherham place are fully considered and represented in all digital inclusion activities and reflected within a future co-designed Digital Inclusion strategy.

1.4 The Digital Inclusion Stakeholder group currently consists of representation from different organisations within the Rotherham Place including AGE UK Rotherham, Rotherfed, Voluntary Action Rotherham (VAR), Rotherham Ethnic Minority Alliance (REMA), NHS, RNN Colleges and Rotherham Council; although membership invitations are likely to be extended as the delivery of the programme progresses.

1.5 The Council's Year Ahead Delivery Plan, sets out the following Digital Inclusion outcomes and timescales:

Expanding economic opportunity					
Ref	**Outcome**	**Activity**	**Lead officer**	**Lead directorate**	**Timescales for delivery (from and to)**

4.12	Strengthening digital infrastructure and skills which enable access for all	Identify measures to improve digital inclusion through consultation with communities.	Luke Sayers *Assistant Director Customer, Information and Digital*	Finance and Customer Services	December 2022 - **Complete**
4.13		Develop a Digital Inclusion Strategy.	Luke Sayers *Assistant Director Customer, Information and Digital*	Finance and Customer Services	December 2022 - July 2023 **Complete**

1.6 The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet's endorsement of the programme together with their continued support in delivering the actions identified to increase digital inclusion across the borough.

2. Key Issues

2.1 When the Digital Inclusion programme was first established, it became apparent that whilst both national and regional data provided an indication of digital activity/engagement across the Yorkshire/Humber region, the extent to which local people felt digitally excluded was unknown.

2.2 An independent Rotherham Digital Inclusion baseline review was therefore undertaken between January and March 2022. This involved over 700 residents who took part via face-to-face focus groups, postal questions and online surveys; each participant sharing their views and experiences of using technology, and their digital worries and concerns.

2.3 The baseline review identified:

- Groups that are at high-risk of digital inclusion:
    - Older People
    - Deprivation
    - Long Term Conditions / Learning Disability
    - Disadvantaged Young People
- Areas of the borough at particularly high-risk of digital exclusion as a result of the combination of deprivation and poor internet infrastructure:
    - East Herringthorpe
    - Rotherham Central
    - Thrybergh
    - Maltby East
- Common barriers to digital inclusion:
    - Internet availability in venues such as sheltered housing.

- Language.
- Residents wanting more ‘one to one’ support to help them use their own devices and be more aware of internet safely.
- Age – increasing age increases the need for digital support, but there are also pockets of younger people who are at risk of being digitally excluded.
- Based on the survey responses around 54% of residents need some form of digital support.

2.4 The review provided the Council and other Stakeholder group members with a better understanding of:

- The level and quality of the ‘digital offer’ of services within the Rotherham Place.
- Local appetite for digital inclusion.
- Barriers that prevent the people of Rotherham accessing and benefiting from online services and digital channels.
- Groups and areas of the borough that are most at risk of digital exclusion.
- Existing digital inclusion activity (and gaps) across the Rotherham Place.
- The digital maturity of Rotherham provider organisations based on the ‘What Good Looks Like’ (WGLL) framework which is used to accelerate digital and data transformation.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

3.1 Option 1 – Do nothing (not recommended)

One of the primary aims of the Digital Inclusion programme was to identify the extent to which local people are digitally excluded.

The Rotherham Place baseline review provided this evidence; identifying both the challenges individual people/groups are facing, and the extent to which digital inequality is affecting some parts of the borough.

These findings confirm that digital exclusion remains a challenge in Rotherham, contributing to educational and economic disadvantage, health inequalities and increased social isolation.

If action is not taken, some communities will continue to face digital inequality and be unable to overcome the barriers that prevent them from being able to access/do things online that others take for granted.

3.2 Option 2 – Recommended

Endorse the co-designed Digital Inclusion Strategy and support the approach being taken to help people and communities who are most at risk from digital exclusion.

3.2.1 Digital Inclusion Strategy

Based on the findings of the Rotherham Place Baseline review, members of the Digital Inclusion Stakeholder group worked collaboratively to create the Rotherham Place Digital Inclusion strategy. **(Appendix 1).**

The strategy is person centred and is aligned with the Rotherham Together Partnership and Place Board priorities. It has been deliberately designed to:

- Focus on the things that matter to people who live, work and do business in Rotherham.
- Ensure that anyone who reads it can identify with something in the strategy.
- Be accessible and understandable – using simple, plain and meaningful language with no 'jargon'.

3.2.2 Digital Inclusion Action Plan

A workshop was held in November 2022 with both residents and organisational representatives. This session was used to agree how best to support Rotherham's most digitally excluded people and communities, and to identify the actions that would be needed to deliver the outcomes set out in the strategy.

The resultant co-designed Digital Inclusion Action Plan (**Appendix 2**) sets out a range of targeted activities and initiatives to be delivered over the next 12-18 months.

There is no single solution to improving digital inclusion as technology is constantly evolving at speed. The programme's fundamental approach will therefore be based on test and learn methodology; making best use of resident stories and case studies to highlight successes and identify future opportunities. This will be achieved by:

- Maintaining constant dialogue with all delivery partners, and more importantly through conversations with those who are directly receiving help.
- Consistent and frequent user consultation.
- Capturing evidence of how initiatives and activities are helping residents and enabling them to become more digitally included and active.
- Being confident and decisive as a group.

- Listening to feedback so that we can quickly change or amend anything that isn't working and refocus our energies.
- Keeping residents updated about the programme.
- Re-visiting the groups that took part in the initial baseline report research to share progress and find out from them how the programme is making a difference.

3.2.3 **Activities already underway**:

i) RNN Digital Champions

A volunteer programme has been jointly developed with the RNN group. Students attending Rotherham college who are undertaking a digital qualification are encouraged to volunteer as 'digital champions' to gain experience of working with local people and help them make better use of technology.

- 10 community groups have signed up to be involved in the initial pilot.
- There are 18 student volunteers, who have each been matched to a group that is local to where they live to help limit travelling distances.
- Sessions held to date include:
  - Bramley Coffee Morning, Bill Chafer Centre
  - Catchup Café, Rotherham Minster
  - Mindfulness & Wellbeing, Kimberworth Park
  - The Salvation Army, Maltby

Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive.

- Students say they have felt accepted and welcomed, increasing their communication skills and confidence.
- Community groups have said how extremely useful they found it
- Students have told us that since volunteering, they now feel less nervous going out on placements outside of college.
- RNN feel this work has helped them further strengthen their link with the community which has also led to requests for assistance with other activities unrelated to digital inclusion.

The initiative is set to continue when the college reopens in September.

ii) Good Things Databank Pilot with the libraries

Good Things Foundation offer free sim cards to organisations through their Databank programme.

This is a national programme designed to support people on low income who have limited/no access to online services.

Rotherham Council are piloting the scheme which was launched in May from Riverside House library; enabling local people who might otherwise be unable to afford to communicate/engage digitally to benefit from a free mobile data, calls and texts.

A phased roll out of the free sim card initiative to other Library & Neighbourhood sites will commence in September (Maltby, Rawmarsh, Dinnington and Swinton).

Subject to the success of the initial pilot, it is anticipated that other Stakeholder organisations will sign up to the scheme. In addition, the Digital Support Officers, once in post, will have the ability to offer sim cards directly through their work in the community.

iii) ICT Classes and Employability classes for residents

Free training courses on specifics subjects (e.g. Excel and Word) are available across Rotherham, allowing individuals to upskill themselves ready for employment.

Work will continue with the deliverers of these training modules to ensure what they offer is fit for purpose and is promoted in the right way to target those people/communities most likely to benefit.

3.2.4 **Future Activities and Initiatives**

The Digital Inclusion Action Plan provides a detailed list of all activities and initiatives expected to be delivered over the next 12-18 month period. Examples include:

- Appointment of 2 FTE Digital Support Officers – to undertake the activities identified in the action plan and deliver interventions across Rotherham Place. These post holders will spend most of their time working within the communities of Rotherham.
- Creation of ‘digital surgeries’ in libraries and community centres; initially as a pilot in one of the areas most at risk of digital exclusion (East Herringthorpe, Rotherham Central, Thrybergh, Maltby East). Surgeries will be organised as ‘drop in’ sessions for anyone wanting to learn more about ‘how to do’ things digitally. For example, attach a photo to an email, call someone using WhatsApp etc.
- Devices – the baseline report indicates that device ownership is a real barrier to being digitally included. There are various best practice examples in other authorities that provide evidence of success with schemes such as device lending services and ‘gifting’ using previously

owned donated devices. This is something that the Stakeholder group are keen to explore and introduce as a proof of concept.

- Community engagement across Rotherham - A key part of the success of this programme is reaching as many people as possible from different demographics within Rotherham; particularly those groups that are harder to reach. A Communication Plan has therefore been created specifically to target people who:

    - Don't use technology and don't plan on using it in the future.
    - Don't have any experience with technology, or don't have the means to get technology - but would really like to have it and learn how to use it.
    - Use some technology but would like help to use it more and improve their digital skills.
    - Are financially excluded from digital.
    - Are digitally confident and want to help others, or signpost them to us (*friends and family digital helpers*).

3.2.5 **Evaluation and programme sustainability**

A robust and transparent measurement framework has been implemented and adopted, providing the evidence source for continuous evaluation of the Rotherham Digital Inclusion Programme and the impact it is having on the lives of local people.

The Digital Inclusion Stakeholder group will also continue to explore options for additional funding and/or opportunities to benefit from social value and local/national initiatives that contribute to the delivery of the identified actions.

Evaluating the effectiveness of digital inclusion interventions will demonstrate how the programme has added value; the evidence from which can be used to inform "what future delivery would look like.

4. Consultation on proposal

4.1 The specification document outlining the objectives and intended outcomes of the Rotherham Place Digital Inclusion Baseline review was created and signed off by all members of the Digital Inclusion Stakeholder group.

4.2 Over 500 local people shared their thoughts and comments as part of the independent research undertaken to produce the Rotherham Place Digital Inclusion Baseline review:

- 454 online surveys received.
- 67 postal surveys returned (500 sent out).

- 9 focus group sessions held across the borough in areas with high levels of deprivation and groups where English isn't the first language.

4.3 Rotherham provider organisations completed a self-assessment across seven key areas using the 'What Good Looks Like' (WGLL) framework which organisations can choose to use to accelerate digital and data transformation. Providers who contributed included VAR, Rotherfed, Clifton Learning Partnership, RMBC, AGE UK Rotherham, and three NHS trusts.

4.4 The strategy and Action Plan workshop that took place in November 2022 was attended by residents and organisational representatives from AGE UK Rotherham, RotherFed, Rotherham Older Peoples Forum, RNN Group, RDASH, NHS, and Rotherham Council.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

5.1 The co-designed Digital Inclusion Action Plan sets out a range of targeted activities and initiatives to be delivered over the next 12-18 month period.

5.2 The Digital Inclusion Stakeholder group are responsible for reviewing the progress of the Action Plan; and for ensuring resources and activities focus on the priority groups and communities identified in the baseline review.

5.3 The Digital Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan have been endorsed by the Rotherham Place Board (May 23) and approved by the Rotherham Together Partnership Chief Executive Officers Group (July 23). Further updates will be provided periodically to both the Rotherham Place Board and Rotherham Together Partnership Board.

5.4 Timescale for key actions:

Action	**Timescales**
Cabinet endorsement of the Digital Inclusion programme, strategy and related actions	September 2023
Launch of Digital Inclusion website	September 2023
Phased roll out of free sim cards to other Library & Neighbourhood Hubs	September 2023
Pilot of digital drop-in centre model	October 2023
12 Month programme review	June 2024

5.1 **Next steps and future actions**

It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. Notes the work undertaken to date as part of the Digital Inclusion programme.

2. Endorse the co-designed Digital Inclusion Strategy and support the approach being taken to help people and communities who are most at risk from digital exclusion.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

6.1 Of the original funding, referenced in paragraph 1.2, £334k was available at the start of this financial year (2023/24). Staffing and resource costs required to deliver the action plan are fully funded within the original budget. This includes three staff posts and the cost of website development and digital infrastructure.

6.2 There are no direct procurement implications associated with the recommendations detailed in this report. If there is an identified need during the delivery of the action plan to engage third party suppliers for goods, works or services this must be procured in compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (as amended) and the Council's own Financial and Procurement Procedure Rules.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

7.1 Although this is a non-statutory function, leadership by the Council of the Digital Inclusion agenda across the Borough will assist the Council in the delivery of its other core functions as set out in body of the report, along with the associated benefits described above.

7.2 The activities as described in this report are not reserved to Council in legislation or regulations and therefore are executive functions, exercisable by the Cabinet.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

8.1 Due consideration would need to be given to any staff employed on a temporary basis, a redundancy payment would potentially be made to those employees who work under a contract of employment with the Council, regardless of the number of hours worked per week, and have at least 2 years' continuous service.

8.2 Due HR processes would be followed to mitigate any risk of redundancy and support the employees to finding suitable alternative employment where possible.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

9.1 The Digital Inclusion Action Plan sets out a series of activities and initiatives that focus on the groups considered to be most at risk of digital exclusion (as identified in the baseline review); which includes disadvantaged young

people and people of all ages who may be vulnerable through deprivation, long term care or learning disability.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 An Equality Analysis has been undertaken (Appendices 4,5. The Digital Inclusion strategy forms the framework from which the Digital Inclusion programme will tackle the digital divide for all communities and groups.

10.2 Both the strategy and action plan have been designed to focus on improving access to technology and increasing digital confidence and skills for all residents and communities; with particular regard to groups with protected characteristics who may be more likely to experience digital exclusion.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

11.1 A Carbon Impact assessment has been undertaken (Appendix 5)

11.2 The Digital Inclusion programme aims to encourage individuals to reduce their digital carbon footprint by managing electronic devices properly and more efficiently.

It will also encourage targeted groups to have greater dependency on digital technologies which can hopefully alter their day to day activities – for example an increase in online banking, online shopping, e-books, streaming etc will mean fewer journeys and healthier environments.

12. Implications for Partners

12.1. The Digital Inclusion Stakeholder group includes representation from the Council, Age UK, Rotherfed, VAR, REMA, NHS, and RNN Colleges. Programme decisions are made in collaboration with all group members.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 There are robust governance arrangements in place whereby updates regarding the achievement of the programme actions and outcomes are regularly shared with the Rotherham Place Board and Rotherham Together Partnership Board.

13.2 A regular review of the risk register is undertaken by the Digital Inclusion Stakeholder group who will jointly identify and agree appropriate mitigative action.

14. Accountable Officers

Luke Sayers, Assistant Director Customer Information & Digital Services, Finance & Customer Services

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	**Date**
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	04/09/23
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	30/08/23
Assistant Director, Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Bal Nahal	30/08/23

Report Author: Luke Sayers, Assistant Director of Customer, Information and Digital Services
01709 823249 or Luke.Sayers@rotherham.gov.uk
This report is published on the Council's website.

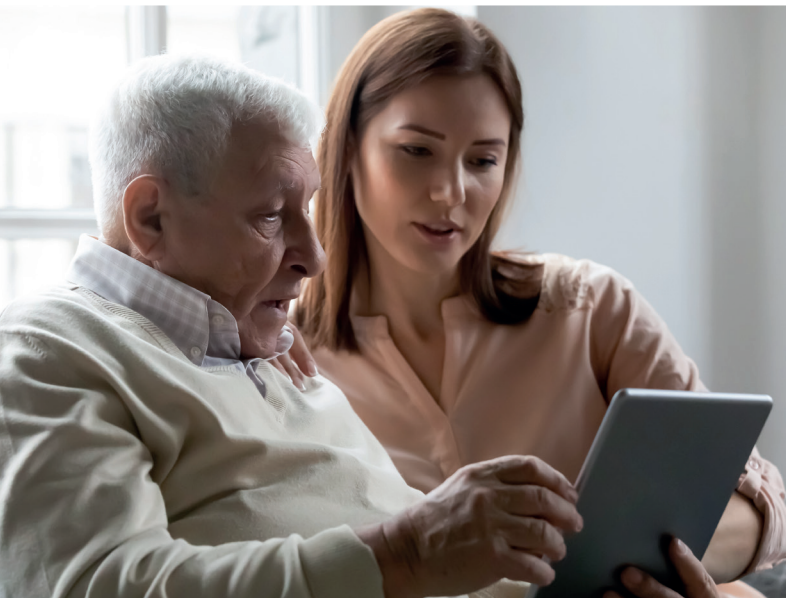
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Appendix 1

Rotherham Digital Inclusion Strategy









VoluntaryAction Rotherham

Rotherham Federation
Strengthening Communities

Rotherham ageUK

RNN GROUP

NHS

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Appendix 1

What is digital inclusion?

Making sure that people are given the opportunity to use and access technology to do things that benefit them everyday.

What are the benefits of being online?



Finding a job

- More jobs now are only advertised online and the process to apply is often online only
- More employers require some level of digital skills



Keeping in touch

- Talk to friends and family through video or telephone calls, messages, or emails



Shopping

- It can be cheaper and more convenient to buy things online
- Find better deals for the things you need using comparison sites to find an energy supplier, mobile phone package and makes it easier to switch



Knowledge and learning

- The internet can help you find information, learn new skills, learn a new language, or keep up to date with news and events from around Rotherham and the world



Health

- Book and manage health appointments online 24/7
- View and manage your personal health information
- Improved access to health services and information



Entertainment and lifestyle

- Watching online TV services for your favourite box sets
- Tips and tricks for your hobbies, including finding recipes
- Buy tickets to events



Financial

- Online banking, apply for and access Council/Government services (including Benefits)



Travel

- Book holidays, check-in at the airport and get your NHS Covid Pass
- Travel around using a Sat Nav or online map

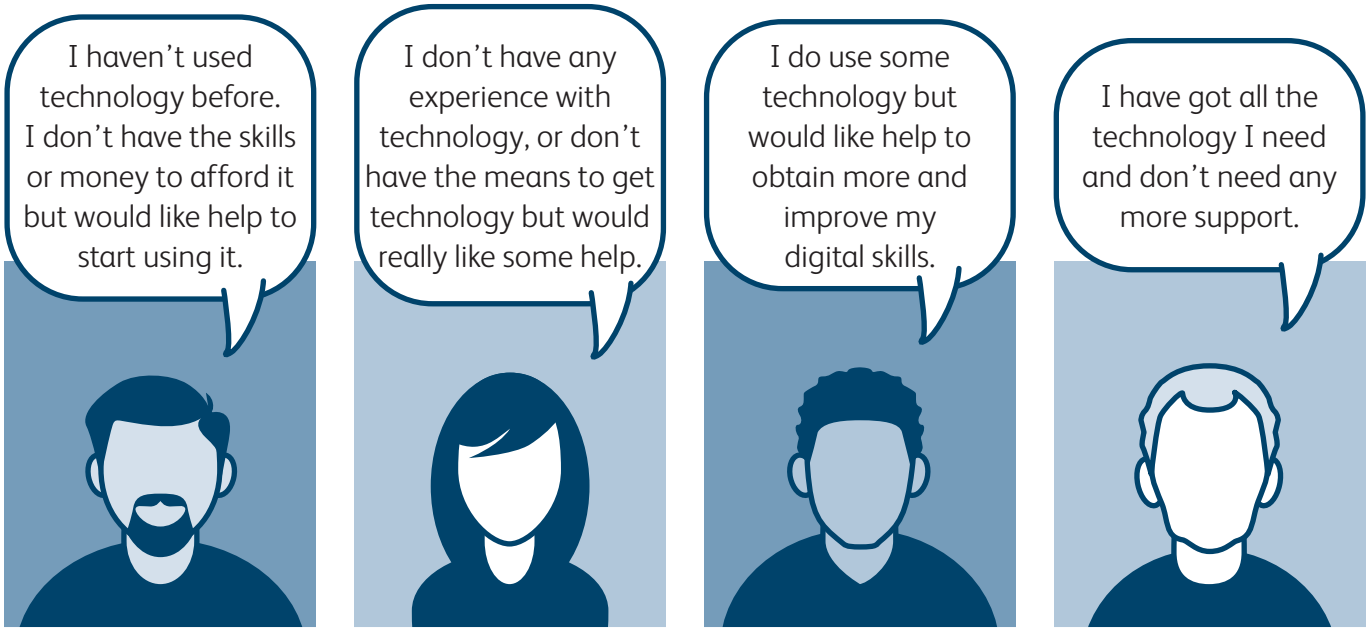
Appendix 1

Why do we need a Digital Inclusion Strategy?

We want every resident in Rotherham to be able to enjoy the benefits of getting online.

We asked people who live and work in Rotherham about their views and experiences of using technology and their worries and concerns.

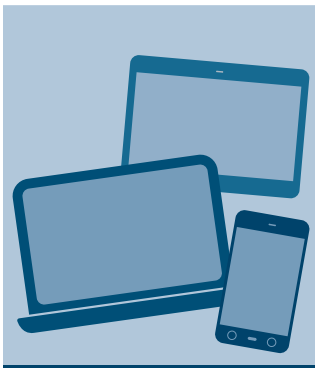
This is what they told us…



Everyone is different, but there is something for everyone



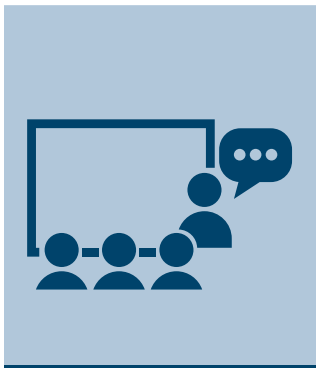
If technology isn't for you, that's fine but if you change your mind, help and support is available and we'd love to talk to you about it.



We want to help you learn about digital, as well as how to use and access devices.



We want to help improve your digital skills in a way that's flexible to your needs.



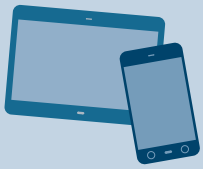
Can you help?
We can support you to share your knowledge with others.

Appendix 1

We want to help you get online and feel more confident about using technology so you can do the things you want to do.

Based on what you told us we will:

Help you get online



Help you with phones, tablets and sim cards.



Increase the number of places where free Wifi can be accessed across Rotherham.

Help you learn



Show you how to use the internet and devices including computers, tablets and phone.



We want to offer flexible learning in your community and ensure schools and employers are improving the digital literacy of their students or workers.

Help keep you safe



We know how important it is for people to feel safe online and will provide you with advice and guidance.

Help through volunteering



We will help people who want to volunteer by putting them in touch with organisations across Rotherham who are providing support within the community where people need it.

Why we want to help you become more digitally included

- Some organisations only provide services or reduced costs online
- You can talk to organisations online, which is quicker than sending a letter
- Accessing help online will give your more choices and give you the information you need to make important decisions in your life when you need to make them.

Find out more

This document will be reviewed annually, and we welcome your feedback. If you need this information in another format or language, please contact us to discuss how we can best meet your needs.

Email: rotherhamdigital@rotherham.gov.uk
Website: www.rotherhamdigital.co.uk/

/RotherhamDigital
@RothDig

Digital Inclusion Rotherham Action Plan April 2023 to September 2025

Phase 1 - Information gathering (Completed)

i) Objective:

A third-party organisation with a proven track record of assessing and analysing digital inclusion/exclusion, be commissioned to:

- Identify and profile the target group within the Rotherham Place.
- Understand the local barriers to digital inclusion at an individual and Rotherham Place level.
- Identify existing digital inclusion activity (and the gaps) across the Rotherham Place.
- Identify best practice Digital Inclusion activities and programmes at a local and national level to inform the type of digital inclusion activities that best respond to the brough wide needs and aspirations.

Ref	Outcome	Actions	Lead / Org	Timescales	Progress	Baseline Ref / Priority
1.1	Robust and effective programme governance in place	• Form a Digital Inclusion Stakeholder group with a diverse set of members from organisations across Rotherham to help form the strategy and action plan. This group will meet monthly • Appoint Digital Delivery Manager • Establish a governance framework that ensures accountability to the Rotherham Place Partnership Board and the Rotherham Together Partnership	H. Barker RMBC A. Clayton NHS	Complete November 2021		

1.2	Digital Inclusion Baseline report provides place-based evidence of digital inclusion/exclusion in Rotherham	• Create and sign off a specification document.
		
		• Appoint an independent research specialist to produce a Rotherham place baseline review to include:
		  • National and Rotherham population level analysis
		  • Consultation with residents across all channels, with particular focus on groups most likely at risk of digital inclusion.
		  • An indication of the digital maturity of organisations in Rotherham
		
		• Review report to ensure meets requirements specified
			Digital Inclusion Stakeholder group	Complete November 2021
				
				Complete November 2021
				
				Report completed and published April 22		

Phase 2 - Develop evidence-based intervention strategies and programme governance (Complete)

i) Objective (based on the findings derived from Phase 1)

- *Develop a Digital Inclusion strategy, the outcomes of which can be delivered by a range of projects and initiatives that target Rotherham's most digitally excluded using the most appropriate method of delivery within the budget available.*

Ref	Outcome	Actions	Lead / Org	Timescales	Progress	Baseline Ref / Priority

2.1	Digital Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan created in response to priorities identified in Baseline review	• Workshop with representatives from different organisations across Rotherham inputting into the creation of a Digital Inclusion Action Plan. • Financial Plan completed and signed off by budget holder (RMBC) • Work up a one-page visual document to highlight the work intended in 2023	Digital Inclusion Stakeholder group P Rushton/L Williams RMBC P Woodhouse RMBC	April 23 March 23 March 23	Drafts in progress Drafts in progress Drafts in progress	
2.2	Strategy and Action Plan supported by all organisations represented at the stakeholder group, Place Board and Rotherham Together Partnership Board	• Sign off final version of strategy and action plan by respective organisations/people • Presentation to Place Board • Presentation to Rotherham Together Partnership Board	Digital Inclusion Stakeholder group H Barker RMBC/ A Clayton NHS H Barker RMBC/ A Clayton NHS	March 23 April 23 May 23		
2.3	Publication of a Place Based Digital Inclusion Strategy	• Stakeholder group to make the agreed Digital Inclusion strategy publicly available	Digital Inclusion Stakeholder group	TBC	launched when the website goes live – Scheduled for September	
2.4	Communication Strategy in place	• Develop a communications plan for the programme	W Wilcock RMBC	February 23 - Ongoing	This is a live document; subject to frequent review	
2.5	Action plan visual document	• Create a visual one-page action plan for purposes of sharing externally. It will follow the same visual style of as the strategy	P Woodhouse RMBC W Wilcock RMBC	Completed March 23		

Phase 3 - Delivery (In Progress)

i) Objective

- *Following the completion of phases 1 and two, identify the different delivery mechanisms that can add most value to the communities of Rotherham.*

Ref	Outcome	Actions	Lead / Org	Timescales	Progress	Baseline Ref / Priority
3.1	Key roles in place to focus on delivering the Digital Inclusion Action Plan in Rotherham	• Recruit a small team to work on delivering the action plan and Digital interventions in the community 1 FTE Digital Inclusion Delivery Manager 2 FTE Digital Support Officers	H Barker RMBC A. Clayton NHS	Sep 23	Job advertised July 23. Not received suitable candidates, so will be re-advertising the role	Page 5, 55,63
3.2	Residents of Rotherham to have increased access to technology including Wi-Fi, Devices and sim cards	• Map 'free Wi-Fi' locations Publish this information both on the website and using offline methods	Digital Inclusion Team	Sept 23	This links to Website launch	
3.3		• Launch a National Databank pilot in RMBC libraries starting initially in Riverside House to offer free sim cards to residents.	A Heggie RMBC	Launched April 23 - Onwards	Launched 9th May from Riverside only. To be expanded to 4 more libraries in September	
3.4		• Explore the feasibility of installing free Wi-Fi in community settings: • Identify pilot location – to be based in one of the following high priority areas: East Herringthorpe, Rotherham Central, Thrybergh or Maltby East	Digital Inclusion Team	May 23 Onwards	Initial research phase with Sky and BT to determine a out personal v business. Will work with the stakeholder group to eventually identify a pilot location from one of the high priority areas,	Page 28 - Feedback from residents

		• Implement • Measure impact and outcomes • Determine whether model can/should be rolled out more widely • Create model that can be sustained moving forward				
3.5		• Work with the assisted technology teams in RMBC to make sure activities/priorities are aligned • Promote technology that helps people with their health. • Engage and link up with various departments and boards within Public Health • Engage and Link into mental health organisations / networks as the cost-of-living crisis is having a huge impact in this area • Engage and Link into the Rotherham Prevention and Health Inequalities group	P Woodhouse RMBC P Woodhouse RMBC P Woodhouse RMBC P Woodhouse RMBC P Woodhouse RMBC A Clayton NHS	April 23 Onwards April 23 Onwards Sept 23 Ongoing Ongoing	Engaging with Sandra Whiting and the Assisted Tech team Included on website Presentation to Health and Wellbeing board by Helen Barker is scheduled for September PW has presented to the Health and Inequalities group	
3.6		• Collaborate with the NHS to on their Virtual Wards programme	P Woodhouse RMBC	Ongoing	PW is part of the Digital Board for Virtual Wards	

3.7		• Research and explore the feasibility of offering a device loaning or gifting scheme.
		  • Create a proof of concept
		  • Implement
		  • Measure impact and outcomes
		  • Determine whether model can/should be rolled out more widely
		  • Create model that can be sustained moving forward
			Digital Inclusion Team/ Digital Inclusion Stakeholder group	May 23 Onwards	PW has spoken to a number of other towns / cities who have successful schemes, and this is still in the research phase. Will be a priority of the team once new roles in post.
					
					The employment hub have a set of 10 tablets that they are happy could be used for this pilot.
					
					The libraries have expressed interest in being the base for these, but further discussions to be had with the stakeholder group to determine its scope
						Page 52,56

3.8	Provide information that gives people more confidence in being safe online	• Identify local organisations to engage with to deliver safety talks into their community • Engage with Safer Rotherham Partnership	Digital Inclusion Team	March 23 Onwards	Agreed with RMBC Community Safety team to do some in the community safety talks. Would also be part of the Digital Support Officer roles. Can also engage with other organisations, have a contact at the police to speak to.	

3.9		• Signpost to existing online safety information
		  • Identify and make use of already published good practice safety guidelines
		  • Promote using online methods (website, YouTube etc) but also when out in the community
		  • Work with organisations to help support young people
			CS Web team RMBC
			
			Digital Inclusion Team/CS web Team
			
			Digital Inclusion Stakeholder group
			
			Digital Inclusion team
				April 23 Onwards	Awaiting Website launch	Page 36, 56

		with information about being safer using social media • Promote safety information to parents/carers to help them feel better informed as to the different types of social media out there, their uses and risks.	Digital Inclusion Stakeholder group / W.Wilcock (RMBC)			
3.10	Help residents across Rotherham increase their Digital Skills: Activities and actions to be initially focused on the high-risk groups (Older People, Deprivation, LTC / Learning Disability, Disadvantaged Young People) living in the high risk wards (East Herringthorpe, Rotherham Central, Thrybergh, Maltby East)	• Identify organisations across Rotherham currently offering free digital skills training. • Promote and share these opportunities via Rotherham digital website, partner websites, social media and whilst out in the community.	Digital Inclusion team All	Ongoing	Part of the website content	
3.11		• Create 'digital surgeries' in libraries and community centres in East Herringthorpe, Rotherham Central, Thrybergh, Maltby East) (where people can drop in to learn more about digital and how to do things online)	A Clayton NHS Digital Inclusion Team	May 23 Onwards	Focus for the new Digital Support Officers once in post	
3.12		• Establish volunteer programme with RNN whereby Digital students go into community groups to help residents with their use of technology	P Woodhouse RMBC D Smith RNN	March 23 Onwards	First phase was very successful with great feedback. Will start again in September when the students return to college	Page 28, 63

3.13		• Develop a longer term plan of community-based activities linking in with existing and established outreach programmes eg. Warm welcome, poverty & financial inclusion • Create activities that focus on helping residents with their digital skills • Provide and promote an easy way for residents to seek help if unsure how to do something online	Digital Inclusion Team	May 23 Onwards	Will be a main focus of the new Digital Support Officer Roles once in post	Page 55
3.14	Residents use and develop their digital skills working in the voluntary sector to help others	• Create a digital champion model that compliments existing volunteer programmes across Rotherham	Stakeholder group members	Ongoing		Page 56,63
3.15		• Work with community groups to encourage people to become involved in volunteering so they can support other people in their local area	Digital Inclusion team/ Digital Inclusion Stakeholder group	Ongoing		Page 56,63
3.16	Opportunities seized to learn from the best practice of others	• Continue dialogue and learning from all the current work happening in other parts of the country to learn from best practice and identify opportunities for shared benefit.	P Woodhouse RMBC	Ongoing	Continued communication, for eg ,recently with Barnsley to talk about their Databank and their digital champion roles, and Stockport to talk about their device gifting service	
3.17	A robust and effective Communication Strategy is in place to ensure the Digital inclusion programme is communicated across Rotherham using both online and offline methods	• Publish the Digital Inclusion Strategy in different formats so people can find out more about the programme aims and support available	W Wilcock RMBC CS Web Team RMBC	Sept 23	Starts with launch of website	
3.18		• Launch the ‘Rotherham Digital’ website:	W Wilcock RMBC	Sept 23		

		• Website that captures all Digital Inclusion information, case studies, best practice, and activity in Rotherham, • Promote the website through social media and other available messaging to encourage and inform residents, communities, and businesses.				
3.19		• Promote digital inclusion work using all available offline and online communication channels so people are aware of what's happening, how they can get involved, and how they can access the help and support they may need • Plan attendance at events across Rotherham like the Rotherham Show and various roadshows. • Create easy way for organisations to make contact to share information about their Digital Inclusion activity and/or request support/help.	W Wilcock RMBC Digital Inclusion Stakeholder group Digital Inclusion team Digital Inclusion team	Ongoing Start of each financial year June 2023		

<u>Phase 4: Develop a sustainability and ongoing financial model (longer term)</u>

I) <u>Objective</u>

- *Evaluate the effectiveness of digital inclusion interventions to demonstrate how the programme has added value; the evidence from which can be used to inform "what future delivery would look like."*
- *Agree a programme of continued support for all partner organisations to establish digital inclusion activities as a core component of service offerings.*
- *Explore options for additional funding and pool potential match funding to support the programme and future sustainability.*

Ref	Outcome	Actions	Lead / Org	Timescales	Progress	Baseline Ref / Priority
4.1	The effectiveness of the programme is fully evaluated to inform what future delivery would look like	• Establish measurement mechanisms that are designed to evaluate the impact of actions taken; to both residents and organisations/businesses within the Rotherham Place	Digital Inclusion Stakeholder group	July 2023	Measuring Impact draft produced. Will form part of the new Digital Support Officers induction to ensure they understand its importance.	
4.2		• Through established programme governance, ensure the Digital Inclusion programme continues to focus on agreed priorities and is being delivered to timescale within budget	Digital Inclusion Stakeholder group	Ongoing		
4.3		• Constantly review the membership of the group to identify any gaps in representation and look to address this by inviting new members to join	P Woodhouse RMBC	Ongoing		
4.4		• Share case studies involving local people and community groups to inspire others onto the website and through regular updates to our partners	P Woodhouse RMBC	Ongoing		
4.5		• Keep a track of national, regional digital inclusion levels and compare against the baseline review	P Woodhouse RMBC	Ongoing		
4.6	Partner organisations have each established digital inclusion activities as a core	• Identify activities/best practice that should/could be absorbed by all organizations	Digital Inclusion Stakeholder group	Ongoing		

	component of their service deliver/approach	• Review the digital maturity findings of the baseline report to identify organisational gaps • Create a library of best practice guidance that all organisations can access when undertaking any work with a digital inclusion aspect				
4.7	Activities/actions required to further increase digital inclusion have been identified	• Identify any actions that have not been completed due to timescales/budget • Assess the impact of any work not undertaken and likely risks if not completed • Identify critical actions/activities and deliverables that should be considered as key to the continued reduction of digital exclusion	Digital Inclusion Stakeholder group	Ongoing		
4.8	Options for the future sustainability of the programme have been fully considered	• Briefing paper created setting out activities undertaken, impact on the Rotherham Place and recommendations/risks of continuing/ending the programme	Digital Inclusion Stakeholder group	To be completed by July 2024		

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Appendix 3

Initial Equality Screening Assessment

Completed to ensure that the Digital Inclusion Stakeholder group have and continue to give proper consideration to equality and diversity when undertaking activities and actions that are designed to improve digital inclusion.

A **screening** process can help judge relevance and provide a record of both the process and decisions made. It helps 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 a more detailed Equality Impact Assessment

1. Title	
Title: Digital Inclusion Programme	
Assessment reviewed and accepted by: Digital Stakeholder group Members	On: 21st March

2. Please provide a brief description of what has been screened
The Rotherham Place Digital Inclusion Programme was established to: • Tackle inequalities within our communities that digital exclusion contributes to • Work with the third sector to develop and support community engagement and a sustainability model • Maintain and build the Digital Inclusion Partnership • Identify and capitalise on social accountability across health and social care • Establish a temporary 'digital inclusion group' to support the above outcomes and ensure all interested parties and organisations are involved • Work with partners to improve and expand their digital offers • Identify and pool potential match funding to support the programme and future sustainability • Increase the take up of online services across the borough and sustain and grow digital engagement to the benefit of all • Engage with multiple boards, networks and organisations across Rotherham to ensure the programme is aligned with work already happening across the borough.

3. Relevance to equality and diversity
Digital inclusion remains a challenge for some people in Rotherham and lack of digital

access can have a detrimental impact on residents. The associated problems can be significant for citizens and families contributing to educational and economic disadvantage, health inequalities and increased social isolation.

The Digital Inclusion programme therefore seeks to better understand the barriers that prevent people within our community from accessing digital services by consulting with local people and using this insight to co-design a future strategy that helps support, encourage 9ncrease the take up of online services across the borough to the benefit of all.

Questions	Yes	No
Could the proposal have implications regarding the accessibility of services to the whole or wider community?	X Positive	
Could the proposal affect service users?	X Positive	
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 organisations represented by Digital Inclusion Stakeholder group members commission or procure activities and the way they are organised, provided, located and by whom?	X Positive	
Could the proposal affect the workforce of organisations represented by Digital Inclusion Stakeholder group members	X Positive	

4. Considering the impact on equality and diversity

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.

- **How has the Digital Inclusion Stakeholder group considered equality and diversity?**

Equality and diversity is at the heart of the Digital Inclusion programme. Research suggests that digital exclusion is more prevalent amongst groups who are elderly, disabled, and from BAME and socially deprived communities.

- **Key findings**

Phase 1 of the programme (**Knowledge Gathering**) has been completed.

Appendix 3

- An independent research specialist was appointed (Attain) to produce a Rotherham place baseline review which involved:
    - National and Rotherham population level analysis
    - Consultation with residents:
        - 454 online surveys received
        - 67 postal surveys returned (500 sent out)
        - 9 focus group sessions held across the borough in areas with high levels of deprivation and groups where English isn't the first language

The findings of the Digital Inclusion Rotherham Place Review identified that:

- Groups most at high-risk groups of digital inclusion:
    - Older People
    - Deprivation
    - LTC / Learning Disability
    - Disadvantaged Young People

- Common barriers to digital inclusion:
    - Internet availability in venues such as sheltered housing.
    - Language
    - Residents wanting more one to one support to help them use their own devices and be more aware of internet safely.
    - Age –increasing age increases the need for digital support, but there are also pockets of younger people who are at risk of being digitally excluded
    - Based on the survey responses around 54% of residents need some form of digital support

- **Actions**

Phase 2 of the Digital Inclusion programme:

The Digital Inclusion working group will use the findings of Phase 1, to co-design a strategy that sets out the key areas of focus, improvement aims and objectives, delivery approach, and measurable outcomes.

It is expected that the strategy will underpin a place-based approach to:

1. intervention work with high-risk groups and wards, focussing on areas of deprivation to bring communities together through activities and initiatives that enable targeted support
2. creating the structural foundations for tackling digital inclusion at scale through partnership and collaboration; working together to resource provision and plug any gaps.
3. establishing a social movement to drive the digital enablement of residents who want to become digitally competent, providing co-ordinated borough wide support

Appendix 3

and more bespoke offers where appropriate to specific customer groups and communities 4. measuring impacts and outcomes using a governance framework that ensures accountability to the Rotherham Together Partnership.

Date Equality Analysis considered and scoped:	Completed March 2023
Next review of Equality Analysis	August 2023

5. Governance, ownership and approval

Name	Details	Timelines
Digital Inclusion project Manager – P. Woodhouse RMBC	Creating draft EIA screening document	March 2023
Digital Inclusion Stakeholder Group	Sign off of the EIA Continuous review of the EIA	March 2023 Every 6 months

6. Publishing

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

A copy of **all** screenings will be made publicly available on the Rotherhamdigital website.

Date this screening published	TBC

Appendix 4

PART B – Equality Analysis Form

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

This form:

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

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

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

1. Title	
Equality Analysis title: Digital Inclusion	
Date of Equality Analysis (EA): August 2023	
Directorate: F&CS	**Service area:** CIDS, Customer Services
Lead Manager: Helen Barker	**Contact number:** **01709 254530**
Is this a: [x] **Strategy / Policy** [ ] **Service / Function** [ ] **Other** **If other, please specify**	

Appendix 4

2. Names of those involved in the Equality Analysis (Should include minimum of three people) - see page 7 of Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance		
Name	**Organisation**	**Role (eg service user, managers, service specialist)**
Helen Barker	RMBC	Head of Customer Services
Phil Rushton	RMBC	Customer Service Manager
Steve Eling	RMBC	Policy and Equalities Manager

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

Aim/Scope (who the Policy/Service affects and intended outcomes if known)

In June 2021, SLT were presented with a report detailing the intention to establish a Rotherham Place Digital Inclusion Programme to:

- Tackle inequalities within our communities that digital exclusion contributes to
- Work with the third sector to develop and support community engagement and a sustainability model
- Maintain and build the Digital Inclusion Partnership
- Identify and capitalise on social accountability across health and social care
- Establish a temporary 'digital inclusion group' to support the above outcomes and ensure all interested parties and organisations are involved
- Work with partners to improve and expand their digital offers
- Identify and pool potential match funding to support the programme and future sustainability
- Increase the take up of online services across the borough and sustain and grow digital engagement to the benefit of all

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

Digital Inclusion Stakeholder Group

The programme has a governance structure based on this group. It is made up of members of various organisations across Rotherham to ensure all types of residents are represented by the programme. This is an open group and new members are always welcomed if we feel we lack representation at any time. Current organisations represented are :

RMBC (including leads from Communities and Libraries)
NHS
Rotherham AGE UK
RNN Group
Barnardos
VAR
Rotherfed

Appendix 4

Equality and diversity is at the heart of the Digital Inclusion programme. Research suggests that digital exclusion is more prevalent amongst groups who are elderly, disabled, and from BAME and socially deprived communities.

Phase 1 of the Digital Inclusion Programme (Knowledge Gathering) was completed in 2022.

- An independent research specialist was appointed (Attain) to produce a Rotherham place baseline review which involved:
    - National and Rotherham population level analysis
    - Consultation with residents:
        - 454 online surveys received
        - 67 postal surveys returned (500 sent out)
        - 9 focus group sessions held across the borough in areas with high levels of deprivation and groups where English isn't the first language

The findings of the Digital Inclusion Rotherham Place Review identified that:

- Groups most at high-risk groups of digital inclusion:
- Older People
- Deprivation
- LTC / Learning Disability
- Disadvantaged Young People

Common barriers to digital inclusion:

- Internet availability in venues such as sheltered housing.
- Language
- Residents wanting more one to one support to help them use their own devices and be more aware of internet safely.
- Age –increasing age increases the need for digital support, but there are also pockets of younger people who are at risk of being digitally excluded
- Based on the survey responses around 54% of residents need some form of digital support

Phase 2 of the Digital Inclusion programme (Delivery) is in progress

The Digital Inclusion working group will use the findings of Phase 1, to co-design a strategy that sets out the key areas of focus, improvement aims and objectives, delivery approach, and measurable outcomes.

The Digital Inclusion Strategy and Actin Plan were co-produced with all members of the stakeholder group and also engaging with residents of Rotherham

This strategy will underpin a place-based approach to:

1. Intervention work with high-risk groups and wards, focussing on areas of deprivation to bring communities together through activities and initiatives that enable targeted support

2. Creating the structural foundations for tackling digital inclusion at scale through partnership and collaboration; working together to resource provision and plug any gaps.
3. Establishing a social movement to drive the digital enablement of residents who want to become digitally competent, providing co-ordinated borough wide support and more bespoke offers where appropriate to specific customer groups and communities
4. Measuring impacts and outcomes using a governance framework that ensures accountability to the Rotherham Together Partnership.

The programme has been presented to The Rotherham Place Board and the Rotherham Together Partnership where on both occasions the programme was met with overwhelming support.

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

In terms of digital inclusion/exclusion, there is a wide range of national research but less is known (at a local level) about the impact this has on specific customer groups in the Rotherham area.

During our research phase we went into the community to meet as many people as possible. Of course, it wasn't possible to meet all people, and even though the official research phase has been completed, due to the nature of the programme we will never stop speaking to people in the community, and following a test and learn approach, ensure the help we are giving is what is needed.

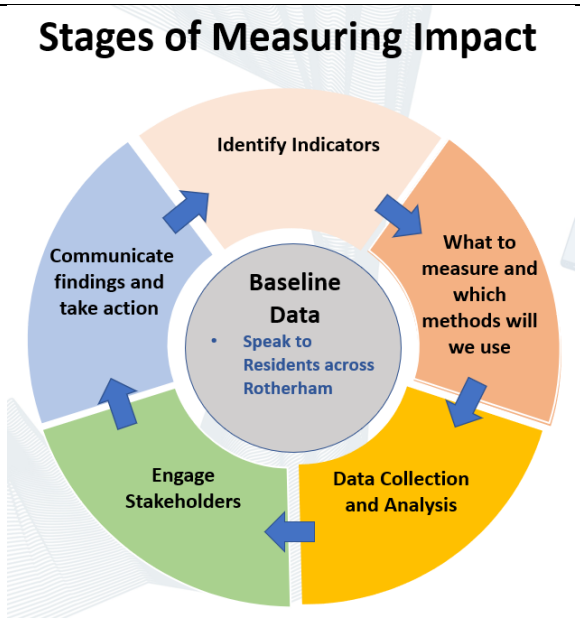
What monitoring arrangements have you made to monitor the impact of the policy or service on communities/groups according to their protected characteristics?

The Digital Inclusion Stakeholder group will always oversee monitoring the programme.

A key part of the programme is to ensure we are constantly measuring the impact of the programme.

Our Measuring Impact strategy can be looked at with the following image :

Appendix 4



The programme cannot be successful if we aren't constantly measuring our impact across all residents of Rotherham.

The Digital Inclusion programme will be recruiting 2 Digital Support Officers in the second half of 2023. They will be community-based roles, again ensuring our work is reaching all communities across Rotherham. Although based at the council, these roles are for the whole of Rotherham and can be used as a resource by organisations across Rotherham

The Digital Inclusion Team will:

- Continue to attend Community reference group meetings and encourage feedback from members about issues/challenges for their specific communities/customer groups
- Continue to work with the stakeholder group and work with other organisations to gain their thoughts and views on the way services are delivered
- Make best use of any local or national data that highlights areas of concern, best practice elsewhere, changing behaviours, new technologies that might help specific customer groups.
- Publish Impact data / case studies to all stakeholders continuing reviewing the programme to identify any opportunities to improve
- Review this EIA on an annual basis in line with the annual review of the Customer Access Strategy

Engagement undertaken with customers. (date and group(s) consulted and key findings)	See Section entitled '*What equality information is available? (Include any engagement undertaken)'*

Engagement undertaken with staff (date and group(s)consulted and key findings)	Ongoing as part of review processes

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

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

The Digital Inclusion strategy forms the framework for the way this programme will tackle the digital divide for all communities and groups.

The strategy and action plan we coproduced with residents across Rotherham advocate the benefits of being online and it is these benefits this programme will we see increase across Rotherham :

Finding a job
• More jobs now are only advertised online and the process to apply is often online only
• More employers require some level of digital skills

Keeping in touch
• Talk to friends and family through video or telephone calls, messages, or emails

Shopping

• It can be cheaper and more convenient to buy things online
• Find better deals for the things you need using comparison sites to find an energy supplier, mobile phone package and makes it easier to switch

Knowledge and learning
• The internet can help you find information, learn new skills, learn a new language, or keep up to date with news and events from around Rotherham and the world

Health
• Book and manage health appointments online 24/7
• View and manage your personal health information
• Improved access to health services and information

Entertainment and lifestyle
• Watching online TV services for your favourite box sets
• Tips and tricks for your hobbies, including finding recipes
• Buy tickets to events

Appendix 4

Financial
• Online banking, apply for and access Council/Government services (including Benefits)

Travel
• Book holidays, check-in at the airport and get your NHS Covid Pass
• Travel around using a Sat Nav or online maps

By improving access to technology or increasing their digital skills, this programme can meet the needs of all communities and groups across Rotherham

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

Research suggests that some customers and communities are more likely to find it difficult to access services in the same way that others might take for granted. For example, national data finds that digital exclusion is more evident amongst the elderly, disabled, and individuals from BAME and socially deprived communities.

The strategy acknowledges these challenges and puts the programmes focus on these high-risk groups of digital inclusion

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

The common barriers to digital inclusion:

- Internet availability in venues such as sheltered housing.
- Language
- Residents wanting more ‘one to one’ support to help them use their own devices and be more aware of internet safely.
- Age –increasing age increases the need for digital support, but there are also pockets of younger people who are at risk of being digitally excluded
- Based on the survey responses around 54% of residents need some form of digital support

The programmes entire focus is to remove these barriers for all residents across Rotherham and enable them to receive the benefits of being online.

The delivery phase has started and activities already underway (August 2023):

RNN Digital Champions
We are working with Rotherham College to utilise their digital students and their required work experience to become digital champions in the community. We are starting a small pilot. We will match suitable students with groups. This will be informal, and the idea is for them to join a group and to offer help to anybody with anything technology based. They won’t be delivering courses. They will respond to whatever each individual needs help with

Appendix 4

Good Things Databank Pilot with the libraries
Good Things Foundation offer free sims to organisations through their Databank programme. This is a scheme we want to promote and help organisations utilise. Working with the libraries, we will start a pilot scheme. We also want to encourage other organisations to sign up to utilise this.

ICT Classes and Employability classes for residents
Free training courses on specifics subjects for individuals like Excel and Word are important for individuals to upskill themselves ready for employment. These are available across Rotherham, and we will work with the deliverers to ensure what they offer is fit for purpose and to help them be advertised throughout Rotherham.

Recruitment for 2 community based Digital Support Officers has started with expected start dates of October 23

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

Strong and collaborative community engagement is essential in delivering this programme.

It is members of the community that this programme is designed to help.

The strategy and action plan makes communities the heart of everything we do, in fact community members actively were involved in the develop of these documents.

This will continue throughout the programme. Its important we continually talk to the recipients of our help to ensure its the right help in the right place.

The 2 new Digital Support Officers will have a fantastic impact as they will be exclusively working in the community.

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

5. Summary of findings and Equality Analysis Action Plan

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

Title of analysis: Digital Inclusion Equality Analysis
Directorate and service area: Finance & Customer Services
Lead Manager: Helen Barker, Head of Customer Services
Summary of findings:

Action/Target	State Protected Characteristics as listed below	Target date (MM/YY)
Recruitment of 2 x Digital Support Officers	**ALL**	**10/23**
Phased rollout of National Databank across libraries of Rotherham	**ALL**	**10/23**
RNN Digital Champions in the community to start again	**ALL**	**09/23**

***A = Age, D= Disability, S = Sex, GR Gender Reassignment, RE= Race/ Ethnicity, RoB= Religion or Belief, SO= Sexual Orientation, PM= Pregnancy/Maternity, CPM = Civil Partnership or Marriage. C= Carers, O= other groups**

6. Governance, ownership and approval

Please state those that have approved the Equality Analysis. Approval should be obtained by the Director and approval sought from DLT and the relevant Cabinet Member.		
Name	**Job title**	**Date**
Helen Barker	Head of Customer Services	11th August 2023
Phil Rushton	Customer Service Manager	11th August 2023

7. Publishing	
The Equality Analysis will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given. If this Equality Analysis relates to a **Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision** a copy of the completed document should be attached as an appendix and published alongside the relevant report. A copy should also be sent to equality@rotherham.gov.uk For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file and also published on the Council's Equality and Diversity Internet page.	
Date Equality Analysis completed	11th August 2023
Report title and date	Rotherham Digital Inclusion Programme Equality Analysis August 2023
Date report sent for publication	
Date Equality Analysis sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	

- Carbon Impact Assessments are to be appended to the associated cabinet reports
- Prior to publishing reports, Carbon Impact Assessments should be sent to climate@rotherham.gov.uk for feedback
- Report authors may also use the above email address to direct any further queries or to access further support regarding completing the assessment

Will the decision/proposal impact…	Impact	If an impact or potential impacts are identified			
		Describe impacts or potential impacts on emissions from the Council and its contractors.	Describe impact or potential impacts on emissions across Rotherham as a whole.	Describe any measures to mitigate emission impacts	Outline any monitoring of emission impacts that will be carried out
Emissions from non-domestic buildings?	None				
Emissions from transport?	Decrease		Increasing the dependency of more individuals to access digital technologies and go online will help reduce the need for journeys (more tasks completed online instead).		A focus of the programme is to measure the impact all its initiatives are having. We will be capturing data and case studies
Emissions from waste, or the quantity of waste itself?	Decrease		Expected to reduce as the Digital Inclusion Programme will encourage the recycling and donation of devices as well as encouraging repair or re-sell as opposed to upgrades.		
Emissions from housing and domestic buildings?	Decrease		Educating individuals in the proper usage of devices and energy consumption – efficiently charging devices, turning off devices when not in use instead of leaving on standby etc.		
Emissions from construction and/or development?	None				

Carbon capture (e.g. through trees)?	None				
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:

Digital inclusion remains a challenge for some people in Rotherham and a lack of digital access can have a detrimental impact on residents. The associated problems can be significant for citizens and families contributing to educational and economic disadvantage, health inequalities and increased social isolation.

Through our research across Rotherham, the programme has identified initiatives to help residents get access to technology and improve their digital skills. When successful, this will increase the number of people accessing services online and increase their access to knowledge online.

The Digital Inclusion programme aims to encourage individuals to reduce their digital carbon footprint by managing electronic devices properly and more efficiently.

It will also encourage targeted groups to have greater dependency on digital technologies which can hopefully alter their day to day activities – for example an increase in online banking, online shopping, e-books, streaming etc will mean fewer journeys and healthier environments.

To ensure the programme is being successful, a key component is to monitor the impact we are having by collecting data and case studies at every stage which will hopefully allow to confirm we are having a positive impact which, explained above can include carbon emission reduction.

Supporting information:	
Completed by: (Name, title, and service area/directorate).	Paul Woodhouse (14.08.23) Digital Inclusion Delivery Manager

	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]	Tracking Reference: CIA 131 Arthur King, Principal Climate Change Officer Regeneration & Environment

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Public Report
Cabinet

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting
Cabinet – 18 September 2023

Report Title
July Financial Monitoring 2023/24

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 July 2023 and forecast for the remainder of the financial year, based on actual costs and income for the first four months of 2023/24. 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 second financial monitoring report of a series of reports for the current financial year which will continue to be brought forward to Cabinet on a regular basis.

As at July 2023, the Council currently estimates an overspend of £4.5m for the financial year 2023/24. This is largely due to demand led pressures on Children's residential placements and home to school transport as well as the impact of inflationary pressures in the economy, particularly on food prices, and the legacy impact of lockdown restrictions on some directorate's services, especially in R&E.

The current economic climate remains turbulent, with challenges in projecting where inflation will move and the pace at which it moves. At present inflation is showing signs of slowing owing to reductions in energy and fuel prices. This will help support the Council's Budget position for 2022/23, though it is too early in the financial year to be clear on its full benefit.

There remains funding uncertainty for the local government sector beyond 2023/24 as the Local Government financial settlement was only a one-year allocation and the

Council will continue to face significant challenges moving forwards in regards to the funding of social care.

Although inflation appears to be easing, the Local Government Association (LGA) Pay Award is yet to be agreed and the full financial impact remains unknown at the present time. The next report to Cabinet in November may present a more certain picture of the Council's Directorate financial position and the impact on the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy if this is resolved.

Recommendations

That Cabinet:

1. Note the current General Fund Revenue Budget forecast overspend of £4.5m.

2. Note that actions will continue to be taken to reduce the overspend position but that it is possible that the Council will need to draw on its reserves to balance the 2023/24 financial position.

3. That Cabinet approve the capital budget variations as detailed in section 2.61 of the report.

List of Appendices Included
Appendix 1 Equalities Impact Assessment
Appendix 2 Carbon Impact Assessment

Background Papers
Budget and Council Tax 2023/24 Report to Council on 2nd March 2023
May Financial Monitoring 2023-24 Report to Cabinet on 10th July 2023

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

Council Approval Required
No

Exempt from the Press and Public
No

July Financial Monitoring 2023/24

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 second in a series of financial monitoring reports to Cabinet for 2023/24, setting out the projected year end revenue budget financial position in light of actual costs and income for the first four 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 2023/24 as at July 2023

Directorate	Budget 2023/24	Forecast Outturn 2023/24	Forecast Variance over/under (-)
	£m	£m	£m
Children and Young People's Services	65.4	70.2	4.8
Adult Care, Housing & Public Health	120.0	120.0	0.0
Regeneration and Environment Services	49.3	54.2	4.9
Finance and Customer Services	20.8	20.8	0.0
Assistant Chief Executive	7.4	7.2	-0.2
Central Services	39.3	34.3	-5.0
Directorate Forecast Outturn	**302.2**	**306.7**	**4.5**
Dedicated Schools Grant			-4.2
Housing Revenue Account (HRA)			-4.7

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

- Placement pressures within Children and Young People's Services and Adults Social Care.
- Home to School Transport pressures within Regeneration and Environment and Children and Young People's Services.
- Pressures relating to the longer term recovery from Covid-19, on income generation within Regeneration and Environment.
- Inflationary costs impacting the cost of food in Schools Catering and contractual and provider inflation impacting Children and Young People's Services.
- Increased costs of homelessness due to increased demand.
- Increased property costs within Regeneration and Environment.

2.3 As at July 2023, the Council currently estimates a directorate overspend of £4.5m for the financial year 2023/24. Whilst the core directorates services have a forecast year end overspend of £9.5m on the General Fund, there is a £5m forecast underspend within Central Services reflecting the corporate budget provision approved within the Council's Budget and Council Tax Report 2023/24 to support anticipated pressures within Home to School Transport and Children's placements.

2.4 However, there are expected to be pressures within Central Services as a result of inflation remaining high and the potential Local Government Association (LGA) Pay Award. This pressure is expected to be mitigated through the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy which did have reasonable cover for inflationary impacts. The Council's current forecast assumes an increase in pay award based on the LGA pay offer. This is above the position built into the Council's Budget for 2023/24 and could increase further following national pay negotiations.

2.5 It is currently expected that the period of high inflation will last for a further 12-18 months before returning to a more normal level but the cost increases 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 short term financial pressures that will need to be managed and mitigated through the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the Council's reserves.

2.6 The forecast position will continue to be monitored closely and mitigations identified to improve the position, though it is possible that the Council will need to call on reserves to achieve a balanced outturn. There remains significant volatility at present in the economy that makes projecting forwards the impact of inflation challenging, as such the Council will need to keep focus on assumptions based on these pressures. In addition, the Council will need to ensure that mitigating actions are taken to reduce the current directorate forecast outturns along with ensuring that savings plans are delivered on time to mitigate any knock on impact on future years Medium Term Financial Planning.

2.7 The Council is able to report secured delivery of £1.618m against the planned savings for 2023/24. Table 2 below provides an update on the remainder of the £11.5m of planned savings that had been re-profiled for delivery over the medium term, £4.4m of which were delivered during 2022/23. During 2022/23 the Council successfully delivered £4.9m savings, £4.4m on a permanent basis. As such £7.1m remains to be delivered across 2023/24 and 2024/25, with £4.4m to be delivered by the end of 2023/24 and the full £7.1m by the end of 2024/25. To date £1.618m has been secured at the end of July from savings in CYPS placements and management costs and R&E operational property budgets. Whilst placement costs have been reduced in CYPS demand has increased as such CYPS is still reporting a pressure on placements. Further detail is provided in the Directorate position narrative.

Table 2: Previously agreed savings

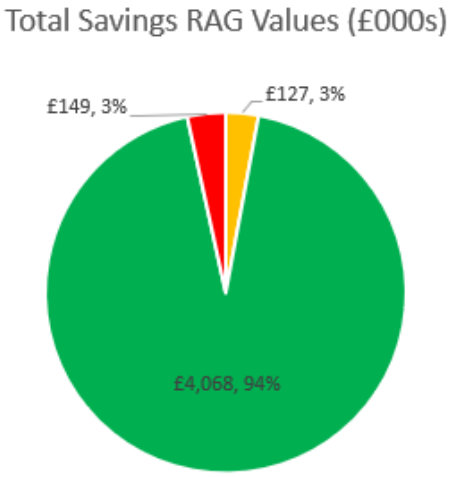
Saving	To be delivered by end of 2023/24	Total to be delivered end of 2024/25	Secured as at 31st July 2023
	£000	£000	£000
CYPS	3713	6,385	1,594
R&E	388	410	24
R&E Customer & Digital	300	300	0
Total Savings	**4,401**	**7,095**	**1,618**

2.8 As part of the Budget and Council Tax Report 2023/24 a series of new temporary and permanent savings were approved. Table 3 shows the progress against these new savings, these include a range of permanent and temporary savings with a total of £2.789m secured against 2023/24 total of £4.344m so far.

Table 3: New Savings agreed as part of the Budget and Council Tax 2023/24 report

Directorate	2023/24	2024/25	Secured as at 31st July 2023
Finance and Customer Services	308	238	310
Assistant Chief Executive	303	407	96
Children's and Young Peoples Services	1,348	1,059	1,348
Adult Care, Housing and Public Health	1,224	1,998	235
Regeneration and Environment	1,161	1,001	800
Total	**4,344**	**4,703**	**2,789**

2.9 A summary of these new savings RAG status is shown below.



2.10 £149k of savings plans are deemed high risk. This is in respect of ACH&PH3 Housing Related Support. The proposed timescales for making the savings relating to Burns and Browning, whilst legally achievable, did not anticipate the current lack of options to place existing clients in alternative provision. The subsequent review has highlighted that other HRS providers have become deskilled at supporting this cohort of vulnerable adults.

2.11 This saving should be achievable longer term when the new mental health service options are fully in place and the flexible purchasing system for Housing Related Support (HRS) is completed. A Cabinet report on progress is scheduled for June 2024 which will include timescales and recommendations for the future of these two facilities. The Cabinet report will explore opportunities for any efficiencies that can be made from the HRS service at that time. It is expected that in the meantime this saving will be mitigated via additional NHS income in Adult Social Care on a temporary basis until clarity over the longer term deliverability of the Housing Related Support is confirmed. Following confirmation**,** the revised approach will be reported to Cabinet to approve as an amendment to the savings plan.

2.12 The Amber savings include FCS2 ICT Contracts (£70k budget) and ACEX6 UKSPF grant income (£57k budget). Against FCS2 £36k has been delivered to date, although it is expected the remainder will be delivered during the year, it cannot be confirmed until new contract values are agreed as the Council continues to refresh/renew its ICT contracts. There is a risk to delivery as values are subject to procurement. ACEX6 is anticipated to be delivered via alternative grant funding stream to UKSPF. When grant funding is confirmed this saving will be adjusted to green.

The following sections provide further information regarding the Council's forecast outturn of £4.5m, the key reasons for forecast under or overspends within directorates and the progress of savings delivery.

2.13 Children and Young People Services Directorate (£4.8m) forecast overspend)

2.14 Children & Young People Services has a budget pressure of £4.8m at the end of July, a £1.5m worse position than the £3.3m overspend reported in May. This is primarily driven by pressures in Children's Social Care and Education. In the main the overall pressures in Children's Social Care relate to demands on placements (£3.8m) and home to school transport cost pressures (£1.3m), offset by staff savings of £300k.

2.15 The Looked After Children placement numbers at the end of July 2023 are 518. This is 28 below the July 2023 budget profile (546).

2.16 However, the placement mix is showing higher than projected placements at July in external residential (9), Remand (2), Parent & baby (2), external emergency (2) offset by in-house fostering (21), IFA (10), Supported Accommodation (4), and in house residential (3) and in house emergency (1), no cost placement (5).

2.17 The LAC number of 518 includes 40 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children which has risen from 14 in March 2022.

2.18 The direct employee budget is £41.3m and is a combination of general fund, traded and grant funded services. The forecast underspend at the end of the July 2023 financial year is £300k, which includes a general fund staffing underspend of £300k after removing placement related staffing costs**.**

2.19 A significant element of the CYPS non-pay budgets relates to placements which has a net budget of £34.4m with an outturn projected spend of £38.2m and a projected overspend of £3.8m. The £3.8m adverse projection relates in the main to a £3.3m pressure in relation to residential placements.

2.20 The £3.3m residential pressures is due to a combination of a reduction in the estimated residential step downs (£3.4m) as well as increase in the unit costs (£200k) due to market pressures, offset by increased DSG funding (£300k) where young people are educated by the childrens home.

2.21 The Home to School transport pressures of £1.3m reflect demands on transporting children in care (£450k), those children in care placed out of borough with EHC plans £400k and post 19 transport costs £450k. CYPS have operational groups set up to review transport costs to ensure the most appropriate method of transport is in place.

2.22 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)

The High Needs Block (HNB) is £57.8m (including the £3.5m 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 EHCs numbers and the implementation of new developments linked to the SEND Sufficiency Strategy.

2.23 The central DSG reserve now stands at £5.927m deficit following receipt of £6.0m safety valve funding during 2022/23 and a £913k underspend across all DSG elements. The Council will receive 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.

2.24 The High Needs Block (HNB) budget is set to provide a £2.068m contribution to reserves in line with the management plan, but only after agreement of the 1.5% School Block funding transfer (£3.459m) and would have been a £1.391m in-year deficit without this funding.

2.25 The position at the end of July is a £1.517m overspend on the High Needs Block and therefore the contribution to reserves would reduce from £2.068m to £551k. The Central DSG is forecast to underspend by £1.751m in 2023/24 when taking into account the underspend on the HNB (£551k), Safety Valve funding (£2.0m), offset by planned use of reserves in Early Years and Schools Block (£800k). The DSG reserve deficit is expected to reduce to £4.176m by March 31st 2024.

2.26 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 resource provision in Rotherham linked to mainstream schools and academies, with further capacity becoming operational by the end of 2023/24.
- Implement the accessibility strategy.
- Work with schools and academies to maintain pupils in mainstream settings wherever possible.

2.27 Adult Care, Housing and Public Health (balanced outturn position)

2.28 The overall directorate forecast is currently breakeven. However, there is significant demand pressures within Adults (£1.1m) and Homelessness (£864k). It is currently expected that these pressures can be mitigated across the financial year as has been the case in previous years. This will be closely monitored over the period.

2.29 The cost of care packages is forecast to be £1.1m overspent. This is due to increased numbers of people in older people's residential and nursing care and in mental health provision. This includes some high-cost packages. 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 and additional income from CHC may offset some of the costs. Transitions are forecast as underspent by £313k reflecting historic trends.

2.30 Staffing budgets are forecast to be £384k overspent due to vacancies which have needed to be filled by agency placements that provide cover for the service and overtime payments for staff.

2.31 Neighbourhood Services (Housing) is forecast to overspend by £881k. Homelessness is expected to overspend by £864k after accounting for grant income. This is due to continued use of hotels as numbers of people seeking support continues to increase. In July there were 61 households needing hotel accommodation. This is an increase from 35 in April. The forecast assumes that numbers will decrease steadily over the year.

2.32 Public Health is forecast to budget at this stage.

2.33 Regeneration and Environment Directorate (£4.9m forecast overspend)

2.34 The July outturn projection for the directorate indicates a forecast pressure of £4.9m for this financial year. This represents a significant worsening of £1.0m from the May forecast. The forecast reflects the impact of ongoing demographic pressures in Home to School Transport, the impact of inflationary pressures in the economy, particularly on food prices, rising property costs in Asset Management and the legacy impact of lockdown restrictions on some of the directorate's services. For example, the impact on waste tonnages 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.

2.35 Community Safety and Street Scene (CSS) is forecasting an overall pressure of £1.9m, a decrease of £0.3m from May's reported position. The most significant pressure continues to be in respect of Home to School Transport of £2.0m, 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. To address 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.

2.36 Parking Services is forecasting a pressure of £340k. 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. The pressure in Parking Services is being mitigated by income over-recovery of £470k in Streetworks and Enforcement.

2.37 Waste Management is currently forecasting a £530k underspend, an improvement from the break-even position last reported. There has been a slight worsening in recycling market prices, and an increase in agency costs adding to collection costs, as a result of staff absence but pressures in the service are being

mitigated by the windfall payment from the Waste PFI contract, as a result of the high energy price which is overachieving against budget.

2.38 Culture Sport and Tourism (CST) is forecasting an overall pressure of £400k, an increase of £300k from May's forecast. There is a £160k pressure in Green Spaces as a result of income pressures and staffing pressures in the Trees and Woodland Service, resulting from the requirement to increase resources in the Service to deal with a backlog of maintenance issues. There is an ongoing pressure in the Theatre of £60k as a result of a forecast under-recovery of income. There is also a forecast overspend of £90k at the Waleswood Caravan Park as a result of flooding in April that impacted on pitch availability, poor weather during the summer impacting on income generation, and an increase in food costs. The Music Service is reporting an £80k pressure as a result of staffing pressures, due to teachers pay increases and changes to contractual arrangements.

2.39 Planning, Regeneration and Transport (PRT) is forecasting an overall pressure of £2.3m, an increase of £0.7m from May's forecast. The major pressure is in School Meals of £1.5m, due to inflationary pressures on food prices and pressures on income in the service.

2.40 Asset Management is forecasting an overspend of £870k. The forecast reflects an increase of £330k in cleaning charges, to reflect the true service cost. There is a corresponding increase in income in the Cleaning Service. The forecast assumes income under recovery in Estates, as a result of staff vacancies impacting on income generation. Pressures in Facilities Management include rising property costs, including repairs and maintenance and fixtures and fittings. The timing of the achievement of property savings is under regular review and will be fed into future forecasts as key decisions are able to be taken.

2.41 A pressure of £200k is being reported in the RIDO service, largely due to a forecast shortfall on Markets income arising from the number of void stalls and the ongoing difficult trading conditions. However, grant income offsetting direct costs in other services in RIDO has helped to partially mitigate the Markets service pressure.

2.42 Finance and Customer Services (balanced outturn position)

2.43 The overall directorate is reporting a balanced outturn position. Whilst there are some financial pressures within the directorate, the service is projected to make savings on Legal disbursements and Bereavement Services income, which will help to mitigate these financial pressures and deliver a balanced budget.

2.44 Within Customer, Information and Digital Services, the service continues to generate cost reductions on the renewal or removal of ICT contracts, which has delivered a budget saving this year. The service has also incurred difficulties with recruitment, creating further temporary cost reduction. This is offset by over-recruitment within Customer Services contact centre to help manage the difficulties caused by high staff turnover in this area, that impacts on call waiting times. This is intended to be managed from underspends elsewhere within the Directorate.

2.45 Legal Services faces continued demand for legal support with child protection hearings and court case costs relating to Looked After Children. Reduced costs of legal disbursements and ongoing difficulties in recruiting to key posts, in particular within Adult Social Care legal support, are currently resulting in a forecast underspend. However, the number of cases during the year remains volatile and will continue to be monitored closely.

2.46 Assistant Chief Executive (£0.2m underspend)

2.47 The service is currently forecasting an underspend of £200k. This is due to increased income in HR of £102k (offset by increased costs of DBS checks) and additional funding in support of resettlement work. Staffing is also forecast to be underspent due to a small number of vacancies across the directorate.

2.48 Central Services (£5m forecast underspend)

2.49 Central Services has a forecast underspend of £5m reflecting the corporate budget provision approved within the Council's Budget and Council Tax Report 2023/24 to support anticipated pressures within Home to School Transport and Children's placements.

2.50 There continues to be significant financial challenges as a result of high inflation, energy prices and the potential impact of the 2023/24 Local Government Pay Award. Whilst energy prices are expected to continue to reduce they remain well in excess of levels prior to the war in Ukraine. Inflation continues to impact the renewal of Council contracts and payments to key service providers, as such it continues to present a financial challenge to the Council's approved Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy. However, the Council was able to build into the Council's Budget and Council Tax Report 2023/24 greater levels of funding to manage the impact of inflation, energy and pay. As such it is currently anticipated that these impacts can be controlled within the existing budgetary provision. As stated within the Budget and Council Tax Report 2023/24 uncertainty in the global and UK economy remains the most significant budget risk and as such will need to continue to be closely monitored.

2.51 The current economic climate remains turbulent, with challenges in projecting where inflation will move and the pace at which it moves. At present inflation is showing signs of slowing owing to reductions in energy and fuel prices. This will help support the Council's Budget position for 2022/23, though it is too early in the financial year to be clear on its full benefit. These financial challenges are being regularly reviewed as part of the Council's ongoing Medium Term Financial Planning. It is currently expected that the period of high inflation will last for around for 12-18 months 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 where required the Council's reserves. As such the Council's ability to build further capacity into those reserves as part of the 2022/23 outturn position is a significant benefit.

2.52 The Council's Treasury Management functions are expected to continue to perform well for the bulk of 2023/24. The Council still holds significant cash balances and is able to invest them for a greater return given current high interest rates, in addition to slippage on the Capital programme in 2022/23 which means that the level of financing costs for 2022/23 will be less than anticipated. The benefits from the Treasury Management function can be used to support wider inflationary pressures that the Council will face during 2023/24. The positive impact of this will be reported later in the year when the value of this is more secure.

2.53 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 2023/24, approved at Council 1 March 2023. 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 2023/24 was set at £13.2m at the outset of 2023/24.

2.54 Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

2.55 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 underspend by £4,729k.

2.56 The underspend largely relates to reduced energy costs for the Council and the District Heating scheme £2,976k and £1,512k in contract shared savings.

2.57 Increases in energy costs were anticipated to have a big impact in this financial year. These have now decreased significantly. This saving has now been recognised in the forecast as Council has approved the proposed redistribution of the saving.

2.58 Contract shared savings is a refund from repairs contractors based on the profits they made during the previous year once those have been confirmed and audited.
The income is expected to be ringfenced to cover expected costs associated with:

- bringing stock conditions surveys up to date;
- improving systems and processes for providing assurance on property services compliance;
- preparing for new regulatory framework and inspection regime;
- and expanding our housing growth function to achieve the Council's 1,000 new homes target.

2.59 Capital Programme Update

2.60 The Capital Programme 2023/24 has been updated following the 2022/23 outturn and the latest information on project position and delivery plans. The revised Capital Programme is £249.767m split between the General Fund £198.322m and HRA £51.445m. This is a decrease of £16.994m from the position reported to Cabinet on 10th July 2023 as part of the Council's 2022/23 Financial Outturn report, the majority of which relates to the reprofiling of schemes due to delays caused by the high volume of capital activity taking place nationally that is limiting resources in the market and the challenges that inflation is causing on the cost of projects that ultimately requires greater work on project design and scope. The movement is based on the latest profiles of expenditure against schemes, including slippage and re-profiles of -£16.376m and new grant funding added to the programme of £2.793m.

2.61 Table 3: Variations to the Capital Programme 2023/24 to 2025/26.

	Total Impact £m	**2023/24 Impact £m**	**Post 2023/24 Impact £m**
Revised Grant and Funding Estimates	23.641	2.793	20.848
Changes to Corporate Resources	-6.244	0	-6.244
Slippage / reprofiling	-0.694	-16.376	15.682
Total	16.703	-13.583	30.286

2.62 The main items contributing to the reprofiling of the Capital Programme are:

- **Riverside Gardens,** £2.202m slippage. Following the outcome of the procurement exercise the project is undergoing a value engineering exercise and a subsequent procurement for the revised scheme. This will result in an expected delay of approximately 6 months.

- **Essoldo** £1.488m slippage. This scheme was forecast to be over budget. The cost plan is being reviewed to try to find savings. This has delayed the scheme whilst the building owner and potential operator review proposals.

- **Templeborough,** £2.365m slippage. There have been revisions to the delivery plan, costs and design which have delayed the project by approximately 3 months.

- **Leisure & Culture Qtr Infrastructure,** £1.817m slippage. Budget issues are causing a delay to the start of the project. The scheme design is being reviewed and procurement will be aligned to the Riverside Gardens scheme.

- **Riverside Infrastructure,** £1.089m slippage**.** The project has been rescoped in order to remove the bridge that would have joined to the Guest & Chrimes site which has delayed the start of the scheme.

- **Rother Valley Country Park,** £3.128m slippage. In light of additional a refresh and review of the project scope and outputs a revised funding package has been required. This has resulted in a delay to the scheme.

- **Sheffield Rd, Phase 2 & 3** £2.385m slippage. This budget has been reprofiled to tie into anticipated phasing of a 15 month delivery programme.

2.63 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 July Cabinet report are listed below:

Table 4: New Grant/HRA Funded Schemes added to the programme

Directorate/Scheme	**2023/24 £M**	**Post 2023/24 £m**
Regeneration & Environment		
Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Funding.	0.500	0.790
Dept for Transport Clean Air Zone (CAZ) funding	0.081	0.000
Building Back Better Funding for Electric Vehicle infrastructure	0.123	0.000
City Region Sustainable Transport Settlements (CRSTS) Highways Maintenance Funding confirmed	0.825	0.000
CRSTS Grant for Mainline Station	1.000	0.000
Building Back Better Funding (Templeborough)	0.270	0.000
DLUHC Regeneration Grant (Wath & Dinnington)	0.000	19.990
Future High St Funding	0.141	0.000
Local Neighbourhoods Roads Safety Budget Allocations updated following year end	-0.145	-0.057
Transforming Cities Fund (Maltby Bus Corridor)	0.117	0.000
Adjustments to Levelling up Funding	-0.118	0.125
Total	**2.793**	**20.848**

2.64 Corporate Borrowing Changes

The Capital Programme includes provision for the purchase of the Council's Office 365 and telephony licenses. There is the option to pay for licences annually and as such avoid the cost of borrowing associated with paying upfront for a number of years. Moving these costs to revenue is operationally and financially more effective and will generate a saving of £57k per annum at a borrowing rate of 3%.

2.65 To process this change the capital budget of £6.406m has been removed and a revenue budget will be set up within central services. The budget will be created by removing the cost of financing from the Treasury Management Budget.

2.66 There is also a budget addition of £162k for the demolition of Park Hill Lodge. Park Hill Lodge in Maltby is a General Fund asset proposed for development through the HRA for new Council homes. To facilitate this, and to mitigate against the revenue holding costs, it is proposed to use non-ringfenced Right to Buy receipts to fund the demolition.

2.67 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.

- **Rother Valley and Thrybergh Country Park:** An exercise has been undertaken to finalise the outputs for these two projects and as a result establish a funding package to deliver the two schemes. The outcome of this was reported to August Cabinet. Following this review a funding package has been approved to bridge the gap, this revised funding pack has now been factored into the Council's Capital Programme. This includes;

	Rother Valley (£M)	**Thrybergh (£M)**
Levelling Up Fund	5.500	2.500
CST Capital Contribution	0.08	0.064
Capital Contingency	0.374	0.271
Total	5.954	2.835

- **Templeborough Business Zone:** This Town Deal funded project facilitates the development of a new 'heart' of Templeborough situated at the gateway between Sheffield and Rotherham at the Magna Science Adventure Centre. New managed workspace units will be delivered, set within improved green space and complemented by drive up food and beverage.

  This is a complex site to develop with several constraints resulting from its historic use requiring evolution and adaptation of design solutions as further knowledge of the site is gained through the project development

process. Scheme design has also had to respond nationwide cost increases and pressures in the construction market.

Cost variation
Cost at stage 2 was reported to be estimated at £648k over budget. A cost reduction exercise was undertaken, the main changes summarised below:

- Replace a new office build with improvement of an existing office building.
- Removal of one managed workspace unit and an increase in the size of the food and beverage unit.
- Design amendments to the specification for car park improvements.
- Increase in fees due to extended design period to complete scheme changes.
- Reduction in programme length resulting in savings on prelim costs.

The design and cost review has resulted in a reduction in the project cost increase to £270k over budget.

The revised funding package includes:-

	£M
Town Deal Enabling Fund	0.038
Town Deal	6.570
MCA Devolved Capital	0.270
Total	6.878

2.68 MCA Approvals
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. New funding received through SYMCA is £81k CAZ funding, £825k CRSTS maintenance funding, £1m CRSTS funding for the mainline station, £393k building back better funding, £117k transforming cities funding.

2.69 The proposed updated Capital Programme to 2025/26 is shown by directorate in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Proposed Updated Capital Programme 2023/24 to 2026/27

Directorate	**2023/24 Budget £m**	**2024/25 Budget £m**	**2025/26 Budget £m**	**Total Budget £m**
General Fund Capital				
Children and Young People's Services	12.887	7.476	11.733	**32.096**
Regeneration and Environment	169.281	60.939	37.984	**268.204**
Adult Care & Housing	9.008	14.117	4.273	**27.399**

Assistant Chief Executive	0.405	0.210	0.210	**0.825**
Finance and Customer Services	6.740	3.380	16.216	**26.335**
Total General Fund Capital	**198.322**	**86.123**	**70.415**	**354.859**
Total HRA Capital	51.445	56.283	31.450	**139.178**
Total RMBC Capital Programme	**249.767**	**142.406**	**101.865**	**494.038**

The Capital Programme for 2023/24 remains ambitious even with a significant level of re-profiling of schemes into 2024/25. 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.

2.70 Funding Position of Capital Programme 2023/24

The £249.767m of capital expenditure is funded as shown in the Table 6 below.

Table 6: Funding of the Approved Capital Programme

Funding Stream	**2023/24 Budget £m**
Grants and Contributions	79.366
Unsupported Borrowing	118.087
Capital Receipts	0.738
HRA Contribution	0.130
Total Funding - General Fund	**198.322**
Grants and Contributions	2.516
Unsupported Borrowing	1.602
Housing Major Repairs Allowance	38.168
Capital Receipts	7.243
Revenue Contribution	1.915
Total Funding - HRA	**51.445**
Total	**249.767**

2.71 Capital Receipts

2.72 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.

2.73 To date General Fund useable capital receipts of £1.290m 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 31st July 2023 £m**
Land at Kiveton Park	-1.236
Miscellaneous	-0.039
Total Capital Receipts (Excluding loan repayments)	**-1.275**
Repayment of Loans	-0.015
Total Capital Receipts	**-1.290**

2.74 The detailed disposal programme is currently being updated. At this stage the forecast for useable capital receipts is between £1.275m and £1.75m but this may change when the detailed assessment has been completed. 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 and each individual decision should be taken as appropriate.

2.75 Capital Achievements

The following outputs have been achieved during the 2023/24 financial year to date.

- In the first quarter of 23-24 the council has completed the repair of 32 unclassified roads out of the 159 unclassified roads included in the indicative highways repair programme for 2023/24.

- In the initial Towns and Villages programme, eight schemes are now complete with a further scheme currently being delivered, and three projects issued to delivery teams ready for completion. The programme has been split into four phases, with five of the six projects in Phase 1 now completed, as well as three projects in Phase 2. The remaining project in Phase 1 is awaiting approvals from third parties through Legal Services.

- Continued progress on 'Shovel Ready' flood defence/mitigation schemes and complete Stage 2 (initial design work and engagement with third

parties) - Phase 2A (Ickles Lock) is now completed and a completion ceremony took place in July 23.

- Progress on the 6 priority Flood Alleviation Schemes is moving through the identified delivery stages of feasibility, site investigations, land owner engagement, detailed design and planning applications approvals ahead of the 2024 deadline.

- Manvers Way Cycle Scheme completed in July. This provides an attractive high quality and direct cycle route between Wath Upon Dearne Town Centre, residential areas and employment areas. This supports economic growth in the Dearne Valley and contributes towards reducing congestion and improving air quality.

- The new pedestrian bridge at Forge Island has been lifted into place linking Forge Island to the town centre.

3.0 Options considered and recommended proposal

3.1 With regard to the current forecast net revenue budget the directorates are forecasting an overspend of £4.5m, management actions are being identified with the clear aim of ensuring a balanced budget position can be achieved. It is currently assumed 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 2023/24 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.

4.0 Consultation on proposal

4.1 The Council consulted on the proposed budget for 2023/24, as part of producing the Budget and Council Tax Report 2023/24. Details of the consultation are set out in the Budget and Council Tax 2023/24 report approved by Council on 2nd March 2023.

5.0 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 2023/24 will be taken to Cabinet in July 2024.

6.0 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 inflation and increases in demand. 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 later in 2023. This will provide 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 and reserves strategy.

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.

7.0 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:-

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	04/09/2023
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	29/08/2023
Head of Legal Services (Deputy Monitoring Officer)	Bal Nahal	29/08/2023

Report Author: *Rob Mahon, Assistant Director – Financial Services*
This report is published on the Council's website.

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Appendix 1

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.

Directorate: Finance and Customer Services	**Service area: Finance**
Lead person: Rob Mahon	**Contact number: 01709 254518**

1. Title: July Financial Monitoring 2023/24

Is this a:

☐	**Strategy / Policy**	X	**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

Appendix 1

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. 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

Appendix 1

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

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

4. Considering the impact on equality and diversity	
If you have not already done so, the impact on equality and diversity should be considered within your proposals prior to carrying out an **Equality Analysis.** Considering equality and diversity will help to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and take active steps to create a discrimination free society by meeting a group or individual's needs and encouraging participation. Please provide specific details for all three areas below and use the prompts for guidance.	
• **How have you considered equality and diversity?** N/A	
• **Key findings** N/A	
• **Actions** N/A	
Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	n/a
Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	n/a
Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title):	n/a

5. Governance, ownership and approval		
Please state here who has approved the actions and outcomes of the screening:		
Name	**Job title**	**Date**
Rob Mahon	AD Financial Services	21.8.23

Appendix 1

6. Publishing	
This screening document will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given. If this screening relates to a **Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision** a copy of the completed document should be attached as an appendix and published alongside the relevant report. A copy of **all** screenings should also be sent to equality@rotherham.gov.uk For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file and also published on the Council's Equality and Diversity Internet page.	
Date screening completed	21.8.23
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 equality@rotherham.gov.uk	21.8.23

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?	*no impact on emissions*				
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)?	*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:

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.

For information, the report references two development schemes, Thrybergh and Rother Valley Country Park, which although more energy efficient than current buildings, will not meet net zero standards when complete. This is due to increased financial pressures and will lead to increased borough and Council emissions in the long term.

Supporting information:	
Completed by: (Name, title, and service area/directorate).	Rob Mahon, Assistant Director Financial Services, Finance and Customer Services.
Please outline any research, data, or information used to complete this [form].	N/A
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]	Louise Preston, Climate Change Manager CIA135

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Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Public Report
Cabinet

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting
Cabinet – 18 September 2023

Report Title
Scrutiny Review Recommendations – Impact of Selective Licensing

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)
Katherine Harclerode, Governance Advisor
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Ward(s) Affected
Borough-wide

Report Summary
This report summarises the findings and recommendations of a scrutiny review into the impact of the selective licensing scheme in Rotherham at its halfway point. The selective licensing scheme, which runs from 2020-2025, focusses on alleviating deprivation and poor housing conditions in specific residential areas of Parkgate, Thurcroft, Maltby, Dinnington, Eastwood/Town Centre and Masbrough. The review sought to assess the impact of the scheme so far and identify further steps and risk mitigations that will help to build positively upon the accomplishments of the scheme to date.

Recommendations

1) Cabinet notes the following recommendations for consideration and response.

   a) That reinspection be prioritised for landlords whose properties have required action previously.

   b) Consideration be given to how the Council may support retention of experienced inspectors already in the Council's employment.

   c) That consideration be given to incentivising responsible landlords, and, where there is a proven track record, empowering landlords to self-assess, provided that the service can still obtain assurances that decent standards are maintained.

d) That consideration be given to managing expectations around selective licensing as a measure focused on the health of residents, rather than aesthetics or regeneration.

e) That consideration be given to how uptake of the cost-of-living support offer among families in selective licensing areas may be further promoted and monitored, with a view to identifying gaps and promoting financial inclusion.

f) Given the complexity of measuring impact on deprivation and difficulty in improving relative levels of deprivation, that consideration be given to how internal measures may better reflect the real impact of the scheme.

g) That a joined-up approach be sought with relevant Council strategies and services, with partner and voluntary sector organisations and with resident-led initiatives prior to any future selective licensing declaration.

h) That engagement with landlords and with tenants be considered alongside any response to the above recommendations, and that the response to the above recommendations be subject to the learning derived from continued engagement with landlords and tenants.

2) Cabinet responds to the recommendations by November 2023 in accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

List of Appendices Included
None

Background Papers
A Fairer Private Rented Sector: Policy Paper. 2 August 2022.

Housing Health and Safety Rating System: Guidance for Landlords and Property Related Professionals. Department for Communities and Local Government. 2006.

McLellan, David, et al. *The English Indices of Deprivation 2019: Technical Report.* Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. September 2019.

Selective Licensing and Landlords. Presentation and Briefing. Improving Places Select Commission Review of Impact of Selective Licensing. 15 November 2022.

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel
Overview and Scrutiny Management Board 5 July 2023
Improving Places Select Commission 9 May 2023

Council Approval Required
No

Exempt from the Press and Public
No

Scrutiny Review Recommendations – Impact of Selective Licensing

1. Background

1.1 This review falls under the remit of Improving Places Select Commission which supports the Council in achieving its Council Plan 2022-25 themes of Every Neighbourhood Thriving and People are Safe, Healthy and Live Well. Members of Improving Places Select Commission had concerns about living conditions and absentee landlords in specific areas of deprivation. These concerns led to a review of the impact of the selective licensing scheme in place from 2020-2025 to address deprivation and housing conditions in specific residential areas of Parkgate, Thurcroft, Maltby, Dinnington, Eastwood/Town centre and Masbrough.

1.2 All councillors whose wards have selective licensing areas were invited to participate in the review. Improving Places Select Commission subsequently undertook an in-person meeting with service leads from the community safety and enforcement team and the Private Sector Housing Coordinator within Strategic Housing on 15 November 2022.

1.3 Prior to this meeting, Improving Places Select Commission members had background knowledge of several areas:

- The function of selective licensing in Rotherham.
- The general role of the private rented sector in Rotherham's housing market.
- Proposed social housing reforms described in the Government White Paper, A Fairer Private Rented Sector, *2022.*
- Recent proceedings of the National Residential Landlord's Association (NRLA), which Rotherham MBC has attended and presented.
- The seven Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) whereby deprivation is measured, which include health as a primary factor and housing as a secondary factor.
- Local knowledge of Selective Licensing areas within their wards.

1.4 The review examined:

- The role of private sector housing in national and local contexts.
- How selective licensing gives the Council additional powers to raise standards in areas of greatest deprivation.
- Misconceptions around selective licensing in Rotherham.
- The role of partners in raising standards

1.5 In examining the role of partners in raising standards, the review also considered the perspective of South Yorkshire Police (SYP, partners and made note of the consultations with landlords and tenants which are currently in progress by the service. The results of the landlord surveys are being analysed by the service, and the engagement with tenants will be completed in April 2023, with outcomes available after this report has been submitted. Therefore, it is acknowledged that recommendations from this review will be subject to any insights garnered from these

engagement exercises. The service may be invited to share the results of these surveys and the response of the service as part of a future update to scrutiny.

1.6 Whilst anti-social behaviour is often mentioned as an issue of concern when discussing selective licensing areas, the topic of anti-social behaviour was determined to be outside the scope of this review. This is because Rotherham's selective licensing scheme was initiated to address deprivation and poor housing conditions. Therefore, any review of the impact of the scheme should examine the extent to which the scheme is alleviating the conditions it set out to address. Crime, however, was considered in this review insofar as it is the fifth domain within the Indices of Multiple Deprivation, which is the national framework by which deprivation is measured. Matters relating to assessing the impacts on deprivation will be discussed in the next section. IPSC has previously agreed that anti-social behaviour will be the focus of a separate piece of scrutiny work in 2023/24.

1.7 **Selective Licensing in Rotherham**

1.8 Private Sector Housing plays an increasingly important role in Rotherham. As housing market conditions delay home ownership for many families, and as the cost of living leads more families to join the register for council housing, private sector housing will play an increasingly important role. Private Sector Housing is all housing which is not Council-owned, including private lettings, Registered Housing Associations, and owner-occupied housing. This sector comprises approximately 85,000 properties in Rotherham. The Council's Community Protection Unit are responsible for monitoring and enforcement action relating to private sector housing.

1.9 The Private Rented Sector (PRS) is the portion of the Private Sector Housing market which is most at risk for deprivation and poor housing conditions. The PRS remains largely unregulated, which means that anyone can be a landlord. The PRS has grown by 240% in the last 20 years. In Rotherham, this sector, based on the initial Census 2021 data, now contains slightly more than 17,000 properties, and makes up 15% of the total housing market. A proportion of these properties are below decent standards.

1.10 Councils have various powers to raise and enforce standards throughout their local authority areas, including areas where there is private sector housing. In addition to these powers, under Part 3 of the Housing Act 2004, councils can add a selective licensing scheme to enable further interventions in a designated area where there are any of the following issues:

- Low housing demand (or is likely to become such an area);
- A significant and persistent problem caused by anti-social behaviour;
- Poor property conditions;
- High levels of migration;
- High level of deprivation;

- High levels of crime.

1.11 Based on several small geographical areas within the borough that have a high proportion of private rented sector housing, Rotherham applied for the current selective licensing scheme based on the criteria of deprivation, or a lack of basic necessities. Following and expanding on a previous scheme from 2015-2020, the current scheme geography was designated in 2020 and will continue until April 2025.

1.12 Initially the scheme was met with some resilience from some landlords. Reluctance reduced once improvements were seen, as penalties were only for landlords not doing things right. The scheme works on an application basis. Since introduction 1,074 landlords have applied for 2,083 licenses. 69% of landlords have responsibility for only one property. Over two thirds of applications are managed by landlords with portfolios of less than five properties. Only a handful of landlords have portfolios larger than 20 properties; these landlords are responsible for 8% of applications. 93% of applications are managed by individuals rather than letting agents. Income from licences is equivalent to £36,167 per designated selection licensing area per year. To date, 346 Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) inspections had been completed, with 129 rebates offered to be returned to landlords when their properties passed. 832 notices had been served where houses were not up to the legal standard. 66 properties had Category 1, or serious, hazards. There had been 17 successful prosecutions. A National Federation of Residential Landlords (NFRL) training package was offered alongside all civil penalties assessed.

1.13 Support offered to landlords under the scheme has continued to expand as the scheme was continued and extended. To provide Rotherham's landlords with a resource for clear information around licensing expectations, the service has created dedicated web pages. The service also produces newsletters to increase added value to landlords by sharing sector specific information, intelligence and inspection trends. The service has introduced an improved inspection protocol and undertaken a landlord and tenant survey. The service offers access to training for landlords and provides NRLA Corporate membership for those landlords who want/need to improve their knowledge of the private rented sector as well as attending and presenting at locally organised, residential landlord association meetings. The service produces tenancy advice packs, enforces Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (MEES), and performs letting agent compliance checks. These efforts recognise the valuable contributions of responsible landlords and managing agents. The support offer will evolve further as the Service reacts to the current Government White Paper.

1.14 Rotherham participated in the consultation on the White Paper, which proposes several reforms to the PRS in response to an increasingly unsettled housing market. Amongst these reforms, is a plan to abolish Section 21 'no-fault' evictions and introduce a simpler tenancy structure through a Rental Reform Bill; to apply the Decent Homes Standard to the

PRS for the first time; to enforce a strict liability offence requiring landlords to offer decent accommodation; to introduce a new Property Portal to help landlords understand their obligations and to introduce a housing ombudsman covering all PRS landlords and providing redress for tenants.

1.15 **Measuring deprivation with the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)**

1.16 Deprivation has proven a challenging category on which to base the scheme, because so many factors contribute to deprivation, and the value of Rotherham's deprivation rating can be influenced by many complex factors. This is reflected in how the Government measures deprivation via seven indices. The Indices of Multiple Deprivation are seven domains, each comprising a range of indicators. These indicators are:

1. Income;
2. Employment;
3. Education, Skills and Training;
4. Health and Disability;
5. Crime;
6. Barriers to Housing and Services;
7. Living Environment.

1.17 A selective licensing scheme focussed on alleviating deprivation, may involve interventions in each of these 7 domains. With so many factors contributing to deprivation, however, impact is hard to achieve without joined up approaches to improving each of the domains. As articulated in *The English Indices of Deprivation 2019,* a technical report by the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government, many people assume that deprivation is synonymous with poverty, but it is important to note that income and finances make up only one domain of the IMD. Deprivation encompasses much more than low income and is characterised by "a lack of resources of all kinds," including basic necessities.[1] Alleviating deprivation requires improved access to multiple types of resources, including those recognised within the IMD indicator.

1.18 For the purposes of this review, the IMD are a useful and relevant framework and should be considered a starting point for measuring the impact of selective licensing. The IMD cannot be used to measure absolute change in deprivation over time, because deprivation is measured as a range of small geographical areas, from most deprived to least deprived. However, the IMD are useful for delving into how Rotherham residents may be experiencing the domains of deprivation, and for thinking about whether these experiences are changing faster or slower than areas of the country where people are also experiencing a lack of basic necessities. The findings of the review, outlined in the next section, identify some impacts of Rotherham's selective licensing areas that are not named in the IMD but benefit residents nonetheless.

[1] McLellan et al. 9.

1.19 To assess the impact of selective licensing on alleviating deprivation, the review examined how the scheme has prompted current and recent interdisciplinary work (across Council services and partner and community organisations across Rotherham), targeting one or more of the IMD. The aim of the review was to maximise the effectiveness of this work for the remainder of the 2020-25 scheme and to consider ways to expand positive impact in these areas of the Borough, in the medium and longer term.

2.0 Findings

2.1 The review identified four key risk factors to the success of the scheme: 1) pandemic-related delays, 2) a shortage of experienced inspectors, 3) a rising cost of living and 4) complexity of measuring impact on deprivation.

2.2 Risk 1 – Pandemic-related delays

2.3 Restrictions during the pandemic required inspections to pause because inspectors could not enter homes. The impact of this meant that the service had to scale back its ambition from inspecting every house twice, to inspecting every house at least once during the duration of the scheme. It is the goal of the service that all properties are inspected by December 2024.

2.4 Over one third of properties have been found not to have any hazards at all, however, learning from past schemes locally and nationally has shown that landlords whose properties required action following an inspection are more likely to be again non-compliant later. This means that properties which have not met the minimum legal standards in the past are at greater risk of falling below the minimum standards again. It is therefore recommended that reinspection be prioritised for landlords whose properties have required action previously.

2.5 Risk 2 – Shortage of experienced inspectors

2.6 Skilled inspectors, especially those qualified to undertake the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)[2], are key to the success of the programme, combining precision, speed, and tact. Experienced inspectors understand how properties are constructed and decline over time. Having this knowledge aids inspectors in identifying areas where things are going wrong. Being able to identify early signs of decline can help make rectifying these faster, easier and less expensive for landlords.

2.7 The review examined how selective licensing fees are collected and utilised. In 2019, the fee was reduced, and a rebate was introduced to incentivise responsible landlords. The application fee is £68 per property (this is not for houses of multiple occupancy). The maintenance fee is £453 covering a 5-year period. Where an applicable is submitted late, a late application fee of £136 can be applied. This is assessed by the

[2] Housing Health and Safety Rating System: Guidance for Landlords and Property Related Professionals, 2006. Department for Communities and Local Government.

service. A rebate of £127 is given back to the landlord if the property passes.

2.8 The review found that licence fees currently pay for one inspector within a team of four inspectors No funds are left over to pay for improvements or projects within the selective licensing areas. To stakeholders expecting visible improvements from the scheme, this could give the impression that the applications are not adding value. For this reason, it is recommended that the Service consider how expectations amongst landlords and within communities may be managed around selective licensing as a measure focused on the health of residents rather than aesthetics or regeneration.

2.9 By nature of the role, inspectors must be highly skilled and experienced to conduct the inspections and navigate the interpersonal demands of the role. Legislation governs how notices are served regarding private sector properties. Communication around this process has to be done with precision, creating a high training requirement for inspectors. Skilled inspectors are therefore key to the success of the programme, combining precision, speed, and tact. Identifying defects, experienced inspectors understand how properties are constructed and decline over time, aiding them in identifying areas where things are going wrong. Being able to identify early signs of decline can help make rectifying these faster, easier and less expensive for landlords.

2.10 The outlook for the service suggests that highly skilled inspectors are in increasingly high demand. Proposed social reforms described in the Government White Paper, A Fairer Private Rented Sector, 2022, will reinforce the need for highly trained inspectors, as new legislation and long-standing laws will require enforcement by local authority officers.

2.11 The service has had to scale back its inspection targets as noted in Section 1.18 above because of the combined effects of pauses during COVID-19 restrictions and the shortage of skilled inspectors. A skilled inspector can independently conduct as many as four inspections per day, including paperwork. This rate drops to around two inspections per day where there are significant differences house to house. A less experienced inspector may complete one inspection per day. The service is currently developing trainee inspectors to be able to conduct inspections independently, but development takes time.

2.12 As tightening resources and shortages of skilled workers are being experienced across many sectors nationally, a mitigation undertaken by some local authorities is to empower landlords to self-assess. Many local authorities go a step further to incentivise accredited landlords, provided they maintain the accreditation throughout the duration of the scheme. Further discounts are granted for proactive landlords who have met standards for energy efficiency, for example. Due to the shortage of experienced inspectors, it is recommended that consideration be given to how the Council may support retention of experienced inspectors already in the Council's employment. It is also recommended that consideration

be given to empowering landlords to self-assess, and that consideration be given to rewarding responsible landlords.

2.13 **Risk 3 – Rising cost of living**

2.14 For many families throughout the country, rising cost of living follows on from a financially challenging period during the pandemic. Prices have risen faster than wages. Rising cost of living is felt in areas of high deprivation where income margins were already low. The pandemic also caused increased risk for some residents relating to IMD domains 1) income, 2) employment, and 3) health and disability. Deterioration in these domains can have follow on effects on other indices, such as cold or crowded living conditions. Homes which are inadequately heated and insulated can become damp and mouldy, with potentially serious health implications for residents.

2.15 In view of these wider challenges which have come about after the initiation of the scheme, housing inspections delivered under the scheme have only limited ability to prevent deprivation from worsening. As the cost of living rises, more residents are at risk of not being able to afford basic necessities. It is therefore recommended that the Council's response to damp and mould, as a health hazard for families affected by rising cost of living, be considered for inclusion in the scrutiny work programme for 2023/24. It is also recommended that consideration be given to how the uptake of the cost-of-living support offer among families in selective licensing areas may be further promoted and monitored, with a view to identifying gaps and promoting financial inclusion.

2.16 **Risk 4 – Complexity of measuring impact on deprivation**

2.17 It is commendable that improvements have been made under the heading of deprivation, but as outlined above, deprivation is an extremely difficult category to influence. A joined-up approach targeting all seven indices would have maximum impact on deprivation.

2.18 It should be noted that, although the links between poor housing conditions and poor health have been well established, the IMD do not identify poor housing conditions as a primary domain. Exposure to damp, cold, mould and noise is strongly associated with poor mental and physical health, yet Living Environment Deprivation - which includes indicators for housing without central heating and housing in poor condition - is one of the lesser weighted IMD domains. This means that improvement in indoors living environment alone, cannot influence these measures, even when serious hazards are being addressed that will improve healthy life expectancy for residents.

2.19 As stated in section, 1.18, the IMD cannot be used to measure absolute change in deprivation over time, because it is measured as a range of small geographical areas ranked from most deprived to least deprived. The IMD is however useful for considering the ways people in selective licensing areas may be experiencing the various domains of deprivation

Given the complexity of measuring impact on deprivation and difficulty in improving relative levels of deprivation, it is recommended that consideration be given to how internal measures may better reflect the real impact of the scheme on specific indices included in the IMD, and in other indicators of quality that are not included in the IMD. Furthermore, it is recommended that a joined-up approach be sought with relevant partner and voluntary sector and resident-led organisations prior to introducing any further scheme, especially in the category of deprivation.

2.20 **Potential areas for further interventions**

2.21 Maximising the effectiveness of the remainder of the current selective licensing scheme, and any future scheme established under the category of deprivation, may involve several areas for potential further interventions:

- supporting actions by CPU and SYP to the reduce rates of violence, burglary, theft and criminal damage, which are indicators of deprivation within the IMD;
- eliciting buy-in from stakeholders regarding focused interventions relating to IMD indices 1-3 which are Income Deprivation; Employment Deprivation; and Education, Skills and Training Deprivation;
- strengthening links with the Housing Strategy of the Council and with other Council service areas and community services, such as those which support homelessness prevention and financial inclusion.

2.22 The review found that the interventions associated with the HHSRS inspections have had a positive if limited impact on health and safety of residents within selective licensing areas. Housing inspections delivered under the scheme have directly led to actions which eliminated hazards relating to IMD Index 7, Living Environment Deprivation and Index 4, Health Deprivation and Disability.

2.23 The review also found evidence that partnership working with South Yorkshire Police in selective licensing areas had a beneficial impact.

2.24 The review found potential for the current scheme focussed on safer housing to give rise to more coordinated interventions around IMD Indices 1-3: Income Deprivation; Employment Deprivation; or Education, Skills and Training Deprivation. Interventions being delivered by the Council, its partners, or third sector organisations which target these Indices could be better integrated within the delivery of this scheme. The range, uptake, and impact of these within selective licensing areas was not identified within the review and may be an area for further work, subject to analysis of the final 2021 census data when available, and forthcoming results of engagement activity with residents. Through a joined-up approach targeting all indices of deprivation, maximum impact can be achieved.

2.25 Furthermore, the review ascertained that more interventions relating to Index 6, Barriers to Housing and Services, may be possible within the remainder of the present scheme. For example, stronger links with the Council's Homelessness Prevention and Financial Inclusion Services would help alleviate pressure on temporary accommodation caused by preventable evictions. Early intervention can help raise the chances of avoiding crisis. This adds value for landlords and tenants alike. Proactive landlords benefit from staying informed, but it is acknowledged that working with less active landlords can be more challenging.

2.26 It is important to note that 88 percent of small geographical areas (LSOAs) that were among the most deprived in 2015 were again among the most deprived in 2020. This was an incredibly difficult category to impact prior to the pandemic and cost-of-living crisis. This does not mean that Rotherham should abandon its attempts to shift deprivation in view of the additional economic challenges and risks. Improving access to resources of all kinds for people living within selective licensing areas remains a worthy aspiration, and if a further scheme were to be undertaken in the future, this should be done with key actions in place to secure buy-in from all stakeholders and partners – and especially residents, who have a vested interest in the revitalisation of their neighbourhoods and communities.

2.27 The review found there may be room to infuse good practice into operations by applying lessons learned from previous schemes locally, as well as learning from other local authorities and from local stakeholders. Recognising that the IMD does not provide an absolute measurement but rather a range, it would be of interest to note where positive and negative shifts occurred within Rotherham LSOAs between 2015 and 2020 and the reasons for these shifts, if these are known. The use of selective licensing within these areas would be relevant. It is understood that selective licensing is not a quick fix.

2.28 Should any continuation of selective licensing declarations be considered for Rotherham after April 2025, it will be important for the Service to consider carefully the appropriate category for the scheme. Despite the category that is chosen, a joined-up system-wide approach should be taken prior to activation of any scheme. The optimal approach will be data-driven based on the needs and desires of residents and will be undertaken in partnership with residents and members of the communities where there is selective licensing. This includes businesses and organisations who have a stake in improving these areas.

2.29 The review noted that the Service is currently engaging with landlords and residents, for example, through newsletters, local and regional landlord forums, and surveys, which are all positive. Scrutiny will be keen to receive an update exploring how insights gathered will inform the future Service offer and future engagement. Preliminary considerations prior to any further scheme of selective licensing should include engagement activities to form a baseline from residents and landlords.

2.30 With buy-in from residents and stakeholders, system-wide actions can be organised around priorities. For example, if a proposed scheme aimed to reduce rates of short-term tenancies, the Service might join up with teams across the Council and the wider borough who are best placed to address the issues and barriers currently preventing people from seeking or sustaining their tenancies. Working with town or parish councils where there is interest may generate additional momentum from community members who are willing to lead grassroots efforts.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

3.1 The review considered how best to include the perspective of residents living within the selective licensing areas. This was left to the Service as part of the engagement activity that ends after April 2023. For this reason, the results of this piece of work and the response of the service to insights received through the engagement work will be considered as part of the response to the recommendations. All other recommendations agreed as part of the outcomes of this review are subject to the findings of the engagement work with residents.

4. Consultation on proposal

4.1 Members consulted with Service Leads and Partners as part of their considerations in developing these recommendations. Members also have due 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 by 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. 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 than 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 HR implications directly 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 and vulnerable adults directly arising from this report.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 Furthering equalities and human rights is a key objective in undertaking scrutiny activity; therefore, Members have due regard for 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 CO_2 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 due regard to the risks and mitigation factors associated with the services under scrutiny and have made recommendations accordingly.

Accountable Officer(s)
Emma Hill, Head of Democratic Services and Statutory Scrutiny Officer

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This report is published on the Council's website.

Approvals obtained on behalf of:

	Name	Date
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	04/09/23
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	31/08/23
Assistant Director of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phil Horsfield	31/08/23

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Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Public Report
Cabinet

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting
Cabinet – 18 September 2023

Report Title
Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy

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

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report
Ian Spicer, Strategic Director of Adult Care, Housing and Public Health

Report Author(s)
Lynsey Skidmore, Interim Head of Housing Property Services, Adult Care, Housing and Public Health. 01709 334950.

Ward(s) Affected
Borough-Wide

Report Summary

This report seeks approval of the specific Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy. The Policy sets out the Council's approach to dealing with Damp, Mould and Condensation problems in Council-owned and private sector homes.

Recommendations

That Cabinet:

1. Approves the specific Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy.

2. Delegates authority to the Assistant Director of Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing, to alter the Policy to bring it into line with forthcoming new legal time limits for social landlords to address damp and mould, if required.

List of Appendices Included
Appendix 1 Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy
Appendix 2 How to keep your home safe, well and warm- a guide for residents.
Appendix 3 Initial Equality Screening (Part A).
Appendix 4 Equality Analysis Form (Part B).
Appendix 5 Carbon Impact Assessment.

Background Papers
Housing Ombudsman Spotlight Report ‘It’s not lifestyle’ October 2021:
Housing Ombudsman Report ‘One year on follow up report: Spotlight on damp and mould – it’s not lifestyle’. February 2023:

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel
Improving Places Select Commission- Damp Mould and Condensation Update- 12th July 2023.

Council Approval Required
No

Exempt from the Press and Public
No

Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy

1. Background

1.1 Damp and mould in the home can be a hazard to health, causing respiratory problems and increasing allergies. In some cases, it can lead or contribute to serious health conditions and even death. Excess damp and mould constitute a severe hazard and therefore must be addressed by landlords.

1.2 The Council adopts a zero-tolerance, pro-active approach to reports of damp, mould and condensation in council-owned properties and expects other landlords in Rotherham to do the same. The Council provides support to private rented tenants to address hazards that occur in their homes primarily through enforcement of statutory minimum legal standards.

1.3 The Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy has been developed in response to the recommendations by the Housing Ombudsman report 'It's not lifestyle', published in October 2021. The report was a spotlight on damp and mould issues in social housing based on common features present in hundreds of complaints heard by the Ombudsman. While the Ombudsman's jurisdiction does not encompass private sector housing, many of the themes and recommendations apply equally to all housing tenures.

1.4 This issue was brought into sharp focus following the coroner's report into the tragic death of two-year old Awaab Ishak, who lived with his parents in a housing association home in Rochdale. The report found that the cause of death was a severe respiratory condition caused by presence of mould in the home. The property had inadequate ventilation and was not equipped for normal day-to-day activities, which led to excess damp and mould; and the landlord placed too much emphasis on Awaab Ishak's parents' 'lifestyle' and were too slow to implement remedial works.

1.5 It is likely that the Policy will require amendment following the introduction of new regulations that will specify minimum response times in cases of reports of severe health and safety hazards (known as 'Awaab's Law').

2. Key Issues

2.1 The Council has a statutory obligation to deal with hazards in Council and private sector properties. The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) states that a dwelling must be free of category one hazards, and the existence of hazards should be a trigger for remedial action. Damp, mould and excess cold may amount to a category one hazard. In the social housing sector, the Decent Homes standard includes a requirement that a property must be free of category one hazards.

2.2 Currently the Councils approach to damp and mould has not been a separate policy and is documented in the Council's Repair and Maintenance Policy. This includes information on the Damp Survey Request and Report Procedure. However, given its importance it is proposed to have a separate Policy document detailing the Council's approach to dealing with damp, mould and condensation.

2.3 This new Policy will cover both Council and private properties.

2.4 Key aims of the Policy are to raise awareness of damp, mould and condensation, provide advice to residents, and detail the Council's approach to dealing with reports of damp and mould.

2.5 The Policy includes:

- The definitions and causes of condensation, damp and mould, and steps that can be taken prevent and treat it.
- The role of the Council as a landlord.
- The role of the Council as the enforcement body for private sector homes.

2.6 The Policy is underpinned by the following principles:

- All residents should expect to be able to live in a safe and healthy home environment free of damp, mould and condensation.
- Residents should be empowered to identify, treat and prevent damp, mould and condensation in their homes where it is safe, practical and reasonable to do so.
- There is a clear and accessible way to report cases of damp, mould and condensation available for all residents.
- Council staff and contractors should always treat residents in a fair and empathetic manner, taking into account individual circumstances including age, health conditions, language barriers and any contributing factors such as fuel poverty, insulation defects and overcrowding.
- All landlords, including the Council, should take responsibility and be proactive. A data driven, risk and solution focused approach should be adopted to identify and prevent damp and mould quickly.

2.7 The legislative framework will be strengthened through the introduction of 'Awaab's Law', which will require landlords to fix reported health hazards within specified timeframes. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) will bring forward new requirements soon. Cabinet is requested to authorise a delegation to enable rapid amendment to the Policy if required so that it aligns with any new legal requirements.

2.8 <u>Council housing</u>

Between January 2023 to July 2023, the Housing Service received 1,598 reports relating to damp and mould in Council properties. This is a significant increase in comparison to previous years. The number of Technical Officers to inspect mould and damp has been increased by 50% (from six to nine officers) following the 338% increase in reports in January 2023 (comparing 128 reports in January 2022 to 432 reports in January 2023).

2.9 The zero tolerance and pro-active approach within Council properties includes the following:

- Pro-actively identifying issues through awareness raising, staff training and a programme of property surveys.
- Preventing the potential for mould occurring through targeted investment in areas/property archetypes with a high prevalence of damp and mould
- Improvements to thermal efficiency and ventilation.

2.10 The Housing Service attempted 247 proactive mould surveys to Council houses in geographic areas identified as having a disproportionately higher number of mould-related issues in 2022. This subsequently resulted in mould treatment works being successfully carried out to 63 properties, and 36 new extractor fans were fitted. There are plans in place to undertake a further 400 targeted proactive mould surveys to Council homes in 2023. The methodology for targeting the 400 proactive mould surveys will follow the same principles as the targeted approach for the 247 surveys undertaken in 2022.

2.11 The table below summarises the investment in specialist treatments in Council properties over the last 7 years:

Year	Mould and Condensation Treatment	Damp Proofing Works	Beyond the mould (Extractor Fan planned Programme)	**Annual spend**
2017-18	£175,000	£285,000	£0	**£460,000**
2018-19	£138,000	£170,000	£0	**£308,000**
2019-20	£213,000	£299,000	£0	**£512,000**
2020-21	£125,000	£352,000	£0	**£477,000**
2021-22	£186,000	£331,000	£0	**£517,000**
2022-23	£295,000	£580,000	£53,000	**£928,000**
2023-24 (P5 Forecast)	£750,000	£896,000	£432,000	**£2,078,000**
7 Year Total	**£1,882,000**	**£2,913,000**	**£485,000**	**£5,280,000**

2.12 In addition, £8.8m targeted investment has been made in the Council's housing stock during the last five years to improve ventilation, insulation and thermal efficiency.

2.13 <u>Private sector housing</u>
The Council takes a pro-active approach in Selective Licensing designated areas, and a reactive approach to deal with unresolved complaints elsewhere. Tenants should first contact their landlord, who has a duty to ensure that properties are fit for human habitation. Tenants can request an inspection by a Community Protection Officer/ Environmental Health Officer (EHO) if their landlords have failed to carry out appropriate repairs. Landlords are held to account in relation to any hazards presented by damp and mould, which during the current financial year has resulted in two properties being prohibited for human habitation due to damp and mould.

2.14 The Council's Community Protection and Environmental Health team has received 10 private sector housing complaints relating to mould and damp between January and July 2023 which implies that by year end there will be an increase on previous full years with 13 in 2022 and 12 in 2021.

2.15 However, it should be noted that tenants in the private sector are not as ready to complain, for a range of reasons, compared to tenants in the social sector.

For each reactive complaint made to the Council, the property will be inspected for hazards and damp and mould will be picked up even where the original issue relates to a different matter, such as heating. The team has dealt with 372 complaints so far, this financial year. In addition, where pro-active inspections of private sector properties are undertaken, damp and mould is one of the hazards examined and is found to be a Category 1 hazard in an estimated 7% of properties.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

3.1 **Option 1:** Do not publish or delay the separate bespoke Policy (not recommended). The Council could rely on the Council Housing Repairs and Maintenance Policy, or the Council could opt to delay introduction of a policy until new legal requirements to deal with damp and mould are in force. This is not recommended because the separate Policy ensures that residents know how to report damp and mould, and the service they should expect once reported.

3.2 **Option 2**: Publish a Policy covering only Council housing (not recommended). This option would address the core requirements of the Council in its position as a social landlord, but it would leave other residents with no clear guidance or expectations of support.

3.3 **Option 3**: Publish a bespoke and separate Policy covering all housing types (**recommended option**). This option, combined with a delegation to bring the Policy into line with any new legal requirements, is preferred because it provides clear policy now, and to all residents.

4. Consultation on proposal

4.1 The emerging themes from the Draft Policy were discussed at the Housing Involvement Panel and the Draft Policy has been shared with tenant representatives and their feedback has been incorporated.

4.2 The Draft Policy has also been shared with members of the Rotherham Strategic Housing Forum. Housing associations have provided positive feedback.

4.3 The Draft Policy and an update on the current position on damp and mould within Rotherham was presented to Improving Places Select Commission on 12th July 2023. IPSC asked for some more data on issues in the private rented sector. This is contained within this report.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

5.1 Subject to approval, the Policy will be published on the Council website in September 2023.

5.2 An annual progress report will be prepared for the Improving Places Select Commission.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

6.1 There is a total budget in place for dealing with damp and mould issues in council homes of £1.072m in 2023/24. This value represents a 109% funding increase vs 2021/22 outturn and a 21% increase vs the 2022/23 outturn.

6.2 The enforcement of legislation relating to the private rented sector is contained within existing revenue budgets and for designated areas, within the Selective Licensing budget. The Selective Licensing budget is funded through fees charged to landlords for the Licensing of properties.

6.3 There are no direct procurement implications associated with the approval of the Policy. There are current contracts in place with specialist mould and damp contractors to facilitate works to Council homes. As and when these contracts require renewal (or additional contractors are required to meet demand), they must be procured in compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (as amended) and the Council's own Financial and Procurement Procedure Rules.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

7.1 There are legislative requirements for keeping social housing and private sector properties in a reasonable state of repair and free from hazards, which are also applicable to damp and mould. The detail of the relevant legislation is contained within the main body of the report.

7.2 The Social Housing (Regulation) Act received Royal Assent on the 20th July 2023. The Act will introduce "Awaab's law" which will require landlords to fix reported health and safety hazards within specified timescales.

7.3 The Social Housing (Regulation) Act also enhances the powers of the Regulator by permitting regular inspections of the largest social housing providers and the power to issue unlimited fines to rogue social landlords, the inspections are expected to commence in April 2024.

7.4 The Regulator will now consult on revisions to the consumer standards, and the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) will consult on the measures to move forward with the social housing reform programme such as "Awaab's Law", changes to the Decent Homes Standards and professionalisation of the sector.

7.5 In implementing the Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy the Council is taking steps to minimise the risk of legal challenge/enforcement action by the Regulator in the future. The Council will be able to demonstrate that they have fully considered the recommendations made by the Housing Ombudsman and are taking their responsibilities as a housing provider seriously.

7.6 The Council has a statutory obligation under section 3(1) of the Housing Act 2004 to keep the housing conditions in their area under review with a view to identifying any action that may need to be taken, and at section 4(1) and (2) to inspect properties where Category 1 or 2 Hazards may exist. Section 5 of the Housing Act 2004 places and statutory duty on the Council to take action where Category 1 hazards exist.

7.7 Part 3 of the Housing Act 2004 provides powers for Council's to designate areas for Selective Licensing, which gives the Council additional powers to license private rented properties and attach conditions to those licenses, in addition to the existing powers in the Act.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

8.1 The Housing Service has followed due process and increased the number of Technical Officers to reflect increased demand associated with damp and mould.

8.2 There are no Human resources implications from this paper relating to the Council's private sector housing enforcement functions.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

9.1 Damp and mould can negatively impact upon the health and wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults. It is therefore imperative that we address and deal with the issue as soon as possible.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 The presence of mould within homes can disproportionately affect people with protected characteristics including younger children, older adults or someone with a health condition. The presence of mould may also have an impact on an individual's mental health. The housing service prioritises the response time for anyone with a vulnerability towards damp and mould to enable it to be dealt with sooner.

10.2 Tenants have a right to reside in a home which is fit for habitation.

11. Implications for CO_2 Emissions and Climate Change

11.1 Additional visits to properties by Technical Officers and damp and mould contractors due to the increase in demand and to reflect our pro-active approach may result in an increase in vehicle emissions and waste generated through treatment works.

11.2 However, the Housing Service is carrying out investment to the housing stock to improve the thermal efficiency of properties which positively contributes to the reduction of CO_2 emissions and climate change agenda.

12. Implications for Partners

12.1 There are specialist contractors currently contracted to deliver mould eradication works.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 The key risk is to the health of tenants who are living in properties with damp and mould which can lead to respiratory problems, infections, allergies or asthma. There are robust processes in place to prioritise a response based on the increased vulnerabilities to exposure to mould spores.

13.2 Failure to comply with HHSRS and the Decent Homes Standard will lead to non-compliance. The Regulator for Social Housing can issue an unlimited fine, enter properties with 48 hours' notice and make emergency repairs where there is a serious risk to tenants, with landlords footing the bill. The policy sets out the zero-tolerance and proactive response to reports of damp and mould.

13.3 The Damp, Condensation and Mould Policy addresses the requirements of the legislation and Housing Ombudsman recommendations.

14. **Accountable Officer(s)**

James Clark, Assistant Director of Housing
Approvals obtained on behalf of:

	Name	Date
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	04/09/23
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	30/08/2023
Assistant Director of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phil Horsfield	25/08/2023

Report Author: Lynsey Skidmore, Interim Head of Housing Property Services. 01709 334950 or lynsey.skidmore@rotherham.gov.uk

This report is published on the Council's website.

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DAMP, MOULD & CONDENSATION POLICY



www.rotherham.gov.uk

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

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INTRODUCTION

Damp and mould in the home can be a hazard to health, causing respiratory problems and increasing allergies.

The Council is committed to treating concerns regarding damp, mould and condensation seriously both within our housing stock and that of private landlords and housing associations. This policy sets out the role and responsibilities of the Council, Housing Associations and Private Landlords and aims to:

- Raise awareness of the impact of condensation, damp and mould
- Provide advice to all Rotherham residents, and
- Detail our approach to dealing with reports of damp and mould in council owned and private sector properties.

The policy is underpinned by the following principles:

- All residents should expect to be able to live in a safe and healthy home environment free of damp, mould and condensation.
- Residents should be empowered to identify, treat and prevent damp, mould and condensation in their homes where it is safe, practical and reasonable to do so.
- There is a clear and accessible way to report cases of damp, mould and condensation available for all residents.
- Council staff and contractors should always treat residents in a fair and empathetic manner, taking into account individual circumstances including language barriers, age, health conditions, and any contributing factors such as fuel poverty, insulation defects and overcrowding.
- All landlords, including the Council, should take responsibility and be proactive. A data driven, risk and solution focused approach should be adopted to identify and prevent damp and mould quickly.

The scope of the policy covers our approach to working with residents to prevent and eradicate damp, mould and condensation.

The policy includes:

- An overview of condensation, damp and mould,
- Steps that can be taken to prevent and treat mould
- The role of the Council as:
  - A landlord
  - The enforcement body for private sector homes

The council, housing associations and private landlords operate under different legal and regulatory frameworks, but all bear responsibility for ensuring tenants' homes are habitable and safe.



THE FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO MOULD

The main contributors that may lead to mould being present in your home are condensation, rising and penetrative damp. 'Damp' is a general term which covers a range of different issues connected to excess moisture. It is important to establish what the source of the problem is and its origin. Damp can be caused by a variety of factors and there can be more than one type of damp present at any time.

Condensation

Condensation is the most common cause of dampness contributing towards creating mould within homes, particularly during winter months and is often caused by poor heating and ventilation.

Condensation occurs when moisture held in warm air meets a cold surface and then condenses producing water droplets, or when levels of humidity inside the property are too high.

Condensation can take the form of:

- Surface condensation, arising when the inner surface of the structure is cooler than the room air.
- Condensation inside the structure (interstitial) where vapour pressure forces water vapour through porous materials (such as walls), which then condenses when it reaches colder conditions within the structure.

It is often seen as water on windows and is more noticeable when the weather gets colder and the outside temperature drops. Moisture in the air can cause mould growth on walls and ceilings as well as on furniture and possessions.

Condensation can be caused by:

- **Inadequate heating** within the property.
- **Poor ventilation** and lack of circulating fresh air.
- **High humidity levels** resulting in excessive water vapor in the air.
- **Poor insulation** and building design.
- **Overcrowding** within the property leading to additional levels of condensation and humidity.



The risk of condensation can be reduced through:

- **Adequate ventilation** such as, opening windows and trickle vents, air bricks, ensuring space around furniture to assist air flow and mechanical extractor fans.
- **Adequate heating** such as, energy efficient boilers and radiators which maintain an appropriate heat level.
- **Adequate thermal insulation** such as, wall and loft insulation.
- **Reducing levels of water vapour** in the air from drying clothes outside where possible, opening windows and putting lids on pans when cooking.



Damp

If your property suffers from a build-up of condensation, better ventilation might fix the problem, as highlighted above. However, condensation is not the only cause of damp and your home may experience damp for other reasons.

Rising Damp: Rising damp is the movement of moisture from the ground rising through the structure of the building. This can be caused by a missing or defective damp proof course, or where ground levels, access ramps, etc. breach the damp proof course.

A damp proof course is a barrier, usually formed by a membrane, built into walls of a property, typically 150mm above ground level, to prevent damp rising through the walls.

The presence of rising damp can create or add to an existing condensation problem.



Rising damp to side of kitchen unit on external wall.

Penetrating Damp (including internal leaks): Penetrative damp is caused by water penetrating the external structure of the building or internal leaks causing damp, rot and damage to internal surfaces and structure. The cause can be the result of, for example:

- Water ingress – When water from outside makes its way into a building through defective components such as roof coverings, flashings and external doors and windows.
- Defective or blocked rainwater gutters and pipes.
- Leaking internal water pipes, defective wall tiles to shower area.



Defective overflow pipe.



Penetrating damp to internal wall with defective wall tiles to shower area at other side.

Mould

Mould is a fungus that grows and spreads on damp or decaying matter. It grows best in damp and poorly ventilated areas and reproduces by making spores. It is important that your home has good ventilation to minimise internal moisture and prevent mould growth.

Condensation and damp in homes can lead to mould growth. Mould spores are potent airborne allergens. Exposure to high concentrations of allergens over a prolonged period can cause allergic type reactions, the development or worsening of asthma, respiratory infections, coughs, wheezing and shortness of breath.

Living in a cold home can worsen asthma and other respiratory illnesses and increase the risk of heart disease and cardiac events. It can also worsen musculoskeletal conditions such as arthritis.

Cold or damp conditions can have a significant impact on mental health, with depression and anxiety more



Black spot mould following condensation to walls and ceiling.

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO PREVENT CONDENSATION AND MOULD IN YOUR HOME

If you have mould, caused by damp, it is important to find out why you have excess moisture in your home. When you know what's causing the damp, you can make sure your home is repaired or take steps to limit the moisture in the air. You may need to get a professional to remove mould for you or, in the case of tenants, you need to highlight the problem to your landlord, but if it's only a small amount you may be able to remove it yourself.

There are a number of simple steps that you can take to help keep your home free of damp and mould. It is recommended that you:

- **Air your property regularly** – opening windows regularly, even in winter, allows some moisture to escape.
- **Keep doors closed** – when having a shower or bath or cooking keep the room door closed. This will stop moisture spreading to other parts of the property.
- **Wipe away condensation** – use a cloth or towel to wipe away condensation from windows and frames each day. This will minimise the development of mould.
- **Turn your heating on** – this can dry out damp and reduce your chance of getting mould.
- **Keep an eye out for leaks** – if you see a leak report to your landlord as soon as possible to avoid further damage to your property.



- **Dry clothes in a ventilated room** – dry clothes on an airer in a well-ventilated room keeping the door shut to minimise the spread of moisture to other rooms.
- **Dehumidifiers and damp traps** – these will help take moisture out of the air.
- **Use extractor fans** – always use when having a bath, shower or when cooking to allow moisture to escape.
- **Don't overfill your home** – leave a gap between furniture and the wall and avoid overfilling wardrobes. Check regularly for signs of damp, mould and condensation.
- **Grow moisture loving plants** – some plants absorb moisture and pollution from the air, for example, peace lilies, tillandsia, palms and ferns.

If mildew or mould is seen to be forming it can be cleaned off with a damp cloth, making sure to ventilate the room afterwards to allow the area to dry.

If damp and mould persist, then you should report the problem to your landlord who has a duty to ensure that properties are fit for human habitation. Properties need to be free from hazards and damp and mould and excess cold could amount to a category 1 hazard under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS).



OUR APPROACH TO DEALING WITH DAMP, MOULD AND CONDENSATION

Owner Occupiers

If you own or have a mortgage on your home, it is still important to deal with damp and mould. The Councils Community Energy Team will be able to advise you on keeping your home properly heated and ventilated as well as providing opportunities to access funding to improve the insulation of your home. Further information can be found under section 6 Further Information and Guidance.

Tenants of housing associations or private landlords

Tenants of housing associations or private landlords, if you experience damp related problems that result in mould, you should first contact your landlord, who has a duty to ensure that properties are fit for human habitation. Rented properties need to be free from hazards and damp and mould and excess cold could amount to a Category 1 hazard when assessed using the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS).

Tenants can request an inspection by a Community Protection Officer/ Environmental Health Officer (EHO) if their landlords have failed to carry out appropriate repairs. If a severe 'category 1' hazard is identified the landlord must take action to remove it. If the landlord fails to comply, then the Council will take enforcement action.

On receipt of a complaint about damp and mould, the Council will aim to contact you within five working days. The team will ask you some questions regarding the severity of the issue. This may include asking for photographs. This information will then determine how the team deals with your complaint.

Where low or medium risk is identified, the matter will be dealt with informally with your landlord unless they refuse to rectify the issue.

Where a high or severe risk is identified, or your landlord has refused to carry out work at the informal stage, the team will organise a full inspection of your property and will take appropriate enforcement action to ensure work is carried out to rectify the issue. Timescales for the works to be completed will be discussed as this can vary between individual cases.

Further information regarding how to raise an enquiry with the Council's Community Protection and Environmental Health team is included in section 5. How to Report an Issue.

Council Tenants

The Council's responsibility is to ensure our tenants' homes are safe and healthy. All council homes must comply with the Decent Homes standard, which includes being free of serious hazards like damp and mould.

The Housing Service are utilising business intelligence, geographic information systems (GIS) and data referencing, to target areas which have a disproportionately high level of damp and mould referrals. Proactive mould surveys are being undertaken in these areas to identify damp and mould followed by treatment works.

Preventative measures to ensure that council properties are kept in good repair, free from damp and mould are also being undertaken. This includes capital investment including re-roofing schemes (where loft insulation top-ups beyond 300mm is required), new heating installations, ensuring baths, sinks etc are properly installed (kitchen and bathroom refurbishments), well maintained rainwater goods and planned ventilation improvement works.

The Council recognises the impact that damp, mould, and condensation can have on our tenants, including distress and concerns about health and wellbeing. We will take prompt action to remedy issues and support our tenants by offering guidance, advice, and assistance throughout the process.

In dealing with damp and mould in our homes, the Council adopts the following principles:

- **Our tenants should be listened to** and treated in a fair and empathetic manner.
- **All Council officers and contractors have a role to play** in identifying and reporting damp and mould adopting an 'eyes and ears' approach.
- **We will embed a culture** where Council officers and contractors are trained to see safety as their responsibility and do not blame lifestyle as the cause of damp, mould and condensation.
- **A data driven, risk and solution focused** approach to deal with damp, mould and condensation. We will seek to understand what is causing damp and mould in our homes, and we will ensure this intelligence informs our investment plans for the future.
- **We will utilise our tenant communications** and engagement channels to adopt a pro-active marketing campaign so that tenants are aware of how to spot damp and mould issues in their home and how they can report them.







Pro-active approach

We want to make sure that our tenants know how to spot and report issues, and that we are proactive in our approach to prevent damp and mould issues in our properties.

We have undertaken proactive mould surveys to Council houses in geographic areas identified as having a disproportionately higher number of mould-related issues. This has subsequently resulted in mould treatment works and extractor fans being fitted. In addition to this, proactive checks are also undertaken for damp and mould during the void process where all necessary damp proofing and mould treatment works are carried out.

Resources have also been increased so that we can pro-actively respond to reports of damp and mould.

Our ongoing pro-active approach includes:

- Identifying the prevalence of hazards including damp and mould through stock condition surveys and predictive modelling. Using this information to plan and deliver pro-active investment in 'hotspot' areas and poorly designed properties.
- Analysing complaints data to identify potential trends, themes and learning opportunities ensuring processes are re-engineered based upon the learning.
- Undertaking thorough damp and mould inspections when properties are vacant, ensuring the necessary damp and mould treatment works are completed before a property is re-let.
- Identifying damp and mould issues during mutual exchange inspections to ensure it is rectified prior to the exchange taking place.
- Providing:
  - Annual training to council officers on customer care and how to identify condensation, damp, and mould.
  - Regular 'toolbox talks' with council contractors to ensure operatives, entering properties, are trained to an appropriate level.

- Each room within a property is checked during a programme of Tenancy Health Check visits to identify damp, mould and condensation.
- Undertaking spot checks (MOT) of properties where tenants have not reported a repair within a 12-month period.
- Reviewing information provided to customers to raise awareness around damp, mould and condensation on an annual basis e.g., through publicity in Home Matters, the Council's webpages, and all social media platforms.
- Providing all new Council tenancies the leaflet 'How to keep you and your Home, Safe, Well and Warm - A guide for tenants and leaseholders' in their starter pack. They will also be shown how to use their heating and ventilation systems, and will be provided with up to date running costs of the appliance for their information.

Zero tolerance when damp and mould occurs

Following a report of damp, mould or condensation the repairs service will:

- Check who is living in the property to see if works and necessary support needs to be escalated due to vulnerabilities of tenant(s) e.g., age (both young and old), ill health or disability that may make the tenant or family member more vulnerable.
- Arrange appointments to visit 100% of all damp, mould and condensation requests, prioritising those where the tenant or family member has been identified as being at increased risk.
- Triage against the three stage process which includes a more in-depth inspection and assessment at each stage of the process dependent upon whether damp and mould has been reported previously.

- Attend and investigate within 10 working days to determine the cause of damp, mould and condensation through a robust and extensive internal and external inspection of the property and, if appropriate, neighbouring properties.
- Diagnose the cause of damp and deliver effective solutions, dealing with the cause of the damp, not just the symptoms and wherever possible, “fixing first time” and looking beyond the mould approach, for example, loft insulation rolled back away from edge roof space, leak, inadequate ventilation, poor heating system etc.
- Technical Officers will remove low levels of mould for tenants on the first visit; this may not require any further works at this time, and advice will be left with the tenant to manage low levels of mould.
- Refer to a specialist damp contractor where there is evidence of defective damp proof courses or decayed timberwork and explain what will happen next, i.e. contact will be made by specialist contractor to book in survey or works.
- Refer to a specialist mould contractor where there is evidence of severe black spot mould and explain to the tenant what will happen next, i.e., contact will be made by specialist contractor to book in survey or works.
- Depending on the extent of works and tenant’s circumstance (health conditions), alternative temporary accommodation may be required in severe cases. The Council will support the tenant through this process.

COUNCIL TENANT AND LEASEHOLDER RESPONSIBILITY

Tenant Responsibility

The Tenancy Agreement states that tenants must keep their homes in good, clean condition and immediately report any faults, damage or repairs. It is therefore the shared responsibility of tenants and the Council to make sure that incidents of damp and mould are reported and acted upon in a timely manner, in a collective effort to minimise damp and mould in Council homes.

Tenants should regularly check their homes for damp and mould and ensure they report an issue as soon as it is noticed so that necessary actions can take place to prevent it from getting worse. Access must be provided to the Council or its contractors so that relevant works can be undertaken.

Tenants should try to reduce condensation damp by ensuring their homes are well ventilated and adequately heated. Where this is not possible, for example because of the costs of heating, tenants should get in contact with the Council for advice.

Leaseholder responsibility

Leaseholders are responsible for managing and maintaining their own properties including damp, mould, and condensation, in accordance with their lease agreement. Leaseholders are responsible for any repairs to their own flat which are due to their actions or inactions.

As the freeholder the Council is responsible for all repairs to the fabric of the building, such as roof repairs, and we will conduct appropriate repairs to rectify any issues. We are only responsible for repairs to a leaseholder's property if we have not complied with this obligation. Any neglect by the leaseholder to manage or conduct repairs for which they are responsible, and that has a direct impact on the condition of a Council owned property, will be dealt with in accordance with the lease.

HOW TO REPORT AN ISSUE

Private and housing association tenants

If you have concerns you should report them to your landlord and if they have failed to address you should report the issue to the Community Protection and Environmental Health team. They can be contacted:

By telephone: (01709) 823118,

By email: env.health@rotherham.gov.uk or

On the website: www.rotherham.gov.uk

If your landlord is a housing association, they will have their own complaints procedure and you have the option of seeking a referral to the Ombudsman if you feel your complaint has not been handled appropriately. Check your landlord's website for more information.

Council tenants

Please report the issue via **email:** repairs@rotherham.gov.uk or telephone 01709 336009.

How to make a complaint

If the Council has failed to provide a service or if you are unhappy with the service you have received, then we welcome this information and feedback. In most cases we hope to be able to resolve problems with the member of staff that you have dealt with. We will use all feedback to help make improvements. When this is not possible, we have a formal complaints procedure to manage complaints.

If you have a complaint, suggestion or compliment you can contact us in a number of ways:

Online form: on the Council website:
www.rotherham.gov.uk/complaints.

Email: complaints@rotherham.gov.uk.

By post: Using a complaint form or by letter. No postage is required for posting forms or letters to us, as you may use our freepost address below.

The Complaints Manager
Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council
(FREEPOST RTCT-XKLS-ZHAZ)
Riverside House, Main Street, Rotherham. S60 1AE.

By telephone: Our contact number is (01709) 382 121.
The customer service representative handing your call will direct you to the appropriate department.

By text: Our contact number is 07860 021 447.

In person: At one of our Customer Service Centres or any Council reception point.

If you are dissatisfied with how we have handled your complaint then you may wish to complain directly to the Housing Ombudsman Service.

The Housing Ombudsman service can be contacted as follows:

Address: Housing Ombudsman Service 81 Aldwych London WC2B 4HN

Phone: 0300 111 3000

Email: info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

FURTHER INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE

Further help and guidance can be found within the 'How to keep you and your home safe and well' guidance leaflet, along with a video the Council has produced on preventing mould. Both are available on the Council's website:

Information for tenants -
Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Link to the 'How to keep you and your home safe and well' leaflet

Dealing with damp and condensation at home -
Energy Saving Trust

Condensation, damp and mould -
Centre for Sustainable Energy (cse.org.uk)

DEALING-WITH-DAMP-AND-CONDENSATION.pdf (nea.org.uk)

The Council recognise that many residents are struggling to pay household bills, including for heating, which can add to the issue of damp and mould. You can access information and support to help at:

Money matters – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Energy – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Energy Crisis Support Scheme –
Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

You may also receive support by contacting your energy provider. Contact information can be found on your most recent bill.

Citizens Advise may provide support and advice by visiting your local branch in Rotherham or on the website at:
www.citizensadvice.org.uk

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BOGUS CALLERS



Beware of bogus callers – Who's knocking at your door?

If you have an unexpected visitor at your door asking to carry out home repairs, remember to always ask for a form of ID. Your safety is very important so please double check that the person visiting is who they say they are.

Legitimate callers will always carry formal identification cards to prove who they are and who they work for.

To keep bogus callers at bay, follow these tips:



- If a stranger wants to enter or carry out any work on your house, and claims that they are from an official utility, local authority, or any other organisation, always ask for ID. If the person is genuine, they will be more than happy to show you their ID.
- Do not open your door or release it from the chain or latch until you have verified that their ID is genuine.
- If they do not show you their ID or if it looks suspicious, close the door, and do not let them in.
- If they persist, tell them that you are calling the police.
- If the person refuses to leave, pick up the phone and call the police on 999.
- If you are unsure or are not expecting a call, do not answer the door.



FIRE SAFETY

A bedtime routine to keep you safe from fire.



We know that we are more at risk from a fire when we're asleep. So, to protect yourself and your loved ones from a fire, it's a good idea to get into a routine of checking your home before you go to sleep.

Keep safe from fire with these tips:

- Make sure candles and cigarettes are put out properly.
- Switch off and unplug electrical appliances.
- Do not leave tumble dryer, washing machine, heated blankets or extractors running on boost function overnight.
- Make sure your oven and hob are turned off correctly.
- Turn heaters off.
- Keep window keys near the window so everyone can find them.
- Close all doors and ensure any fire doors are in good condition and closed correctly.
- Take your keys and mobile telephone with you to the bedroom as you will need them in the event of an emergency.

HAVE A PLAN

It's important to have a plan in case a fire occurs. Smoke alarms will give you an early warning, allowing you time to evacuate.

- If you are woken by your smoke alarm, remember to STOP, THINK, ACT!
- Wake all people inside the property and make your way out through the nearest exit.
- Once you are all outside call 999 and ask for the Fire Service.
- Stay outside until the Fire Service tells you it is safe to enter.
- Remember: Get out! Get the Fire Service out! Stay out

Appendix 2.

HOW TO KEEP YOU AND YOUR HOME SAFE, WELL AND WARM

A Guide for Residents



www.rotherham.gov.uk/housing

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

REF: 87202/2023

STAYING WARM

If you would like to save money but also stay warm and maintain a healthy, condensation and mould free home during the colder months, here are some tips:

- Turn thermostats down to 5°C if you go away in the winter – this keeps the home aired and can prevent pipes bursting in cold weather
- Turn down radiators in rooms you don't use often – but ensure rooms are heated to at least 16°C (61°F)
- Keep furniture away from radiators as this restricts the heat output
- Tuck curtains behind radiators and close them at dusk to stop heat escaping. Open the curtains when the sun shines to warm up the room
- Switch off your appliances when not in use, such as TVs, microwaves, games consoles rather than leaving them on standby. Extractor fans are to be left switched on to allow background extraction (but should not be left in boost mode for extended periods).

For more advice on how to keep warm and well during colder months visit www.nhs.uk/staywell

WHAT IS CONDENSATION AND MOULD?

When we carry out everyday activities, such as cooking, showering, bathing, drying clothes, washing the dishes, and even breathing we create moisture in the air.

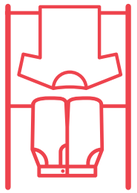
As soon as this warm air hits a cold surface it cools down and is forced to let go of some of the moisture it carries, making the cold surface wet. This is called condensation. Without adequate heating, insulation, and ventilation it provides the ideal conditions for mould spores to flourish.

This mould can be damaging to the home and harmful to your health.

Tips to keep your home condensation and mould free



- Try to maintain a constant temperature within the home during cold weather.



- Do not dry clothes and towels on radiators. Instead, use washing lines or place wet washing in one room, open the window to let moisture escape and keep the door closed. If you use a dryer please ensure that tumble dryers are vented outside or if a condenser dryer, ensure water collected is emptied regularly.



- Open windows when you are at home and when the weather permits to increase ventilation. If windows have trickle vents, make sure they are opened regularly. Remember to never leave windows open when you go out.



- Ensure extractor fans are not isolated, blocked, or disconnected and use the extractor fan when bathrooms are in use or you're in the kitchen cooking, to remove excess moisture.



- Keep internal doors closed to contain the moisture and always use fans when boiling water in pans, bathing, or showering. Always try to keep lids on pans of boiling water to prevent moisture from escaping. This will also ensure less energy is lost when cooking.



- Leave a small gap between the walls of your home and the furniture to allow air to circulate around and help to prevent mould growth.

GAS AND ELECTRICITY CHECKS TO KEEP YOU SAFE

Carbon monoxide poisoning is very serious and a preventable form of poisoning. If you live in a Council property, a carbon monoxide detector installation programme is in place, where alarms will be checked as part of an annual gas service.

In England and Wales, each year around 25 people die from carbon monoxide poisoning, and a further 200 people are admitted to hospital for treatment.

It is very important to ensure gas and electrical checks are carried out in your home by a Gas Safe Registered Engineer, as these are legal requirements in place to keep you and your family safe

Gas service



To reduce the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning it is important that gas safety checks are carried out annually on any gas appliances in your home. If you live in a property with a shared flue or chimney, it is important to share the responsibility with your neighbours.

If you live in a council property, gas engineers will visit each year and carry out an electrical fixed wire test every five years to ensure your appliances are safe to continue using.

Electrical Fixed Wire Test



An Electrical Fixed Wire Test ensures that all fixed electrical wiring, sockets, switches, and fittings meet the satisfactory requirements. It is vital that these checks are carried out to ensure electrical wires in your property are fit for purpose and do not pose a risk of fire or electric shock or electrocution.

The fixed wire test highlights any faults that may require additional remedial work.

Appendix 3

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: Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy Cabinet Report	
Directorate: Adult Care, Housing & Public Health	**Service area:** Housing Property Services
Lead person: Lynsey Skidmore	**Contact: 01709 334950** lynsey.skidmore@rotherham.gov.uk
Is this a: [x] **Strategy / Policy** [ ] **Service / Function** [ ] **Other** **If other, please specify** **Report**	

2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening
The report is seeking approval of the new Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy. It also provides an update on the current position with damp and mould reports in Rotherham Council and private sector homes and the approach taken by the housing service to deal with the issue.

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? *(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)*	x	
Could the proposal affect service users? *(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)*	x	
Has there been or is there likely to be an impact on an individual or group with protected characteristics? *(Consider potential discrimination, harassment or victimisation of individuals with protected characteristics)*	x	
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns regarding the proposal? *(It is important that the Council is transparent and consultation is carried out with members of the public to help mitigate future challenge)*		x
Could the proposal affect how the Council's services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom? *(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from commissioning or procurement)*	x	
Could the proposal affect the Council's workforce or employment practices? *(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from your HR business partner)*	x	

If you have answered no to all the questions above, please explain the reason

The recommendations will improve the way the service deals with reports of damp, mould and condensation as well as improving the housing stock.

A report was presented to IPSC on 11th July 2023 providing an update on the current situation with damp and mould in Rotherham and the draft Policy. It has also been shared with tenant representatives of the Housing Involvement Panel and members of the Strategic Housing Forum. All comments/feedback has been positive to date. An

article was published by the Sheffield Star and Rotherham Advertiser following the IPSC meeting.

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?** Mould spores are potent airborne allergens. Exposure to high concentrations of these allergens, over a prolonged period, can cause allergic type reactions, the development or worsening of asthma, respiratory infections, coughs, wheezing and shortness of breath. Therefore, the presence of mould within homes can disproportionately affect people with protected characteristics including younger children, older adults or someone with a health condition. The presence of mould may also have an impact on an individuals mental health. The housing service prioritises the response time for anyone with a vulnerability towards damp and mould to enable it to be dealt with sooner. The service is accessible and takes account of any barriers i.e. language and disability.
• **Key findings** There is a need to ensure a robust performance management framework to ensure the service is being prioritised to individuals with a protected characteristic where the presence of mould may disproportionately affect them.
• **Actions** Implement a robust process to ensure that the service is prioritised to individuals with a protected characteristic where the presence of mould may disproportionately affect them. Implement a robust performance management framework to monitor service responses to individuals with a protected characteristic where the presence of mould may disproportionately affect them.

Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	01.06.23
Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	20.07.23
Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title):	Lynsey Skidmore, Interim Head of Contracts, Investment and Compliance

5. Governance, ownership and approval		
Please state here who has approved the actions and outcomes of the screening:		
Name	**Job title**	**Date**
James Clark	Assistant Director of Housing	

6. Publishing	
This screening document will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given. If this screening relates to a **Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision** a copy of the completed document should be attached as an appendix and published alongside the relevant report. A copy of **all** screenings should also be sent to equality@rotherham.gov.uk For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file and also published on the Council's Equality and Diversity Internet page.	
Date screening completed	20.07.23
Report title and date	Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy
If relates to a Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision – report date and date sent for publication	Cabinet- 18th September 2023
Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	

Appendix 4

PART B – Equality Analysis Form

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

This form:

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

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

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

1. Title	
Equality Analysis title: Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy	
Date of Equality Analysis (EA): 20th July 2023	
Directorate: Adult Care, Housing & Public Health	**Service area:** Contracts, Investment and Compliance
Lead Manager: Lynsey Skidmore	**Contact number: 34950**
Is this a:	
[x] **Strategy / Policy** [ ] **Service / Function** [ ] **Other**	
If other, please specify	

2. Names of those involved in the Equality Analysis (Should include minimum of three people) - see page 7 of Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance		
Name	**Organisation**	**Role (eg service user, managers, service specialist)**
Lynsey Skidmore	RMBC	Interim Head of Contracts Investment and Compliance
Andrew Lumb	RMBC	Partnering Manager
James Clark	RMBC	Assistant Director of Housing

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

Aim/Scope (who the Policy/Service affects and intended outcomes if known)
This may include a group/s identified by a protected characteristic, others groups or stakeholder/s e.g. service users, employees, partners, members, suppliers etc.)

The policy affects all council and private sector tenants. All of which have protected characteristics.

There is also an impact upon employees and contractors.

Individuals with a protected characteristic including age and health condition are more vulnerable to the health impact of mould in their home.

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

The housing service hold equality information on all council tenants and on its employees. This information is considered when a report is submitted.

The Housing Involvement Panel tenant representatives have been consulted on the draft policy.

The policy was presented to IPSC on 12th July for feedback.

The policy has also been shared with members of the Strategic Housing Forum.

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

The housing service do not collect equality information on pregnancy where an individual may be more vulnerable to mould spores.

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

The service is being prioritised if there are people living in a household who may be worse affected by damp and mould as a result of their health condition or age. All orders to contractors and the response time to works are monitored on a daily basis.

Engagement undertaken with customers. (date and group(s) consulted and key findings)	The principles of the policy were presented to tenants at the Housing Involvement Panel in May 2023 who were supportive of the proposals. The draft policy was also shared with tenant representatives in July 2023.
Engagement undertaken with staff (date and group(s)consulted and key findings)	Staff affected (Technical Officers) have been consulted and are currently carrying out the work as reflected within the report. Facilities Services cleaning operatives are undertaking mould cleaning work in council properties and have been consulted.

4. The Analysis - of the actual or likely effect of the Policy or Service (Identify by protected characteristics)
How does the Policy/Service meet the needs of different communities and groups? (Protected characteristics of Age, Disability, Sex, Gender Reassignment, Race, Religion or Belief, Sexual Orientation, Civil Partnerships and Marriage, Pregnancy and Maternity) - see glossary on page 14 of the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance) The service response is being prioritised based on age (young or old), disability (health condition) and pregnancy as these characteristics may be worse affected by mould in their home. The zero tolerance and proactive response will positively impact upon protected characteristics.
Does your Policy/Service present any problems or barriers to communities or Groups? No. the policy will be published on the Council website which is accessible.
Does the Service/Policy provide any positive impact/s including improvements or remove barriers? An improved accessible service will be provided to tenants. Pro-active surveys and visits are being undertaken in council properties to identify damp and mould issues where tenants may not know how to identify or report the issue.
What affect will the Policy/Service have on community relations? (may also need to consider activity which may be perceived as benefiting one group at the expense of another)

The service is being prioritised to households with a vulnerability resulting in other households receiving a slower response which may adversely affect on community relations although this is anticipated to be low.

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

5. Summary of findings and Equality Analysis Action Plan

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

Title of analysis: Damp, Mould and Condensation
Directorate and service area: Adult Care, Housing & Public Health, Housing Services
Lead Manager: Lynsey Skidmore
Summary of findings:
There is a need to ensure a robust performance management framework to ensure the service is being prioritised to individuals with a protected characteristic where the presence of mould may disproportionately affect them.

Action/Target	State Protected Characteristics as listed below	Target date (MM/YY)
Revise processes/systems within the housing service to ensure data is collected in relation to pregnancy.	**Pregnancy/Maternity**	**October 2023**
Implement a robust process to ensure that the service is prioritised to individuals with a protected characteristic where the presence of mould may disproportionately affect them.	**Age** **Disability** **Pregnancy/Maternity**	**October 2023**

Implement a robust performance management framework to monitor service responses to individuals with a protected characteristic where the presence of mould may disproportionately affect them.	**Age Disability Pregnancy/Maternity**	**October 2023**

***A = Age, D= Disability, S = Sex, GR Gender Reassignment, RE= Race/ Ethnicity, RoB= Religion or Belief, SO= Sexual Orientation, PM= Pregnancy/Maternity, CPM = Civil Partnership or Marriage. C= Carers, O= other groups**

6. Governance, ownership and approval

Please state those that have approved the Equality Analysis. Approval should be obtained by the Director and approval sought from DLT and the relevant Cabinet Member.

Name	Job title	Date
James Clark	Assistant Director for Housing	
Cllr Amy Brookes	Cabinet Member for Housing	

7. Publishing

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

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

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

Date Equality Analysis completed	20.07.23
Report title and date	Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy

Date report sent for publication	
Date Equality Analysis sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	20.07.23

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APPENDIX 5.

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	No Impact	No Impact	No Impact	No Impact
Emissions from transport?	Additional visits to properties by Technical Officers and damp and mould contractors due to the increase in demand and to reflect our pro-active approach.	Increased emissions from use of vehicles.	Increased emissions within the borough from use of vehicles.	Encourage staff to use active travel, public transport or car sharing when attending visits. This is not possible for contractors as they carry specialist equipment within their vans.	The number of inspections and works orders is monitored.
Emissions from waste, or the quantity of waste itself?	Additional waste may be generated from the packaging associated with damp and mould treatment	Additional waste generated.	Additional waste generated.	Contractors will be encouraged to use products with less packaging.	None.
Emissions from housing and domestic buildings?	The housing service is taking a proactive approach to improve the thermal efficiency	Improved thermal efficiency which reduces the emissions generated from council properties.	Reduced emissions across the borough	Investment into improved thermal efficiency of dwellings.	The housing service undertake EPC's for each property. The EPC's are being monitored in line

	of the housing stock.				with net zero 2030 targets.
Emissions from construction and/or development?	The thermal efficiency improvements require contractors to undertake work to the property.	This will result in increased emissions from transport/machinery whilst the work is being undertaken.	Increased emissions across the borough whilst work is being undertaken.	Contractors will be encouraged to use energy efficient vehicles, materials and machinery where possible.	None.
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: N/A					

Please provide a summary of all impacts and mitigation/monitoring measures: The work to deal with the increased cases of damp and mould across the borough is resulting in an increase in emissions. However, the housing service is carrying out investment to the housing stock which will improve the thermal efficiency of properties and the emissions generated.

Supporting information:	
Completed by: (Name, title, and service area/directorate).	Lynsey Skidmore, Interim Head of Contracts, Investment and Compliance, Adult Care, Housing & Public Health.
Please outline any research, data, or information used to complete this [form].	N/A

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]	

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Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Public Report with Exempt Appendices
Cabinet

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting
Cabinet – 18 September 2023

Report Title
Rotherham Integrated (Mainline & Tram Train) Station Land Acquisition & Project Update

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

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report
Paul Woodcock, Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment

Report Author
Lucy Mitchell, Major Project Officer
Lucy.mitchell@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected
Boston Castle
Rawmarsh West
Rotherham West

Report Summary

This report provides an update on the project progress and the acquisition of land required to facilitate delivery of a new Integrated (Mainline and Tram Train) Station. On 28th March 2022, as part of the Regeneration Programme Strategic Land Assembly, Cabinet gave authority to acquire one property (as detailed in Appendix 1) to facilitate delivery of a new mainline station. This report is seeking Cabinet authority to acquire four additional properties, two of which are essential to facilitate delivery of the Integrated Station and two of which would bring significant benefit to the project but are not currently considered essential to delivery of the station based on the preliminary information which is available. It is of course possible that all or part of the desirable properties may need to be acquired once further, more detailed, plans are prepared. This report is also seeking a Resolution in Principle to investigate use of powers to acquire by Compulsory Purchase or through use of a Transport and Works Act Order.

In the event that it is not possible to acquire any or all of the properties by agreement within the required timescales and/or funding envelopes and the investigation into the use of CPO powers indicates an acceptable likelihood of success, a further

report may be submitted to Cabinet seeking formal resolution to acquire the property interests through use of Compulsory Purchase or Transport and Works Act powers. This report will necessarily set out full details of the target properties.

Recommendations

That Cabinet:-

1. Authorises the Assistant Director of Planning, Regeneration and Transport to negotiate the acquisition by agreement of the property interests in Appendix 1 Appendix 2 and Appendix 3 and within the available funding, in consultation with the Council's S.151 Officer, Assistant Director - Legal Services, the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy, and the Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment.

2. Grants a Resolution in Principle to investigate the use of powers, under either the Compulsory Purchase Order or Transport and Works Act Order, to acquire the necessary property interests.

List of Appendices Included
Appendix 1 EXEMPT Red line boundary plan for land acquisition site 1
Appendix 2 EXEMPT Red line boundary plan for additional land acquisition sites 2 & 3
Appendix 3 EXEMT Red line boundary plan for further potential land acquisition sites 4 & 5
Appendix 4 EXEMPT Finance implications
Appendix 5 Equality Impact Assessment screening
Appendix 6 Carbon Impact Assessment

Background Papers
Cabinet Paper March 2022
Cabinet Paper April 2023
Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) to SYMCA 2022

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel
Cabinet 24 April 2023

Council Approval Required
No

Exempt from the Press and Public
Part Exempt (Appendix 1, 2, 3 and 4)
An exemption is sought for **Appendix 1, 2, 3 and 4** under Paragraph 3 (Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)) of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 is requested, as this report contains financial information relating to the acquisition.

It is considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption would outweigh the public interest in disclosing the information because all such negotiations and financial information should remain confidential between the parties.

Rotherham Integrated (Mainline & Tram Train) Station Land Acquisition & Project Update

1. Background

1.1 Rotherham suffers from comparatively poor rail connectivity - the Town is currently served only by a branch line at Rotherham Central station. Existing rail services at Rotherham Central comprise three stopping trains per hour, with a limited range of direct destinations and lack of fast and frequent connections to key centres of employment. In contrast, the Sheffield to Leeds rail corridor currently operates five passenger services per hour between these two cities, mostly bypassing the town.

1.2 The Council is working with partners to promote and progress development of a new Integrated (Mainline and Tram Train) Station in Rotherham. This new station will significantly improve local, regional, and national rail connectivity for local people and businesses, offering access to employment and business growth opportunities, and contributing significantly to the economic regeneration of the town.

1.3 It is anticipated that the new mainline heavy rail station could offer mainline connections to Sheffield, Doncaster, Leeds, York and Birmingham. Taken together with local connectivity offered by a new Tram Train Station adjacent, this project will radically improve the Town's connectivity, delivering social, economic and environmental benefits. These benefits are captured in a Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) for the project that was submitted to South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) in 2022.

1.4 Following SYMCA approval of the SOBC, the Council secured £1m City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement funding to progress the project to the next investment gateway; the preparation of an Outline Business Case (OBC).

1.5 To progress the OBC, Cabinet, in April 2023, gave authority to appoint Network Rail and Transport for the North to prepare key workstreams for the OBC, including:

- Modelling and scheme testing to understand catchment and impact.
- Operational railway design work.
- Timetable modelling (heavy rail and tram train) to confirm service provision and power supply capability.
- Station building/facilities design.
- Preferred location and preliminary layout for tram train stop.
- Updated cost estimate.

Work to prepare the OBC is now underway with an anticipated completion date of January 2024.

1.6 The Council has also secured Towns Fund investment to acquire land necessary to accommodate the station and develop a masterplan for the Integrated Station. Preparation of the masterplan is underway and focuses on the station, the location of facilities and key connections to the Tram Train

and beyond. It also sets out a longer-term vision for the surrounding area in order to capitalise on the benefits that significantly improved connectivity to the national rail network could bring to the Town.

2. Key Issues

2.1 Given the benefits that this project could bring to Rotherham and its residents, the Council is acting as scheme promoter and seeking to lead the development of the project and lobby for its delivery. The Council's efforts are currently focused on:

- Facilitating delivery of the station through land acquisition.
- Preparing a comprehensive masterplan for the station.
- Delivering an Outline Business Case to articulate the project benefits and secure the necessary funding for the project to progress to Full Business Case.
- Promoting the integrated station opportunity and lobbying for its delivery with partners, SYMCA and Government.

2.2 The Outline Business Case and subsequent Full Business Case will consider in greater detail and provide more certainty in relation to the construction of the station but it is currently anticipated that this will be completed by Network Rail, or a contractor appointed on their behalf.

2.3 In March 2022 Cabinet gave authority to acquire the land necessary to facilitate delivery of the Integrated Mainline and Tram Train Station. The need for this property (detailed in Appendix 1) was based on work completed by Transport for the North during the early project development phase. Negotiations to acquire this property are ongoing with the landowner.

2.4 In recent months, the Master Planning Team appointed by the Council have been working to identify key routes and connections through and around the station to ensure direct connectivity between the mainline station and the Tram Train stop and beyond. The masterplan has also identified a preferred location for the station building and a layout for supporting facilities including car parking, a pick-up/drop off area and space to accommodate rail replacement bus services.

2.5 As part of the masterplan development the Team has identified additional land and property that is essential to accommodate the station, its facilities and supporting infrastructure including a secondary means of egress from the northern platform. These additional properties are identified in Appendix 2.

2.6 The Masterplanning Team are trying to ensure that property interests affected by the station proposal are kept to the minimum necessary to facilitate delivery of the Integrated Station. Appendix 1 and 2 identify these affected property interests. However, two further properties have been identified that may be affected as further detailed engagement with Network Rail in relation to the station design and required facilities progresses in the coming months. The acquisition of these two additional property interests (or part of) as set out in Appendix 3 may also be required.

2.7 Acquisition by agreement is the Council's preferred route to secure the necessary land and property and is a precursor to any Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) or Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO). However, given the length of time and cost implications of the Council pursuing acquisition powers it is important that the Council prepares for this potential route. This report seeks a Resolution in Principle to investigate the use of CPO or TWAO powers. If the use of formal powers is required, it will be the subject of a further report to Cabinet for authority to make any such order.

2.8 In this context, and following Cabinet approval in March 2022, solicitors have recently been appointed to advise on the land acquisition strategy for the project. This initial advice will outline the benefits and implications of the different powers (Compulsory Purchase or Transport and Works Act) that exist and are available to the Council to acquire the required property interests necessary for this project prior to exploring the use of such powers.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

3.1 The preferred option is to acquire all the necessary properties by agreement. Use of statutory powers (CPO or TWAO) will be exercised if it is the only way to assemble the parcels of land required to facilitate delivery of the Integrated Station. Negotiation is a mandatory precursor to any use of acquisition powers and therefore progressing immediately to use of these powers is not an option for consideration.

3.2 Consideration has also been given to acquiring an 'option' to buy the required land and properties although this option is not recommended. There are significant benefits to the Council owning the properties that an 'option' on the land would not provide. The main benefits are around de-risking the project and the ongoing management of the properties until such time when the land is required for the station development.

3.3 In addition, some of the properties are occupied and would provide the Council with an income stream covering the holding costs associated with the property acquisitions. Acquisition of the properties as opposed to taking an 'option' also provides an opportunity to recover the capital outlay of the purchases through a future sale should the properties not eventually be required for development of the station or if the development does not proceed. This opportunity would not exist with an 'option' to buy and the cost of securing the 'option' would not be recoverable.

3.4 To do nothing is not a recommended option considering the availability of, and timescale associated with the funding and the significant impact the land acquisition will have in de-risking the project.

4. Consultation on proposal

4.1 There has been considerable engagement with stakeholder partners through the project steering group and board which endorsed the project Strategic Outline Business Case and will oversee the preparation and submission of

the Outline Business Case and other project workstreams including the masterplan preparation and land acquisitions.

4.2 Locally, a strategic engagement plan formed a key part of the Town Investment Plan (TIP); MyTown portal was used to initially engage the wider community in understanding the Town's needs. As the TIP was progressed, a more targeted approach was developed, enabling the public to comment directly on proposals via a Virtual Exhibition (in line with Covid 19 restrictions). The presence of the platform was promoted through social media and Council newsletters.

4.3 Events such as the Rotherham Show have also provided a platform for sharing plans and obtaining feedback from communities regarding the town's regeneration proposals. At the show in 2022, there was significant interest in the station proposal from local people.

4.4 The Town Deal Board has been consulted on the project and is supportive of the approach being taken. The Town Deal Board at their May 2023 meeting were consulted specifically in relation to the necessary land acquisition and approved the proposal.

4.5 Gateley Hamer, the surveyors working with and advising the Council, are in negotiation with the main landowners impacted by the proposal.

4.6 A stakeholder engagement and communications plan was endorsed by the Integrated Station Project Board at its May 2023 meeting. Engagement with Train Operating Companies and the potential Station Facility Owner took place in June 2023 in order to get their views on the design and layout of the station and associated facilities to ensure operational requirements are adequately reflected in the designs.

4.7 Internal colleagues from across the Council have been involved in a number of masterplan workshops to ensure compatibility and fit with emerging policies and proposals that impact the station location and design, including the flood alleviation schemes for example.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

5.1 An indicative high-level programme to station opening is detailed below. However, the development and construction phases will be subject to confirmation or amendment as the OBC is developed, and subject to further funding being secured for the project.

Masterplan finalised	November 2023
Outline Business Case submitted to SYMCA & DfT	January 2024
Full Business Case completed	Late 2024 / 2025
Land acquisition and tenant relocation complete	2025
Construction Start	2026
Station opening	Spring 2028

NOTE – The above Timetable is indicative and subject to change

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

6.1 The financial implications of the proposed acquisitions are detailed within the exempt Appendix 4. The Council has sufficient Capital budget identified to support the acquisition of the properties and the financial implications of holding the properties once acquired have been identified. It should be noted that these costs are estimates and the full cost of the acquisitions will only be known as an agreement is reached and the maintenance costs of holding the properties as the Council gains further information on the condition of the assets through the acquisition process.

6.2 The recommendations detailed in this report are property related, and do not carry any direct procurement implications. Relevant procurement implications will become applicable as the project moves into preparing for construction and will need to be undertaken in line with relevant procurement law at the time.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

7.1 Legal Services and the external firm of solicitors which has been appointed for preliminary specialist advice are being kept informed at all stages and are advising as and when new issues arise. However, there are no substantive legal issues arising from the contents of this report other than as detailed in the report itself.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

8.1 There are no human resources implications arising from the recommendations within this report.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

9.1 There are no such implications arising from this report.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 The acquisition of these properties will not result in any changes at this stage, therefore current arrangements will be preserved and there will be no impact affecting different groups or service users. As the project progresses, a detailed Equality Impact Assessment will be conducted considering access in and around the site and the potential groups/individuals affected by the proposals.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

11.1 There may be a small amount of increased activity on site from visiting Council staff and contractors involved in survey work, however, this impact will be minimal. Where possible, survey work will be desk-based. As the project progresses to Full Business Case, a Carbon Impact Assessment will be undertaken as appropriate. As this is a major transport project, it is

anticipated that consultants with environmental expertise will be appointed to conduct a comprehensive assessment to fully understand impacts.

12. Implications for Partners

12.1 There are no implications anticipated for partners from these acquisitions. Development of a new mainline station will deliver positive impacts for partners with the land acquisition (the subject of this report) an essential component in de-risking the project.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 The main risks to the successful land acquisition:

1. Land acquisition costs higher than budgeted for;
2. Lack of certainty regarding project delivery undermines ability to acquire land

13.2 Landowner acquisition costs higher than budgeted for:
Risk: Additional land requirements identified and/or cost of land higher than budgeted for. **Mitigation:** Masterplanners and surveyors have been appointed at an early stage in the project to identify the extent of land required and to provide 'worst-case' scenarios and ensure all potential compensation costs are covered.

13.3 Lack of certainty regarding project delivery undermines ability to acquire land
Risk: Early stage of project development and certainty of delivery could impact Council ability to acquire land. **Mitigation:** Preparation and acceptance of OBC by SYMCA/Department for Transport (DfT) increases certainty project delivery and enables project to move to Full Business Case. Solicitors and surveyors have been appointed at an early stage in the project to advise on land acquisition strategy and use of Council powers.

14. Accountable Officers

Simon Moss, Assistant Director of Planning, Regeneration and Transport

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	**Date**
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	04/09/23
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	31/08/23
Head of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Bal Nahal	31/08/23

Report Author: Lucy Mitchell, Major Project Officer
Lucy.mitchell@rotherham.gov.uk

This report is published on the Council's website.

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of the Local Government Act 1972.

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Appendix 5

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: Land Acquisition: Rotherham Integrated Mainline and Tram Train Station Project	
Directorate: Regeneration and Environment	**Service area:** Rotherham Borough
Lead person: Lucy Mitchell	**Contact number:** 07748 143280
Is this a: ☐ **Strategy / Policy** ☐ **Service / Function** ☒ **Other** **If other, please specify** A proposed change to the previous business case for the acquisition of land relating to the development of an integrated Mainline /Tram train station for Rotherham.	

2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening
RMBC has Towns Fund capital in order to purchase land required to progress the project to create a Mainline Station integrated with a Tram Train station. Land on the preferred station site is currently in private ownership. Obtaining this land will enable the Council to manage the leased buildings and the current tenants in order to make sure they are vacant should the project progress. The process to purchase the land has begun with negotiations with the landlords of the sites which will be undertaken by consultants appointed. During the development of the Masterplan, it was determined that an emergency secondary access would be required to the North of

the site. Therefore, there the proposed acquisition of the land parcels has changed relative to the prior EIA.

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? *(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)*		X
Could the proposal affect service users? *(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)*		X
Has there been or is there likely to be an impact on an individual or group with protected characteristics? *(Consider potential discrimination, harassment or victimisation of individuals with protected characteristics)*		X
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns regarding the proposal? *(It is important that the Council is transparent and consultation is carried out with members of the public to help mitigate future challenge)*		X
Could the proposal affect how the Council's services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom? *(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from commissioning or procurement)*		X
Could the proposal affect the Council's workforce or employment practices? *(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from your HR business partner)*		X
If you have answered no to all the questions above, please explain the reason		
The acquisition of land for this project is an internal process between Council and contractor so will have no impact on service users. There will be no impact at this stage on users of the premises as there will be no changes to the set-up or the site. It will not affect any internal processes as it will work within current systems such as procurement etc. As the project location is sensitive, plans have not yet been presented to the public. We work with reputable consultants who are Equal Opportunities employers. It is		

recommended that further screenings are carried out at various stages of the project as plans develop.

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**
Lucy Mitchell	Major Projects Officer (Rotherham Investment & Development Office)	01/06/2023
Maria Smith	Project Manager (Rotherham Investment & Development Office)	01/06/2023

Appendix 5

6. Publishing	
This screening document will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given. If this screening relates to a **Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision** a copy of the completed document should be attached as an appendix and published alongside the relevant report. A copy of **all** screenings should also be sent to equality@rotherham.gov.uk For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file and also published on the Council's Equality and Diversity Internet page.	
Date screening completed	01/06/2023
Report title and date	Land Acquisition: Rotherham Integrated Mainline and Tram Train Station Project
If relates to a Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision – report date and date sent for publication	
Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	

Appendix 6

Carbon Impact Assessment: Land Acquisition for progressing the Integrated Rotherham Mainline/Tram Train Station Project

- Carbon Impact Assessments are to be appended to the associated cabinet reports
- Prior to publishing reports, Carbon Impact Assessments should be sent to… for feedback
- Report authors may also use the above email address to direct any further queries or to access further support regarding completing the assessment

Appendix 6

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		There will be no impact on emissions from the non-domestic buildings on site. Following the land acquisition, the buildings will remain tenanted as they are currently, so emission levels will remain unchanged.		
Emissions from transport?	Increase emissions	There will potentially be council staff and contractors on site for surveying etc. However, the impact will be minimal.		Public transport and active travel to reach the site will be preferred options with regards to site visitation given the proximity of the site to both Riverside house and the existing Tram Train and bus stops in the immediate area. Surveys will be desk-based where possible.	Any mileage or expenses claims recorded for staff travel to site will be reflected in the Council's NZ30 greenhouse gas emissions accounting
Emissions from waste, or the quantity of waste itself?	No impact		There will be no impact on emissions from the non-domestic buildings on site. Following the land acquisition, the buildings will remain tenanted as they are currently, so emission levels will remain unchanged.		
Emissions from housing and domestic buildings?	No impact		There is no housing in the scheme and currently no housing on the site.		

Emissions from construction and/or development?	No impact		Approval for construction or development is not proposed at this stage of the scheme.		
Carbon capture (e.g., through trees)?	No impact		There will be no changes to the site on acquisition, so no options for carbon capture are considered at this stage of the scheme.		
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:

During the land acquisition stage of the scheme, there will be very little impact on carbon emissions. There may be a small amount of increased activity on site from visiting council staff and contactors involved in negotiations and survey work, however, this impact will be minimal. Where possible, survey/negotiation work will be desk-based. Land acquisition is a catalyst to de-risk the overall project.

The proposed change in the land acquisition strategy, would not present an increase in carbon impact beyond the previously agreed upon land parcels given the inherent lack of carbon impact created through the land acquisition process and the similarity with the prior land acquisition business case previously approved.

At later stages of the scheme, Carbon Impact Assessments will be undertaken where necessary. As this is a large-scale project, it is likely that consultants with environmental expertise will be appointed to conduct a full assessment and calculate quantities of emissions if relevant. A starting point for this is the TfN Northern Powerhouse Rail, Accelerated Projects, Carbon Comparison Report which provides estimates for tCO2e for the preferred site.

Supporting information:	
Completed by: (Name, title, and service area/directorate).	Josh Turner, Regeneration and Development Project Support Officer, RIDO, R&E
Please outline any research, data, or information used to complete this [form].	Internal data has been utilized to complete the 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.	Emissions estimates supplied in a TfN report are not referenced in this impact assessment, on account of assumptions which reflect the early stage of the project.
Tracking [to be completed by Policy Support / Climate Champions]	Tracking Reference: CIA112 Arthur King Principal Climate Change Officer Strategic Asset Management Regeneration & Environment

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Public Report with Exempt Appendix
Cabinet

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting
Cabinet – 18th September 2023

Report Title
Council Building Decarbonisation Programme

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)
David Rhodes, Environment, Energy and Data Manager
david.rhodes@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected
All

Report Summary
On 30 October 2019, the Council declared a Climate Emergency and set out its action plan covering the following seven policy themes of Energy, Housing; Transport; Waste; Built & Natural Environment; Influence and Engagement.

At its meeting on 23 March 2020, Cabinet resolved to establish the targets of:

- The Council's carbon emissions to be at net zero by 2030 (NZ30)
- Borough-wide carbon emissions to be at net zero by 2040 (NZ40)

A Climate Emergency Action Plan was established, and progress has been reported annually since then. The policy and technological context of net zero is rapidly changing, and delivery of an annual action plan allows opportunities to be leveraged before they are missed. The Government has recently invested in heat network provision as a key heating source of the future, and this report has been brought forward in order to seek approval to proposals which will enable funding opportunities to be accessed and utilised within Government allocated spending timeframes.

A significant challenge in delivering the Council's Climate Change Action Plan is the reduction in carbon emissions from the Council buildings that are a product of current gas energy supply. In order to consider how it might tackle this challenge the Council approved, as part of the Budget and Council Tax Report 2022/23, a capital investment to begin to decarbonise its buildings. Decarbonisation works can consist of smaller enhancements for example, LED lighting, improved insulation, double glazing and solar Photovoltaics (PV) or much larger capital works such as removal of existing gas

boilers and replacement with an alternative source of energy such as a heat network or air source heat pump.

Whilst the smaller enhancements will reduce the Council's carbon impact and improve energy efficiency, these actions alone will not be sufficient for the Council to achieve Net Zero by 2030. As such the Council proposes to explore opportunities to replace the gas boilers within a number of the existing operational buildings. In order to achieve this, the Council will need to carry out the following key actions:

- Carry out capital works to the proposed operational buildings to make them suitable to connect to an alternative heat source.
- Carry out a procurement process to engage a third-party supplier to establish and provide that alternative heat source via a Heat Network Contract (there isn't currently an alternative heat source in place sufficient to meet the Council's need).
- Carry out a procurement process to engage a third-party supplier to act as a development partner to provide specialist knowledge and guidance required to deliver these actions.

The Council has already secured external funding through the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) to support the majority of the capital costs of the proposed works to the Council's operational estate. The Council's funds can be used as match funding to support the delivery of improvements to the Council's estate.

This report summarises the proposed approach to improving the energy efficiency of five Council buildings including works to enable connection to a low carbon heat source utilising funding from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) and the allocated Council decarbonisation capital budget.

The report also sets out the rationale for the procurement of a Heat Network Contract to supply heat to Council properties and for the procurement of a Decarbonisation Partner to support the Council to develop schemes, secure further funding, design and deliver works including building decarbonisation, energy efficiency and electric vehicle charging infrastructure.

Recommendations

That Cabinet:

1. Approves the programme of works to design and fit the LED and Solar PV works to the five Council buildings listed in Section 2.5 of this report to be delivered through a procurement process.
2. Approves the appointment of a partner to support and advise on the development of the remaining operational estate and to deliver the decarbonisation works contained in this report, to the five Council buildings, to be identified through a procurement process.
3. Approves the use of grant funding from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme and a contribution from the existing Council capital decarbonisation project to deliver the proposed works to the Council's operational property, as set out in exempt Appendix 1.
4. Approve a procurement process to be undertaken to establish a heat delivery contract to provide a heat source to the proposed Council owned properties.

5. Approve that a report will be to be submitted to Cabinet following this process that will detail the outcome of the procurement, its financial feasibility and recommendations for heat delivery for the five buildings listed within Section 2.5.

List of Appendices Included
Appendix 1 Decarbonisation Financial Report (EXEMPT)
Appendix 2 Equalities Assessment
Appendix 3 Carbon Impact Assessment

Background Papers
Project Procurement and Delivery Guidance
Notice of Declaration of Climate Emergency 30-Oct-2019 14.00 Council Meeting.pdf (rotherham.gov.uk)
Responding to the Climate Emergency. Cabinet 23 March 2020:
Climate Change Annual Report Cabinet 20 March 2023

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

Council Approval Required
No

Exempt from the Press and Public
Partial Exemption

An exemption is sought for Appendix 1 Decarbonisation Financial Report under Paragraph 3 (Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)) of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 is requested, as this report contains (Commercial Confidential Information).

It is considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption would outweigh the public interest in disclosing the information because the information could be used by private companies to influence future procurement negotiations.

Council Building Decarbonisation Programme

1. Background

1.1 On 30 October 2019, Rotherham Council declared a Climate Emergency and set out a plan of action to reduce carbon emissions generated by the Council, businesses, other organisations, and individuals across the Borough.

1.2 The following targets were set at its Cabinet meeting on 20 March 2020 to reduce carbon emissions across the Borough:

- The Council's carbon emissions to be at net zero by 2030.
- Rotherham-wide carbon emissions to be at net zero by 2040.

1.3 Since then, the Council has annually produced a Climate Change Action Plan which sets out how these targets will be met and covers seven themes including, Energy, Housing; Transport; Waste; Built & Natural Environment; and Influence and Engagement. The Council has committed funding in order to deliver a programme of building decarbonisation which will play a fundamental role in progressing the achievement of the Council's net zero target, given that the energy use within the Council's current building portfolio produced approximately 3581.65tCO_2 between 2021-2022, or 32.5% of the Council's overall emissions.

1.4 The Council has allocated £6.4m funding in the Capital Programme, which can be used to secure external funding and deliver improvements to decarbonise operational buildings.

1.5 The Council has recently been successful in securing £3.147m of external funding through the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) with a contribution required from the Council. A summary of decarbonisation budgets and grants is included in Appendix 1 (exempt) of this report.

1.6 Separate to the proposals within this report, the Council has also allocated £648,000 to expand the Council's electric vehicle infrastructure (EV) and continues to secure external funding to support this programme of work. Together with the funding for decarbonising buildings, there is a significant programme of activities that would benefit from additional expertise, capability, and capacity in the form of an external decarbonisation partner.

1.7 The government is investing £288m of capital funds UK wide in the support of new low and zero carbon heat networks through the Green Heat Network Fund. This investment in heat networks is intended to develop the UK's heat network market and decarbonise the heat sector. Heat networks provide a low carbon alternative to the carbon intensive gas heating systems which are currently the UK's primary heat source. They may also provide a more affordable option than air source heat pumps. Heat networks therefore form part of the Government's plan to decarbonise the UK's heating provision with a view to reaching net zero by 2050 whilst also improving energy resilience and independence from global markets.

1.8 Eligibility for this grant includes both public and private sector investors such as energy companies as well as registered third sector organisations. It is therefore proposed that the Council carries out a procurement process in order to identify a suitable supplier for the delivery of such a heat network to the Council's applicable town centre buildings.

2. Key Issues

2.1 A significant challenge in delivering the Council's Climate Change Action Plan is the carbon emissions produced as a result of current gas energy use. In order to consider how it might approach this challenge, the Council approved as part of the Budget and Council Tax Report 2022/23 a capital investment to begin to decarbonise its buildings. Decarbonisation works can consist of smaller enhancements for example, LED lighting, improved insulation, double glazing and solar Photovoltaics (PV) or much larger capital works such as removal of existing gas boilers and replacement with an alternative source of energy such as a heat network or air source heat pump.

2.2 Whilst the smaller enhancements will reduce the Council's carbon impact, these actions alone will not be sufficient for the Council to achieve Net Zero by 2030. As such the Council proposes to explore opportunities to replace the gas boilers within five existing operational buildings. Proposed buildings are listed at Section 2.5. In order to achieve this the Council will need to carry out the following key actions:

- Carry out capital works to the proposed operational buildings to make them suitable to connect to an alternative heat source.
- Carry out a procurement process to engage a third-party supplier to establish and provide that alternative heat source via a Heat Network Contract (there isn't currently an alternative heat source in place sufficient to meet the Council's need).
- Carry out a procurement process to engage a third-party supplier to act as a development partner to provide that specialist knowledge and guidance required to deliver these actions. This third-party supplier will also undertake the capital works as described in Section 2.5.

2.3 A proposal has been developed to decarbonise five operational Council buildings through both smaller capital enhancements and more significant capital works to enable connection to a low carbon heating source. All proposed works will contribute to the Council's carbon targets and the relevant objectives in the Climate Change Action Plan.

2.4 The PSDS funding of £3.147m secured by the Council has been awarded to fund these proposed works to improve the energy efficiency of Council buildings, along with works to enable heat to be supplied to buildings from low carbon sources. It is part of the grant conditions that these buildings must be connected to a low carbon heat source by 31 March 2025 and the existing gas boilers removed from operation.

2.5 The proposed works and connection to a low carbon heat source will significantly reduce the Council's overall carbon impact. The scheme, including connection to a heat network, is estimated to save as much as 468 tonnes of carbon per year, from the following improvements:

Town Hall

- Replace heating & hot water system with a low carbon alternative.
- Cavity Wall Insulation
- LED - New Fittings

Riverside House

- Replace heating & hot water system with a low carbon alternative.
- Additional Solar Panels

Civic Theatre

- Replace heating & hot water system with a low carbon alternative.
- LED - New Fittings
- Solar Panels
- Building & Energy Management Systems (BEMS)
- Time Switches
- Double Glazing

Clifton Park Museum

- Replace heating & hot water system a low carbon alternative.
- LED - New Fittings
- Solar Panels
- Building & Energy Management Systems (BEMS)
- Double Glazing

Orchard Centre

- Replace heating & hot water system with a low carbon alternative.

2.6 The above works are estimated to save the Council 468tCO_2 annually and are estimated to improve energy efficiency, and therefore cost, by approximately 25%. This is because of the energy efficiency measures included within the works but also that a typical heat network produces 48gCO_2/kWh of heat compared with the emissions from a typical gas boiler 228gCO_2/kWh. The carbon emissions of an air source heat pump are linked with the current make-up of the UK's gas supply and would reduce gradually as the UK invested in more renewable energy generation.

2.7 The PSDS scheme will enable the five buildings to be ready to be connected to heat from a low carbon source such as a heating network and/or air source heat pumps. The proposal to engage a third party to establish a suitable low carbon heat source that can support these properties is intended to ensure that once the buildings are ready to be connected to a new heat source there is a low carbon source ready to connect to. It is critical for the PSDS grant funding that the Council does carry out the building works and does connect to a low carbon energy source by 31 March 2025 or at the very latest the subsequent heating season, approximately October 2025. If the Council does not achieve this the grant will be subject to clawback as the energy savings from the smaller measures such as solar panels do not provide a sufficient reduction in Carbon emissions to meet the grant conditions.

2.8 In accessing the PSDS grant funding the Council had to indicate which type of low carbon heat source it would be looking to connect into. As such the Council

had to make a choice as to whether it expected to connect to a Heat Network or Air Source Heat Pumps. Although a Heat Network was selected, the Council can, if required, apply to the grant provider for a grant variation to change the low carbon heat source to an Air Source Heat. However, enabling buildings to connect to a heat network would have several advantages against installing on site air source heating including:

- Supporting the installation of a local low carbon heat network to allow wider connections across the Town Centre area with public and private sector buildings. For example, households and small businesses will have the opportunity to use the heat network.
- A heat network has the potential to positively impact on local economies and provide local opportunities for green jobs.
- More economical to run and reduced maintenance, servicing, and replacement costs.
- Potentially the lowest cost option currently to decarbonise building heating systems.

2.9 The works to the Council's operational buildings submitted as part of the proposed PSDS scheme can support the development of a local heat network. This would have the potential for the Council to become a future customer and this would be the intention of the proposed procurement process; to identify a third-party to build a heat network suitable for the Council to connect to and meet its energy requirements. However, in the event that a heat network does not become operational, alternatives such as air source heating will be brought forward for consideration.

2.10 The Council will have opportunities to withdraw from the proposal should the project not progress as expected. At the point the procurement for the external third-party supplier to create the heat network completes, the Council will have an opportunity to review the deliverability and financial impacts of the proposal and assess if it still meets requirements. If it does not meet the requirements, the Council can abandon the procurement and walk away from the project. If the proposal is positive and the Council enters into contract, then the scheme would progress. If the outcome of this procurement process is positive or negative, this will be brought back to Cabinet with recommendations for next steps. If for some reason the heat network does not get built, the supplier would have breached the terms of the contract and the Council would have to either look at air source heating or halt progress removing the use of gas boilers.

2.11 Whilst not connecting to a low carbon heat source would risk clawback of the full value of the PSDS grant funding (£3.147m), the works that would have been undertaken on the Council's buildings by this point are not necessarily ineffective. The smaller enhancements, like solar panels would still have carbon improvements, and the works to connect to an alternative low carbon source would still remain and be available should an opportunity present itself in the future. Given the drivers to move away from gas boilers it is expected that the Council will need to move to an alternative source in the future so the Council would just be further down that road. As such these works would need to be funded from the existing Council budget of £6.4m for the Decarbonisation Programme within the Capital Programme.

2.12 Salix Finance (who administer the PSDS funds) have agreed in principle that any changes to the agreed funding proposed as part of the Council's PSDS funding application on changes such as alternative low carbon heating systems or alternative buildings may be supported. However, any alternative heating systems requiring a design change or alternative buildings would need formal approval from Salix Finance. As the project is a multi-year scheme the timeframe for spending the grant remains as:

- Year 1 £325,874.00 must be spent by 31/03/2024.
- Year 2 £2,821,513.00 must be spent by 31/03/2025.

2.13 The funding cannot be carried over beyond these dates.

2.14 It is proposed that the year 1 spend will be procured separately to cover solar PV panels and LED works only. This is to ensure that the year 1 funding is spent by the 31/03/2024. The remaining enabling works listed in 2.5 are proposed to be procured via the decarbonisation partner procurement exercise. The decarbonisation partner will support the Council in a number of activities, including, design and development of the technical component for future funding applications, survey, design and installation of decarbonisation works in Council buildings, electric vehicle charger installation and provision of technical advice on building decarbonisation.

2.15 The installation of decarbonisation measures on the Council's operational estate, except for the five buildings detailed within this report, will be subject to their own procurement and if applicable Cabinet approval. Examples of installation might include retrofit of insulation, solar PV installation, double glazing, building management systems and other energy efficiency measures as well as connection to a heat network or alternative heat source as applicable.

2.16 In terms of the proposed decarbonisation partner, the scale of work that is required as part of the Council's programme of decarbonisation and associated programmes such as electric vehicle charging infrastructure, means that development and delivery will benefit from additional capacity and capability.

2.17 In addition, to ensure robust procurement procedures alongside challenging Government funding delivery timeframes, procuring a partner is beneficial. Numerous local authorities have awarded decarbonisation partner contracts to private sector partners including:

1. City of Lincoln Council - engaged a private sector contractor to review sites, prepare detailed site decarbonisation plans and investigate further opportunities for renewables at Council Sites.

2. Manchester City Council – Secured £19.67m PSDS funding with the support of private sector delivery partners (Ameresco, Kier and ISG) and are now delivering a programme of measures to a challenging delivery timescale through a variety of contracted delivery partners.

3. Cheshire East Council – Awarded a 10-year delivery contract with Equans.

4. Rochdale Borough Council – Supported by Equans with its application for PSDS funding and was then appointed to deliver the work.

5. Leeds City Council – Contracted with Cenergist to deliver a £14m carbon reduction programme that contributes to the Council NZ30 target.

2.18 Many other councils have successfully awarded similar contracts and received essential technical support to complete and submit funding applications and subsequently deliver the projects/programmes.

2.19 Funding applications such as PSDS consider capacity and capability in assessing the deliverability and feasibility of applications. The benefit of having a contracted partner would include:

- Providing technical assistance in funding applications and improve the likelihood of securing further grant funding.
- Streamlined delivery of decarbonisation works to comply with Government funding criteria.

2.20 The partner will be procured in compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (as amended) and the Council's own Financial and Procurement Procedure Rules as detailed in Section 6 of this report.

2.21 The final stage of PSDS funded works include the potential connection to a heat network and as such will require a contract to be in place to ensure that building retrofit designs are compatible with the chosen heat source. The capital and revenue implications of the decarbonisation of the five buildings included within this funded programme are available in Appendix 1. A contract will also mitigate against risks associated with fluctuations in the market. The award of any contract will be subject to a procurement procedure being undertaken in compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (as amended) and the Council's own Financial and Procurement Procedure Rules. In addition, the award of any contract will be subject to an assessment of the financial feasibility of the contract and a report back to Cabinet.

2.22 Heat networks deliver low carbon heating to buildings via a network of underground pipes originating at the heat source. Delivery of heat to the five Council properties is likely to involve disruption to some Council services as the supplier-side pipes from the heat source to Council buildings will need to be laid following contract award. It is expected that completion will be subject to planning, highways consent and construction timelines to allow pipes to be laid from the heat source to each building. Internal energy efficiency works would be undertaken following consultation with individual services.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

3.1 A number of potential options have been considered including:

Option 1 (Preferred Option):

1. Appoint via compliant procurement procedures a supplier of solar PV and LED lighting for installation to applicable Council buildings as per the

Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme proposal contained within this report.

2. Appoint via compliant procurement procedures, a decarbonisation partner for a period of 3 years with the option of extending for a further two years. This option has the benefit of accessing technical expertise to complete, submit and deliver future Government grant funding applications and securing external funding as well as utilising the Council's own funding. The contract would be used to deliver on funding identified for decarbonisation in Appendix 1 including potential future external funding and to inform future Council decisions on further decarbonisation works.
3. Approve the use of the PSDS grant funding and deliver the PSDS funded works on the five listed buildings, through a compliant procurement procedure in line with PSDS grant timelines. In the event of the Council buildings not being connected to a heat network, approval will be sought from Salix Finance to use the funding for alternative low carbon heating systems, though the Council would look to consider options at this point.
4. Undertake a compliant procurement procedure for a heat network delivery supplier to provide low carbon heating through a heat network to the proposed Council owned properties and return to Cabinet for final approval of the final scheme proposal and costs. The heat delivery contract is expected to be for 20-25 years.
5. Approve that a report will be submitted to Cabinet following the procurement of a heat delivery contract with recommendations for next steps. This report will detail the outcome of the procurement, its financial feasibility, and recommendations for heat delivery for the five buildings listed within Section 2.5.

This is the recommended option.

3.2 **Option 2 –** Procuring individual projects for known decarbonisation measures on Council operational buildings.

The process of numerous tenders is lengthy, costly, onerous, will delay measures and carbon reductions and would be more resource intensive to deliver. This option does not provide technical support for Government grant applications unless procured separately which would likely not meet the short grant timescales for application.

This option means that the Council will no longer be able to use the PSDS funding for the specified five buildings as the procurement process is too lengthy to allow completion of designs in time for the Year 1 PSDS project milestone. As a result, this option is not recommended.

3.3 **Option 3** – Compliantly procure the decarbonisation partner and switch to an alternative low carbon heat source.

This option proposes using an alternative low carbon heating source, such as air source heat pumps, instead of connecting to a heat network. This option would be more expensive for the Council and if the Council decides not to

connect to a heat network the PSDS funding agreement would need to be varied by agreement. This option is considered within the financial model within exempt Appendix 1 in terms of costs for this option. Air source heat pumps are already in use throughout some Council buildings and are a more familiar technology in the Borough but come with additional revenue costs related to maintenance and increased electricity use.

This option would not require an additional heat contract but would have implications for the Council's revenue budgets.

Although in this case the decarbonisation partner would still be available to support future bids and ongoing energy efficiency programmes, this option is not recommended as there will be increased capital and revenue pressures. There is also the potential risk that Salix Finance may not approve the required change which would derail the proposed decarbonisation of the buildings included in the PSDS grant.

3.4 **Option 4** – Only carry out energy efficiency (LED/Solar PV) works using Council's funding.

This option proposes that no further decarbonisation work on the proposed buildings is undertaken, other than energy efficiency works using the Council's allocated decarbonisation budget.

This option is not recommended as it would result in the loss of the current and any future PSDS funding on the five buildings it has been awarded to. The PSDS specification requires a whole building approach which means that whilst replacement of a heat source is a critical criterion for the project, energy efficiency measures are required to deliver the carbon savings required by the scheme to be allocated funding.

In light of the Council's declaration of a climate emergency in 2019 and subsequent target to achieve net zero by 2030, this more limited approach is not recommended. Replacement of gas boilers with a sustainable low carbon alternative alongside improvements in overall energy efficiency are integral to meeting this target due to the substantial carbon emissions arising from gas combustion.

4. Consultation on proposal

4.1 There has not been any public consultation on this proposal.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

5.1 Asset Management will be responsible for implementing the decision in accordance with the timetable below:

5.2 Solar PV & LED Lighting Milestones

Milestone	Date
Cabinet Decision	Q2 23/24

Contractor/Supplier Procurement	Q3 23/24 – Q4 23/24
PSDS Solar and LED Site works and Commissioning	Q4 24/25
Y1 PSDS Invoice Deadline	31st March 2024

5.3 Decarbonisation Partner and PSDS Implementation Milestones

Milestone	Date
Cabinet Decision	Q2 23/24
Contractor/Supplier Procurement	Q4 23/24 – Q2 24/25
PSDS Site works design phase	Q2 24/25
PSDS Site works and commissioning	Q2 24/25 – Q4 24/25
Y2 PSDS Project Complete and Invoice deadline	31st March 2025

5.4 Heat Network Contract Procurement Milestones

Milestone	Date
Cabinet Decision	Q2 23/24
Contractor/Supplier Procurement	Q4 23/24 – Q1 24/25
Cabinet Approval	June 2024
PSDS Commissioning Works Complete	Q4 24/25

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

6.1 The financial implications of the proposed recommendations are covered within the exempt financial Appendix 1.

6.2 The Council is required to contribute 12% of the PSDS grant to fund the cost of enabling works. The match funding will come from the Capital Programme Decarbonisation Fund.

6.3 There are procurement implications across each of the recommendations detailed in this report. The Council must ensure that all procurement activity is undertaken in compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (as amended) and the Council's own Financial Procurement Procedure Rules. For each of the contractual arrangements to be entered into an assessment will be made to determine the most appropriate route to market to ensure it meets the projects requirements and can be delivered within the required funding timescales.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

7.1 The proposed procedures for procuring the delivery partner, decarbonisation measures and heat network are compliant with the PCR and the Council's FPPR, as set out in the Procurement and Legal section of the Finance Appendix, Appendix 1.

7.2 If it is decided to procure connection to a heat network, an appropriate contract with the preferred supplier will be prepared which ensures amongst other things continuity of service and as far as possible price stability. Such a contract will be in a similar form to contracts used in respect of heat networks where other public authorities have followed this course of action. In this regard, a firm of solicitors who have advised in respect of previous projects of this nature have been commissioned to draft the relevant terms and conditions. This will ensure best practice is adopted, and as such the Council's interests are fully protected in relation to the supply contract which, as stated above, will likely be 20-25 years.

7.3 In terms of governance, as the matters set out within this report do not relate to functions which are reserved to Council in legislation or regulations, they are executive functions exercisable by Cabinet.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

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

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

9.1 No implications identified.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 No implications identified though equalities assessment conducted and attached at Appendix 1.

11. Implications for CO_2 Emissions and Climate Change

11.1 Positive implications have been identified within the Carbon Impact Assessment at Appendix 3 including:

- Reduced CO_2 emissions from Council operational buildings through decarbonisation, increased on-site renewable energy and energy efficiency measures.
- Reduced CO_2 emissions from a heat network, 48gCO_2/kWh of heat compared with the emissions from a typical gas boiler 228gCO_2/kWh of heat.
- The scheme is estimated to reduce 468 tonnes CO_2 per annum.

12. Implications for Partners

12.1 No implications identified.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 The main risks include:

a. Unable to complete the schedule of works funded by the Government's Public sector Decarbonisation Scheme within the timeframes agreed in the grant offer letter.

Mitigation – Accurate planning and delivery with the decarbonisation delivery partner will prevent going beyond the time criteria stipulated by Government and incurring penalties.

b. Unable to secure further external funding to support the decarbonisation agenda.

   Mitigation – Technical support from the decarbonisation partner combined with accurate data and evidence will provide the best opportunity to secure funding. The contract will include a clause to prevent any blame and stop financial claims for planned works.

c. An increase in market prices for the installation of decarbonisation measures.

   Mitigation – The market prices will be continuously monitored and if necessary, the schedule of rates adjusted, and programmes adjusted to align with changes.

d. Connection to the heat network is not possible at the end of the project and a change is required to design of the specified buildings heating systems.

   Mitigation – The proposal is to utilise the Year 1 funding for PV panels and LED lighting, which mitigates against this risk. Heat network enabling works will not be started until assurance from the awarded supplier is received. Salix Finance have agreed in principle that connection to the heat network can occur after project works are completed or a change to an alternative heat source may be allowed given the relevant approvals. Mitigation should also be in the form of effective project and relationship management with Salix Finance. Existing gas boilers will not be decommissioned until connection to a heat network or alternative low carbon solution.

e. Revenue costs exceed expected budgets or fluctuate unexpectedly.

   Mitigation – A financial breakdown of expected revenue costs, i.e., energy and maintenance costs are included in Exempt Appendix 1. Mitigating clauses should be included within the Heat Delivery Contract to protect the Council throughout the duration of this contract. Heat network market process will also be continuously monitored to allow for supplier challenge if needed. Approval will be sought from Cabinet prior to appointment.

14. Accountable Officers

Jonathan Marriott, Head of Asset Management

Approvals obtained on behalf of:

	Named Officer	**Date**
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	04/09/23
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	31/08/23
Head of Legal Services (Deputy Monitoring Officer)	Bal Nahal	31/08/23

Report Author: David Rhodes, Environment, Energy and Data Manager
david.rhodes@rotherham.gov.uk

This report is published on the Council's website.

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

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Appendix 2 Equalities Assessment Council Building Decarbonisation Programme

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: Council Building Decarbonisation Programme	
Directorate: R&E	**Service area:** Planning, Regeneration & Transport
Lead person: David Rhodes	**Contact:** 01709 254017

Is this a:

	Strategy / Policy		**Service / Function**	x	**Other**

If other, please specify –

1. Procurement and delivery of a Decarbonisation Delivery Partner to carry out decarbonisation works on Council owned properties.

2. Delivery of the heat network/low carbon heating enabling works and energy efficiency works funding through Government Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) funding on 5 Council buildings.

Appendix 2 Equalities Assessment Council Building Decarbonisation Programme

2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening
Procurement and delivery of: 1. Decarbonisation Delivery Partner to carry out decarbonisation works on Council owned properties. 2. Delivery of the heat network/low carbon heating enabling works and energy efficiency works funding through Government Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) funding on 5 Council buildings.

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? *(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)*		x
Could the proposal affect service users? *(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)*		x
Has there been or is there likely to be an impact on an individual or group with protected characteristics? *(Consider potential discrimination, harassment or victimisation of individuals with protected characteristics)*		x
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns regarding the proposal? *(It is important that the Council is transparent and consultation is carried out with members of the public to help mitigate future challenge)*		x
Could the proposal affect how the Council's services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom? *(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from commissioning or procurement)*		x
Could the proposal affect the Council's workforce or employment practices? *(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from your HR business partner)*		x
If you have answered no to all the questions above, please explain the reason		

Appendix 2 Equalities Assessment Council Building Decarbonisation Programme

Due to the procurement process being used for the contract award, the delivery partner selection contract or enabling works will not have an impact as indicated.

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?** N/A	
• **Key findings** N/A	
• **Actions** N/A	
Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	N/A
Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	N/A
Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title):	David Rhodes, Environment, Energy and Data Manager

5. Governance, ownership and approval		
Please state here who has approved the actions and outcomes of the screening:		
Name	**Job title**	**Date**
Jonathon Marriott	Asset Management HoS	06/04/2023

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

Appendix 2 Equalities Assessment Council Building Decarbonisation Programme

should be attached as an appendix and published alongside the relevant report.

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

Date screening completed	06/04/2023
Report title and date	Council Building Decarbonisation Programme
If relates to a Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision – report date and date sent for publication	18th September 2023
Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	23/08/23

Appendix 3 Carbon Impact Assessment – Council Building Decarbonisation Programme

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?	Positive Impact	Interactions to install low carbon heating systems, reduce energy consumption combined with the installation of renewable energy where feasible will reduce carbon emissions from operational buildings	Reduced emissions	-	CO_2 emissions are monitored and reported and will continue to be reported to assess reductions achieved and analyse measures used.
Emissions from transport?	Reduces Emissions	Two stages considered: 1. There will be minimal impact during the installation phases. 2. EV charging systems will be installed as part of the delivery contract providing positive impacts.	EV chargers should reduce emissions	Transport will be kept to a minimum during installation.	Contractors will be required to report project emissions on completion.
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?	Impact Unknown	There will be minimal impact during the installation phase.	Minimal	Contractors will reduce emissions and environmental impact where possible.	Liaison with Council officers will include monitoring of activities to ensure minimal impact

Carbon capture (e.g. through trees)?	Nil	-	-	-	-

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

- Reduced CO2 emissions from Council operational buildings through decarbonisation, increased on-site renewable energy and energy efficiency measures.
- Reduced CO2 emissions from a heat network, 48gCO2/kWh of heat compared with the emissions from a typical gas boiler 228gCO2/kWh of heat.

Please provide a summary of all impacts and mitigation/monitoring measures:
Decarbonisation measures will reduce emissions and provide a positive impact.

Supporting information:	
Completed by: (Name, title, and service area/directorate).	David Rhodes, Environmental, Energy & Data Manager, R&E
Please outline any research, data, or information used to complete this [form].	Numerous research carried out to confirm the carbon benefits of PV systems
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.	The Council has actively reduced energy consumption and operational CO_2 emissions since 2014. Decarbonisation measures will accelerate reductions contributing to the Council NZ 2030 target.

	Annual CO_2 Emmissions (tonnes)	% Reduction
2014/2015	14,589	0
2015/2016	12,796	14.01%
2016/2017	10,896	17.44%
2017/2018	9,047	20.44%
2018/2019	7,005	29.15%
2019/2020	6,003	16.69%

	<table><tr><td>2020/2021</td><td>5,034</td><td>19.25%</td></tr><tr><td>2021/2022</td><td>4,844</td><td>3.7%</td></tr></table>
Tracking [to be completed by Policy Support / Climate Champions]	CIA061 Rachael Cranch, Climate Change Officer Re-reviewed 23/08/23 by Louise Preston, Climate Change Manager

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Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Public Report
Cabinet

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting
Cabinet – 18 September 2023

Report Title
Joint Regional Statement of Common Ground

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

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report
Paul Woodcock, Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment

Report Author(s)
Winsze Lam, Assistant Planning Policy Manager
01709 822874 or winsze.lam@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected
Borough-wide

Report Summary
Local planning authorities have a statutory "duty to cooperate" with other relevant bodies in order to encourage and enable strategic planning. The Council has met this duty in preparing its adopted Local Plan. Rotherham's Local Plan has already identified the sites required to deliver the housing and employment development required during the plan period.

The duty also operates at a wider scale and the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) members have worked together on a Joint Statement of Common Ground (the Statement) to cover cross boundary, strategic planning matters within the former Sheffield City Region (SCR) area (referred as 'Region' in this report). The Statement covers energy and climate change, housing, employment, transport, natural environment, waste, digital connectivity and other matters of strategic interest.

The Statement will be beneficial to the local planning authorities within the Region as they prepare and review their local plans, as it demonstrates they have met the duty to cooperate at a strategic level. Being a signatory to the Statement will also benefit the Council as it completes the partial update to the Local Plan Core Strategy currently underway. When the updated Core Strategy is submitted to government for independent examination, the planning inspector will require evidence that the duty to cooperate has been met. The Statement will form a significant part of this evidence.

Endorsing the Statement will not require the Council to identify any additional housing land, nor will it require any review of the Local Plan Sites and Policies Document prior to the timescales required by legislation.

The Statement is an updated document from the Sheffield City Region Statement of Common Ground that was approved by Cabinet in December 2019.

Recommendations

That Cabinet:-

1. Approves that the Council be a signatory to the Joint Regional Statement of Common Ground.

List of Appendices Included
Appendix 1 Joint Regional Statement of Common Ground
Appendix 2 Map of Joint Regional Statement of Common Ground
Appendix 3 Equality Part A – Screening
Appendix 4 Carbon Impact Assessment

Background Papers

Sheffield City Region Statement of Common Ground
(approved by Cabinet on 23rd December 2019, Item 91)
https://moderngov.rotherham.gov.uk/documents/s123893/2019-12-16_Cabinet_SCR%20appx%202.pdf

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

Council Approval Required
No

Exempt from the Press and Public
No

Joint Regional Statement of Common Ground

1. Background

1.1 In preparing local plans, local planning authorities are under a duty to cooperate with others on strategic planning matters. This is usually evidenced by joint plans, statements of common ground or memorandums of understanding.

1.2 The Council has an adopted Joint Waste Plan with Barnsley and Doncaster Councils and has also previously secured a memorandum with Sheffield City Council on housing targets to provide evidence of cooperation for the Local Plan Core Strategy examination process. The Council has also been a signatory of Statements of Common Ground when Doncaster, Wakefield and Bassetlaw Councils were preparing their local plans.

1.3 In 2021 the Combined Authority changed its name from "Sheffield City Region" to the "South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority" to better reflect the organisation and the communities it serves. This also recognised the Government's decision to change the geographies of Local Economic Partnerships and the agreement of a Devolution Deal and funding to SYMCA only covering South Yorkshire. However, the constituent and non-constituent members of SYMCA remain unchanged[1], and the former SCR area continues to be an appropriate strategic level for co-operation for spatial planning.

1.4 The Joint Regional Statement of Common Ground is an updated document from the former Sheffield City Region Statement of Common Ground, which in summary:

- Updates the chapters and agreements in relation to housing, employment, transport and digital connectivity.
- Recognises the current issues and challenges facing our region. The Statement has also been expanded to focus on Energy and climate change, the natural environment and waste – providing contextual background as well as areas of agreement.
- Continues to recognise other strategic matters including Green Belt, Minerals, the Peak District National Park, and health and wellbeing challenges.
- Contains updates and additions to data and evidence where appropriate, including the tables set out in the Annex of the Statement.

1.5 The Council's officers have worked on the Statement with other members of the SYMCA. Its main purpose is to set out an agreement on strategic planning matters as part of the plan-making considerations. The Statement covers energy and climate change, housing, employment, transport, natural environment, waste, and digital connectivity across the Region. It also refers to some topics in less detail, such as green belt, minerals planning, the Peak District National Park and health and wellbeing.

[1] Constituent members of SYMCA are Sheffield, Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham Councils. Non-constituent members are Derbyshire Dales, North East Derbyshire, Chesterfield, Bassetlaw and Bolsover Councils.

1.6 Councils taking their local plans through the examination process can use the Statement as evidence in meeting the duty to cooperate requirement. Being a signatory to the Statement will help the Council in preparing the partial update of the Rotherham Local Plan Core Strategy. It will demonstrate to the Planning Inspector, who examines the updated strategy, that appropriate cooperation with neighbouring authorities on strategic planning matters has been achieved.

2. Key Issues

2.1 The Region covers two cities, several large towns, thriving smaller towns, other semi-urban areas and a rural surrounding area. Ten local authorities are responsible for preparing Local Plans (see Appendix 1) - four metropolitan districts of Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield; five district councils of Bassetlaw, Bolsover, Chesterfield, Derbyshire Dales; and North East Derbyshire. An area of the Peak District National Park also falls within the western area of the Region and is a planning authority in its own right. Derbyshire County Council and Nottinghamshire County Council are responsible for preparing minerals and waste local plans for their areas. The National Park plays a key role in the Region, but also much more widely with special qualities that reflect the importance of its landscapes, wildlife and cultural heritage.

2.2 The Statement sets out the authorities' commitment to work together at the city region scale on matters of shared strategic significance. These matters relate to:

1. Energy and Climate Change
2. Housing
3. Employment
4. Transport
5. Natural Environment
6. Waste
7. Digital connectivity

These are summarised as bullet points in the following paragraphs and the full Statement is attached at Appendix 1.

2.3 **Energy and Climate Change**

- SYMCA (SCR Energy Strategy) and 8 out of the 12 authorities have declared a climate emergency and established targets for reducing carbon emissions. The Statement acknowledges, as an overarching imperative, the role of the planning system in responding to the challenges of the climate change crisis and the need to reduce carbon emissions in order to meet national (by 2050), regional and local net zero carbon targets.
- Local planning authorities will seek development to achieve above Building Regulations standard and work towards securing whole life carbon assessment and Future Homes Standards.
- Local planning authorities will work together in line with the 'Connected by Water' Initiative in response to flood risk and the climate emergency on a catchment scale.

2.3.1 Rotherham has developed an annual climate change action plan with actions identified under seven themes: Energy, Housing, Transport, Waste, Built and

Natural Environment, Influence and Engagement. This action plan supports the Council's established targets of:
1) The Council's carbon emissions to be at net zero by 2030; and
2) Borough-wide carbon emissions to be at net zero by 2040.

2.4 **Housing**

- Each Local Planning Authority plans to meet their own housing need within their own Local Authority boundaries, taking account of national planning policy, housing market geographies, individual local authority economic growth targets and agreements between individual authorities as necessary.
- Through Local Plans, ensuring the quantum of housing required to deliver regional growth ambitions is being met and to agree Housing Market Areas in the Region.
- Monitor housing delivery on an annual basis, as a minimum, to ensure that housing growth continues to meet identified local need and support growth ambitions across the Region.

2.4.1 Rotherham's Core Strategy is subject to a partial update which is programmed for consultation in late 2023, subject to Cabinet approval. Endorsing the Statement will not require the Council to identify any additional housing land, nor will it require any review of the Local Plan Sites and Policies Document prior to the timescales required by legislation.

2.5 **Employment**

- The SCR Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) agreed in 2014, sought to create 70,000 new jobs and 6,000 new businesses across the former City Region (between 2015 and 2025). This informed preparation of Local Plans across the region. The SYMCA Strategic Economic Plan (2021) provides a strategy to 2041 to deliver 33,000 extra people in higher level jobs across South Yorkshire.
- Local planning authorities will plan for their own employment land needs within their own Local Authority boundaries, taking account of alignment with housing growth proposals, Functional Economic Market Areas (FEMAs) and agreements between individual authorities as necessary.
- The delivery of employment land and loss of employment land to other uses, will be monitored.
- Continue to work collaboratively to achieve the economic ambitions of the SYMCA and D2N2 SEPs and other growth strategies within the Region, developing our evidence and understanding the operation of a strategic FEMA at the regional scale.

2.5.1 Rotherham's Core Strategy is subject to a partial update which will review the remaining capacity on existing sites allocated for employment related development to ensure the employment need will be met. The adopted Core Strategy identifies the priority of safeguarding the manufacturing base and targeting several priority sectors including Creative and Digital Industries; Advanced Manufacturing and Materials; Environmental and Energy Technologies; Construction Industries; Business, Professional and Financial Services; and Low Carbon Industries.

2.6 **Transport**

- Support the development and adoption of new Local Transport Plans for South Yorkshire and the East Midlands by Spring of 2024. The development and adoption of new implementation plans to reflect the new Local Transport Plan, covering bus, rail, tram, walking, cycling and private traffic (including freight and shift to zero emission vehicles) in a holistic and co-ordinated manner.
- Support the safeguarding and delivery of critical transport routes (both existing and new) and collaborate across boundaries to make the best use of inter-regional rail, tram, road and water transport networks.
- Acknowledge carbon emissions are predominantly driven by medium- and long distance transport, both passenger and freight, and so development and transport impacts may not be fully accounted for in an individual area's territorial emissions – and agree to ensure cross-boundary impacts of development and transport interventions are fully considered and mitigated for.
- Apply a complementary hierarchy of transport models to understand and assess the impact of local plans, projects and proposals on the transport network at appropriate scales.

2.6.1 The Council's Transportation Unit has a close working relationship with the SYMCA and other local planning authorities to ensure any impacts to Rotherham are fully assessed and mitigation measures are in place where required.

2.7 **Natural Environment**

- SYMCA has provisionally been appointed to be the Responsible Authority for the development of South Yorkshire's Local Nature Recovery Strategy. Local planning authorities use the maps, priorities and targets within the agreed Local Nature Recovery Strategies to inform any reviews of Development Plan documents, policies, guidance and site allocations in order to maximise opportunities for nature recovery.
- A natural capital assessment for the whole of South Yorkshire was commissioned by the SYMCA in 2021. The assessment identifies the existing natural capital assets, the baseline habitat level biodiversity, the flow of ecosystem services they provide, the monetary value of the resulting benefits – currently estimated at £550million per year and the opportunities to restore existing habitats and to create new ones to enhance biodiversity and deliver greater multiple benefits. Local planning authorities will use the findings of the South Yorkshire Natural Capital Assessment to help shape new development plans, including planning polices and site allocations.
- Continue to share learning on Biodiversity Net Gain across the Region and aim to develop locally-specific planning policy.

2.7.1 The Council has adopted a Biodiversity Net Gain SPD on 10th July 2023.

2.8 **Waste**

- Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield produced a Joint Waste Needs Assessment which was completed in June 2022. It identifies each authority's waste facilities, and requirements, both separately and as a whole. The Waste Needs Assessment identifies where South Yorkshire's

waste capacity gaps are, which is a starting point to determine what facilities are needed moving forward.

- The South Yorkshire authorities will aim to:
  - Plan jointly to meet South Yorkshire's Waste Needs.
  - Work collaboratively to produce a Joint South Yorkshire Waste Local Plan (JWLP) and prepare a joint/individual Local Development Scheme(s) (LDS) to reflect agreed timescales in individual authority LDS updates.
  - Prepare a JWLP Memorandum of Understanding.
  - Review policies in both the BDR Waste Plan and Sheffield Core Strategy (Waste Chapter).
  - Review current waste plan site allocations and determine need.

2.9 **Digital Connectivity**

The Government's Project Gigabit will deliver support to hard-to-reach parts of the UK towards the cost of gigabit-capable broadband. It will bring full fibre broadband to some of the most rural parts of the region, targeting properties with the slowest speeds that would have otherwise been left behind by commercial plans. To meet these new challenges, the authorities will:

- Support the implementation of Project Gigabit and the digital infrastructure elements of adopted Local Plans.
- Help to bring forward a range of local and regional interventions to improve digital connectivity, improving speeds and addressing gaps in provision.
- Support local communities to utilise the BDUK Gigabit Voucher Scheme to accelerate the roll-out of gigabit capable infrastructure across South Yorkshire and the wider Region.
- Create a supportive planning framework for digital connectivity, including consistent planning conditions that encourage developers to provide infrastructure for at least one, but ideally multiple gigabit capable broadband providers.

2.10 The Statement also sets out other issues of common interest that the authorities agree to work together on:

- Green Belt
- Minerals Planning
- Peak District National Park
- Health and wellbeing

2.11 The Statement has been prepared by the SYMCA Heads of Planning Group, which brings together senior planning managers across all the local planning authorities as well as from Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire County Councils. The Group has responsibility for the Statement alongside other pieces of collaborative work. It will ensure that the Statement is consistent with local planning practice which will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis to reflect any changes to local practice or arrangements at the regional scale. Progress and oversight for the Statement and other joint planning work will be part of SYMCA's new infrastructure and housing portfolio.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

3.1 **Option 1: Approve the Joint Regional Statement of Common Ground with the Council as a signatory.**
Being a signatory to the Statement will assist the Council in completing the partial update of the Local Plan Core Strategy. It will help demonstrate to the Planning Inspector that the Council has met the duty to cooperate.

3.2 **Option 2: the Council does not approve and sign the Joint Regional Statement of Common Ground**
If the Council does not approve and sign the Statement, it still has the option to pursue separate statements of common ground with neighbouring authorities.

3.2.1 The Council may take this approach for specific issues between authorities that require more depth than that covered by the Statement. However, signing the Statement demonstrates to the Planning Inspector that the Council is actively engaging in strategic planning across the Region.

3.2.2 Meeting the duty to cooperate is a statutory requirement and if the Planning Inspector deems it has not been met a local plan examination cannot continue. The duty cannot be met retrospectively. It is therefore advisable that the Council does all it can to meet the duty in the preliminary stages of the Local Plan Core Strategy partial update prior to submitting the plan for examination.

3.3 **Option 1** is the recommended option.

4. Consultation on proposal

4.1 Consultation on the Statement is not a statutory requirement. When local planning authorities consult on draft local plans, the Statement will form part of the supporting evidence for the plan. The public, stakeholders and interested parties can then comment on the plan and supporting evidence as appropriate.

4.2 The Council's officers have been part of drafting the Statement at various stages and are content with the wording and internal consultation has been undertaken as appropriate with colleagues in other services. Further, the Statement has been endorsed by the SYMCA Heads of Planning Group.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

5.1 If the report recommendation is approved, the Council's officers will make the necessary arrangements for Rotherham to be a signatory to the Statement. It is anticipated that the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy would sign the Statement.

5.2 The other SYMCA local planning authorities are also making arrangements to consider approval of the statement and for appropriate signing if approved.

5.3 The SYMCA has not endorsed the Statement at the time of preparing this report, however the MCA is intended to seek Board approval when the South Yorkshire authorities have endorsed the Statement.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

6.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report. The cost of the Council's officer time, involved in the development of this Statement, has been contained within existing approved revenue budgets.

6.2 There are no direct procurement implications associated with the recommendations detailed in this report.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

7.1 Section 110 of the Localism Act sets out the 'duty to co-operate'. The duty:

- relates to sustainable development or use of land that would have a significant impact on at least two local planning areas or on a planning matter that falls within the remit of a county council
- requires that councils set out planning policies to address such issues
- requires that councils and public bodies 'engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis' to develop strategic policies
- requires councils to consider joint approaches to plan making.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

8.1 There are no direct human resource 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 and vulnerable adults arising from this report. The Statement will assist in delivering the Council's strategy and policies set out in the Local Plan. These include promoting and delivering sustainable patterns of development, the creation of mixed and sustainable communities, reducing pollution, providing and protecting community resources and facilities, and conserving and enhancing the quality of the built and natural environment.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 An equalities screening has been completed and is attached at Appendix 1. A full equalities analysis is not required.

11. Implications for CO_2 Emissions and Climate Change

11.1 Climate change poses a significant threat to environments, individuals, communities, and economies on local, national, and international scales. In recognition of this the Council has aimed to be net carbon neutral as an organisation by 2030, and for Rotherham as a whole to achieve the same position by 2040.

11.2 Climate change is a cross cutting topic and strategic planning has a key role to play in achieving sustainable development and tackling and adapting to climate change. Several of the topics covered in this Statement are instrumental in reducing and mitigating the effects of climate change, in particular biodiversity and natural environment and transport. This includes influencing where new housing, employment and other development is located which in turn affects the need to travel and access to more sustainable travel modes.

11.3 The Statement sets out regional goals that support reducing the carbon footprint of development; promoting higher sustainable construction standards; building climate resilient dwellings; minimising impacts of carbon emissions harmful to local air quality, the natural environment and health.

12. Implications for Partners

12.1 The implications for partners or other directorates are mainly associated with the draft plans that are influenced by the Statement. There will be opportunity to comment on these draft plans when they are subject to public consultation.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 The Council has a statutory duty to meet the duty to cooperate. This is set out in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) and The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended). The National Planning Policy Framework elaborates on the duty in relation to plan making.

13.2 When a local plan is considered at independent examination it is subject to a legal “test of soundness”. To pass this test, the Council must demonstrate it has met the duty to cooperate. The duty cannot be met retrospectively so to mitigate any risk, the Council should do all it can to meet the duty prior to submitting its local plan for examination.

14. Accountable Officers

Nigel Hancock, Head of Planning and Building Control

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	**Date**
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	04/09/23
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	31/08/23
Assistant Director, Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phil Horsfield	31/08/23

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This report is published on the Council's website.

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Appendix 1

JOINT REGIONAL STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND

MAY 2023

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1. Introduction

1.1 This Statement of Common Ground provides a record of agreement on cross boundary, strategic planning matters and has been produced by the signatory authorities to demonstrate how Local Plans are prepared on the basis of an agreed understanding of the issues facing the Region (as outlined in Chapter 3, for the purposes of this Statement 'Region' refers to the former Sheffield City Region area).

1.2 The local authorities directly engaged in the Statement are:

- Bassetlaw DC
- Barnsley MBC
- Bolsover DC
- Chesterfield BC
- Derbyshire Dales DC
- City of Doncaster Council
- North East Derbyshire DC
- Rotherham MBC
- Sheffield City Council

1.3 Other key stakeholders and signatories to the Statement are:

- South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority
- Nottinghamshire County Council
- Derbyshire County Council
- Peak District National Park Authority

1.4 This Statement fulfils the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and has been developed in accordance with the Government's Planning Policy Guidance. It updates and replaces the previous Joint Statement of Common Ground agreed in October 2020, which covered the former Sheffield City Region (SCR) geography.

1.5 An explanation of the key strategic matters and where we agree on these is set out in the following sections, with more detailed information in the Annex along with technical issues and links to the evidence base we have developed and continue to maintain.

1.6 Other Statements of Common Ground have also been agreed, or are being prepared, by authorities in the former SCR Region[1]. This includes Statements of Common Ground for:

- The Doncaster Local Plan (March 2020) covering several strategic matters relating to the Local Plan.
- North East Derbyshire District Council, Bolsover District Council, Chesterfield Borough Council, Bassetlaw District Council, Derbyshire County Council and Highways England (Oct 2018) covering M1 J30 & Treble Bob Roundabout.
- Bolsover and Mansfield District Councils (August 2018) covering Gypsy and Traveller unmet need, housing needs, Junction 28 and 28 and development in Pleasley.
- North Derbyshire and Bassetlaw (May 2018) on the Housing Market Area.
- Sheffield and North East Derbyshire (May 2018) on Green Belt.
- Bolsover and North East Derbyshire (May 2018) on the former Coalite Works.
- Bassetlaw and Mansfield (December 2018) covering Gypsy and Traveller unmet need, housing need and distribution, Welbeck Colliery site and A60 corridor.
- Derbyshire Dales District Council is preparing an updated SOCG as part of the review of the Local Plan.
- Nottinghamshire and Bassetlaw, Sheffield, Rotherham, and Doncaster in respect of Waste Planning issues related to the Nottinghamshire and Nottingham Waste Local Plan (2024, forthcoming).
- Bassetlaw and others (November 2022) on the A1 corridor logistics assessment property market area.
- Bassetlaw and Rotherham (November 2022) on the Bassetlaw Local Plan.
- Sheffield Local Plan – in preparation – to be completed prior to Local Plan being submitted for examination.

1.7 In addition, the Peak District National Park Management Plan 2023-2028[2] has high level buy in from Sheffield City Council and all constituent authorities across the National Park area. The Management Plan sets out an ambitious 20 year vision for the Peak District National Park and provides principles and priorities for partnership action working through its vision, aims, objectives and delivery plan.

1.8 This Region-wide Statement of Common Ground has been prepared in light of existing work, in order to avoid duplication or conflict, and enable a more streamlined approach for the planning authorities in South Yorkshire and the former SCR area in the future. It will be reviewed annually by the signatories

[1] Not all signatories to this regional Statement of Common Ground are party to or signatories of the other Statements of Common Ground listed.
[2] https://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/looking-after/strategies-and-policies/national-park-management-plan

involved. This process will also allow other signatories and strategic matters to be added as appropriate.

1.9 Throughout this Statement the wider regional context is recognised where appropriate (for example, the two Strategic Economic Plans prepared by SYMCA and D2N2); however, there is an emphasis on South Yorkshire for some issues where this reflects the core of activity or co-operation.

2. Key Signatories

..... **for and behalf of Bassetlaw District Council**	..... Signature ..... Title
..... **for and behalf of Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council**	..... Signature ..... Title
..... **for and behalf of Bolsover District Council**	..... Signature ..... Title
..... **for and behalf of Chesterfield Borough Council**	..... Signature ..... Title
..... **for and behalf of Derbyshire Dales District Council**	..... Signature ..... Title
..... **for and behalf of City of Doncaster Council**	..... Signature ..... Title
.....	..... Signature

for and behalf of North East Derbyshire District Council	..... Title
..... **for and behalf of Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council**	..... Signature ..... Title
..... **for and behalf of Sheffield City Council**	..... Signature ..... Title
..... **for and behalf of Derbyshire County Council**	..... Signature ..... Title
..... **for and behalf of Nottinghamshire County Council**	..... Signature ..... Title
..... **for and behalf of Peak District National Park Authority**	..... Signature ..... Title
..... **for and behalf of South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority**	..... Signature Mayor..... Title

3. Strategic Geography

3.1. This Statement of Common Ground covers the former Sheffield City Region area. In 2021 the Combined Authority changed its name from "Sheffield City Region" to the "South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority" to better reflect the organisation and the communities it serves. This also recognised Government's decision to change the geographies of Local Economic Partnerships and the agreement of a Devolution Deal and funding to SYMCA only covering South Yorkshire. However, the constituent and non-constituent members of SYMCA remain unchanged[3], and the former SCR area continues to be an appropriate strategic level for co-operation for spatial planning. For the purposes of this Statement references to 'the Region' refer to the former SCR area.

3.2. The Region covers two cities, several large towns, thriving smaller towns, other semi-urban areas and a rural surrounding area. Ten local authorities are responsible for preparing Local Plans (see Figure 1, page 8) - four metropolitan districts of Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield; five district councils of Bassetlaw, Bolsover, Chesterfield, Derbyshire Dales; and North East Derbyshire. An area of the Peak District National Park also falls within the western area of the Region and is a planning authority in its own right. Derbyshire County Council and Nottinghamshire County Council are responsible for preparing minerals and waste local plans for their areas.

3.3. The National Park plays a key role in the Region, but also much more widely with special qualities that reflect the importance of its landscapes, wildlife and cultural heritage[4].

3.4. Research conducted by the OECD[5] in 2012 (updated 2019) into functional urban areas highlights the limitations of existing administrative boundaries and strong relationships among several urban cores within the UK. The work concludes that most of the former Sheffield City Region is a functional urban area, with a rural fringe which is also important to its economic, social, cultural and environmental functioning. This is further supported by the ONS[6] which highlights five main travel-to-work areas within the Region as well as overlaps with five others.

[3] Constituent members of SYMCA are Sheffield, Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham Councils. Non-constituent members are Derbyshire Dales, North East Derbyshire, Chesterfield, Bassetlaw and Bolsover Councils.
[4] The Environment Act 1995 sets out the purposes of National Parks and commitment to their special qualities https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1995/25/contents/enacted
[5] See OECD's Functional Urban Area Definitions here: http://www.oecd.org/cfe/regional-policy/functionalurbanareasbycountry.htm
[6] See ONS's Travel-to-Work Areas: https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/articles/traveltoworkareaanalysisingreatbritain/2016

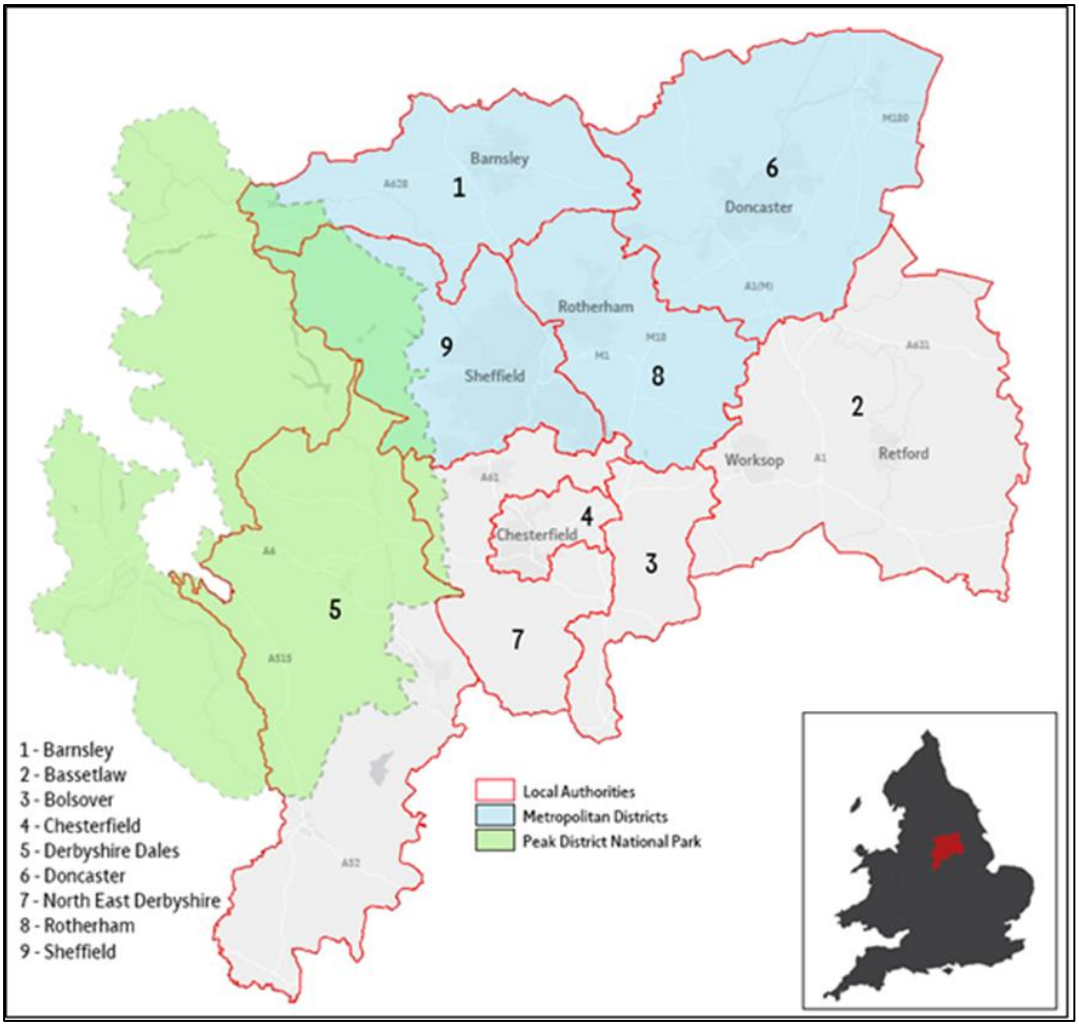


Figure 1: The Statement of Common Ground area

3.5 These relationships are also reflected in the retail, housing, transport and cultural linkages across the Region[7]. For example:

- There is overlap between retail catchments with joint working on retail important in ensuring appropriate land/property provision and retail/leisure demand relative to transport networks.
- Housing markets across the Region share some commonalities with most areas being more affordable than the national average, although this can mask areas of real need, especially for households with the lowest incomes.
- The proximity of major urban areas and the relative ease of commuting between them for work (as demonstrated by travel-to-work flows and journey times) demonstrate strong linkages within the Region.
- Administrative boundaries that cover the Region demonstrate the complexity of geography but also the commonalities. The NHS has several Integrated Care Partnerships and Boards within the Region demonstrating historical but also demographic commonalities. Other Government Agencies work across a

[7] Further evidence was collated in the SCR LEP Review Geography Proposal (September 2018) which is available on request from SYMCA

broader geography (e.g. Homes England covers the North East, Yorkshire and The Humber as well the East Midlands).

- The Region's cultural geography and green and blue infrastructure has never been assessed in its totality but there are clear linkages. These include the Peak District National Park, the West and South Yorkshire Green Belt and the canal and river networks as well as several historic and cultural assets, and some significant areas with high biodiversity value.

3.6 However, relationships between areas don't stop at the Region's boundary and we are committed to working with all neighbouring areas. For example, the area is closely related to the West Yorkshire region (particularly Barnsley) and also overlaps with the D2N2 LEP[8] (in Bassetlaw, Bolsover, Chesterfield, NE Derbyshire and Derbyshire Dales). These relationships have fostered close partnership working, producing some innovative projects on shared priorities as well as wider collaboration with other areas through the initiatives like Northern Powerhouse[9].

[8] Following the Government's review of Local Enterprise Partnerships and the removal of overlapping geographies, a joint statement was prepared outlining the intended collaboration between the Sheffield City Region (as it was known at the time) and D2N2 LEPs across the shared Functional Economic Area. The purpose of the collaboration was to develop shared approaches where there is a clear rationale to do so, and where the impact of doing the activity will exceed the economic benefits of separate endeavours. A number of areas of activity were specified where there would be 'Strategic Collaboration'. This included Spatial Planning, although there were no specific actions defined.

[9] For example, through the Department for International Trade's Northern Powerhouse trade missions

4. Key Strategic Matters

4.1 The local authorities of Bassetlaw; Barnsley; Bolsover; Chesterfield; Derbyshire Dales; Doncaster; North East Derbyshire; Rotherham and Sheffield together with the upper tier authorities of Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire County Councils, the Peak District National Park Authority and SYMCA work together at a regional scale on planning matters of shared strategic significance.

4.2 Together, we have agreed that this Statement of Common Ground should focus primarily on the following strategic matters:

1. Energy and Climate Change.
2. Housing.
3. Employment.
4. Transport.
5. Natural Environment.
6. Waste; and
7. Digital Connectivity.

4.3 Spatial planning has a vital role to play in enabling and encouraging the transition to a competitive and resilient low-carbon society that also supports the environment and human health and wellbeing[10]. This Statement acknowledges, as an overarching imperative, the role of the planning system in responding to the challenges of the climate change crisis and the need to reduce carbon emissions in order to meet national, regional and local net zero carbon targets. It recognises that tackling the climate emergency, supporting sustainable development and transport solutions and delivering environmental improvements and a net gain in biodiversity are cross-cutting and cross-boundary in nature.

4.4 In addition, current working arrangements on several other strategic matters are summarised in this Statement in order to illustrate the range of shared interests being progressed. These are developing and will continue to be reviewed in future updates of this Statement. They include:

- Green Belt.
- Minerals Planning.
- Peak District National Park; and
- Health.

[10] The Climate Crisis: A Guide for Local Authorities on Planning for Climate Change. TCPA & RTPI. January 2023.

4.1 Planning for Energy and Climate Change

4.1.1 In June 2019, The Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019 was signed into force by the UK Government committing by law to achieve 100% (net zero carbon) reduction in emissions by 2050.

4.1.2 Climate change is a cross cutting topic and strategic planning has a key role to play in achieving sustainable development and tackling and adapting to climate change. A number of the topics covered in this Statement are instrumental in reducing and mitigating the effects of climate change, in particular biodiversity and natural environment and transport. This includes influencing where new housing, employment and other development is located which in turn affects the need to travel and access to more sustainable travel modes. As such, as well as the agreements set out below, there will be agreed actions in other chapters in this document which will contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation.

4.1.3 SYMCA and 8 out of the 12 authorities which signed up to the existing Joint Statement of Common Ground have declared a climate emergency and established targets for reducing carbon emissions. The Peak District National Park also has a high priority towards carbon reduction in its National Park Management Plan.

Authority	**Date Climate Emergency Declared**	**Target date** Council activities where applicable	**Target date** Whole area
SYMCA	November 2019		2040
Barnsley	September 2019	2040	2045
Chesterfield	July 2019	2030	2050
Derbyshire Dales	May 2019	2030	2050
Doncaster	September 2019	None	2040
North East Derbyshire	July 2019	2030	
Rotherham	October 2019	2030	2040
Sheffield	February 2019	2030	2030
Nottinghamshire	May 2021	2030	

Energy

4.1.4 As above, SYMCA and the four South Yorkshire local authorities have all declared climate emergencies and put in place targets for reducing carbon emissions.

4.1.5 SYMCA's Energy Strategy[11] outlines how the region could achieve its ambition to be at net-zero carbon emissions by 2040, ten years before the goal set by

[11] https://southyorkshire-ca.gov.uk/getmedia/423b1606-ad2b-4261-93b0-f712b7fef6e8/SCR-Energy-Strategy.pdf

Government. The target was set following the declaration of a Climate Emergency in South Yorkshire in November 2019[12].

4.1.6 The zero carbon and energy strategies of the four South Yorkshire authorities are summarised at Table 10 in the Annex.

Whole Life Carbon

4.1.7 Whole life carbon emissions relate to the carbon emissions associated with a building over its entire lifetime arising from materials, its construction and its use. Traditionally it has mainly been operational emissions that have been assessed. In order to be able to monitor and assess whether we are meeting our net zero targets, we will work towards securing the assessment of whole life carbon emissions for major developments.

Future Homes Standard

4.1.8 The Government has brought in the Future Homes Standard, which from 2025 will require co2 emissions produced by new homes to be 75-80% lower than homes that are built to the 2023 Building Regulations standards. Homes will need to be zero carbon ready with no retrofit work required to benefit from the decarbonisation of the electricity grid and the electrification of heating. The intention is to future proof new homes for low carbon heating systems and meet higher standards of energy efficiency.

4.1.9 The Government has also set higher performance targets for non-domestic buildings (Future Building Standard), which will have to be 'zero carbon ready' by 2025. This involves uplifting minimum energy efficiency standards, uplifting minimum standards for new and replacement thermal elements (i.e. walls, floors, roofs) and controlled fittings (e.g. windows, roof-lights and doors).

4.1.10 The existing Building Regulations and future revisions are a crucial element in achieving zero carbon development. Local authorities will ensure new development meets these standards as a minimum and encourage higher standards where possible.

Flood Risk in South Yorkshire

4.1.11 Since the devastating flooding in November 2019 across South Yorkshire, SYMCA and the four local authorities have worked with partner organisations to respond to the flood risk and climate emergency in South Yorkshire on a catchment scale.

4.1.12 The Connected by Water Action Plan[13] is a vital part of this response, setting out the actions SYMCA, South Yorkshire local authorities and our partners are developing and delivering now and in the coming years. It strengthens our capacity to plan and act together to ensure we are building a climate resilient future for the communities of South Yorkshire.

[12] SCR Mayoral Combined Authority Board meeting. 18 November 2019. Minute item 15. https://governance.southyorkshire-ca.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=137&MId=173&Ver=4

[13] https://southyorkshire-ca.gov.uk/Connected-by-water

Based on the above, the current position is that we:

- Work towards contributing to the national target of being net zero by 2050 alongside local targets and targets in SYMCA and local climate emergency declarations.
- Collaborate where appropriate to accelerate progress towards a carbon neutral Region, reflecting in local plans or supplementary planning documents such as the SYMCA energy strategy and renewal plan, where appropriate.
- Liaise with neighbouring authorities regarding cross boundary impacts of specific sites, to identify and agree appropriate mitigation measures where required.
- Local planning authorities will seek to encourage higher standards than the Building Regulations in force at the time of the development, where practicable and economically viable to do so.
- Local planning authorities will work towards seeking whole life carbon assessments (covering both operational and embodied carbon) where appropriate.
- Local Planning Authorities in South Yorkshire have agreed to work together on a catchment wide basis to reflect the natural geography of the region and seek consistency in respect of permitted run off rates for greenfield and brownfield developments.
- Partners in South Yorkshire will work together to develop and deliver flood risk benefits through the planning system on a catchment scale, consistent with the Connected by Water Action Plan.
- Local Planning Authorities in South Yorkshire have agreed to work together to develop and support the implementation of the Energy Strategy and Delivery Plan.

4.2 Planning for Housing

The Collective Housing Needs of the Region

4.2.1 All Local Planning Authorities in the Region are planning to ensure that their own housing needs are met within their Local Authority boundaries, where this is consistent with national planning policy. Based on adopted annual Local Plan targets, emerging Local Plan targets and local housing need figures, there is no significant shortfall in housing supply and no re-distribution of unmet need required in the Region. The overall level of housing growth being planned for is enabling economic growth targets in existing and emerging Local Plans to be delivered, supporting the aspirations of the SYMCA Strategic Economic Plan.

4.2.2 Using the Government's standard methodology, the assessment of Local Housing Need (LHN) across the Region would be 6,200 (net) new homes per annum[14], which informs developing Local Plans or plans being reviewed. Housing requirement targets in adopted and emerging Local Plans currently total 6,466 new homes per year. This means the Region are currently planning for around 266 homes per year more than the standard housing need figure.

4.2.3 Rotherham's Core Strategy is subject to a partial update, which is programmed for consultation in late 2023 (Reg 18). If LHN is used to inform Rotherham's target the figure will be 566 homes per year. In addition, the draft Sheffield Local Plan (Reg 19 stage) sets a housing target of 2,040 homes per year, which is 978 below the LHN figure for Sheffield of 3,018. This reflects the additional 35% urban uplift as applied to Sheffield's Local Housing Need figure by Government, which has a significant impact on the regional figure. This uplift is catering for household growth arising from people moving to Sheffield from elsewhere in the UK or from abroad (i.e., it is not locally generated). Taken together, these changes mean that the Region would be planning for around 6,072 homes per year, which is 128 homes less than the standard housing need figure. This represents a change since the previous Statement of Common Ground, being slightly below the Government's LHN requirements[15].

4.2.4 Table 1 in the Annex provides a local authority breakdown of local housing need figures and Local Plan housing requirement targets.

Housing Delivery

4.2.5 All Local Planning Authorities are currently working to maximise the delivery of new homes in their area and across the Region.

4.2.6 The number of new homes completed in the Region has risen steadily over recent years, rising from 5,350 in 2015/16 to a high of 8,212 in 2019/20, albeit with a dip during 2020/21 as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, completion of

[14] Correct as at 1. April 2022. Based on increase household projections for 2022-20232 and affordability ratio for 2021. Full guidance at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-and-economic-development-needs-assessments

[15] The previous 2019-based calculations identified that Local Plans were planning for 6,311 – 6,659 homes pear year, equating to 922 – 1,270 homes per year above a combined regional Local Housing Need of 5,389 homes per year.

7,143 new homes in 2021/22 shows how the Region has recovered to reach the second highest level of completions since 2015/16. Table 2 in the Annex provides a local authority breakdown of net housing completions, which represents the total of all new homes added to the housing stock in the Region, including conversions and change of use. For accuracy and consistency, this is based on figures provided annually by local authorities to Government through the Housing Flows Reconciliation returns[16], which are used to calculate performance against the Housing Delivery Test (HDT) - a key feature of the Government's push to increase housing delivery.

4.2.7 Overall, annual housing delivery in the Region is now broadly in line with Local Plan targets and local planning authorities will continue to monitor the rate of new housing completions within the Region.

4.2.8 Monitoring of completions by house type and size is not available consistently across all the Region's authorities and is therefore not included in this Statement of Common Ground. Similarly, other housing issues such as tenure and provision for specific groups like Gypsies and Travellers, students or armed forces personnel are better addressed at the Local Planning Authority level and so are not covered within this Statement.

Housing Land Supply

4.2.9 All Local Planning Authorities in the Region are currently working to ensure that a housing land supply of at least five years is available within each local authority area, which in turn will result in a 5-year supply across the Region as a whole. The most recent monitoring suggests that there is in excess of a 5-year deliverable housing land supply across the Region, rising to a supply in excess of 8 years if compared to the combined Local Housing Need figure.

4.2.10 Table 3 in the Annex provides details of the full local authority published 5-year housing land supply position and publication dates of data. Due to the variation in publication dates, some positions will have since changed. We will continue to monitor land supply in relation to Local Plan requirements.

4.2.11 We will work collaboratively to anticipate and respond to long term requirements and opportunities, including exploring sustainable housing growth opportunities arising from proposed major improvements to strategic transport infrastructure.

Housing Market Areas

4.2.12 Figure 2 below shows the extent of different Housing Market Areas defined across the Region and used to understand housing needs and demands at a local level. It illustrates the complexity of our housing market geography as well as the close relationships between areas, particularly in the south of the region. It is recognised that Housing Market Areas can operate differently for different groups, and that there is some overlap. These more complex relationships will be addressed through

[16] See fuller explanation at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/dwelling-stock-data-notes-and-definitions-includes-hfr-full-guidance-notes-and-returns-form

local assessments and discussions between neighbouring districts wherever necessary.

4.2.13 In some cases, where Local Plans are adopted with housing requirements above the Local Housing Need assessment figure, this may contribute towards wider regional growth ambitions. This would require separate agreements between individual authorities (there are no such agreements in place at present within the Region) and would only apply in situations where new homes and areas of jobs growth do not result in unsustainable commuting patterns and where the new homes are not required to balance the jobs growth in an individual local authority area.

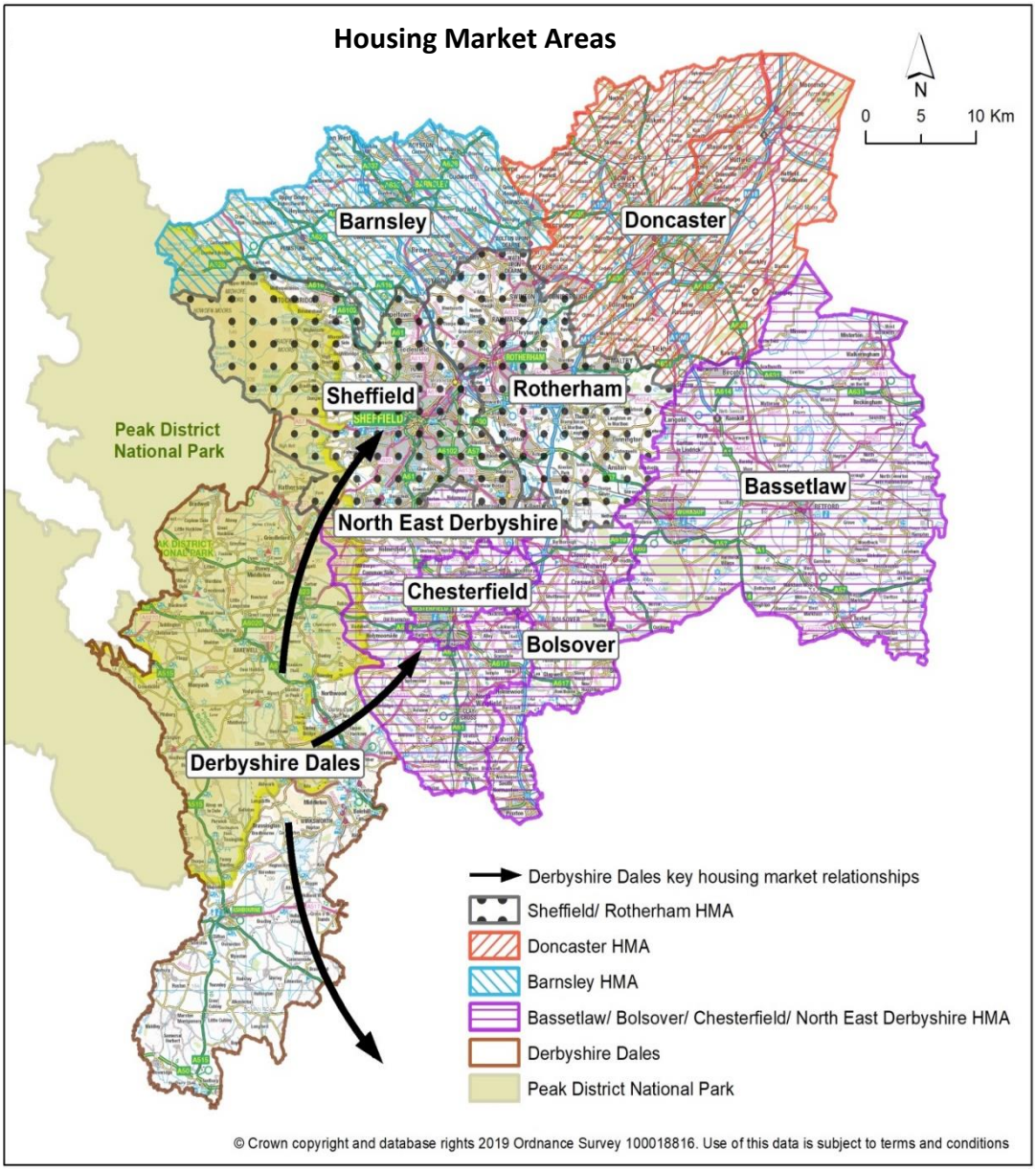


Figure 2: Housing Market Areas

Based on the above, the current position is that:

- Each Local Planning Authority plans for their own housing need within their own Local Authority boundaries, taking account of national planning policy, housing market geographies, individual local authority economic growth targets and agreements between individual authorities as necessary.
- Through Local Plans, we ensure that the quantum of housing required to deliver growth ambitions across the Region is being met.
- Through Local Plans, agree Housing Market Areas in the Region and understand the relationships between these.
- We will use the plan making system to maximise delivery of sustainable housing development.
- Monitor housing delivery on an annual basis, as a minimum, to ensure that housing growth continues to meet identified local need and support growth ambitions across the Region.

4.3 Planning for Employment

Employment Targets

4.3.1 The SCR Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) agreed in 2014, sought to create 70,000 new jobs and 6,000 new businesses across the former City Region (between 2015 and 2025). This informed preparation of Local Plans across the region.

4.3.2 Following the refocusing of the Mayoral Combined Authority on South Yorkshire the latest SEP, agreed in 2021, provides a strategy to 2041. This aims to deliver 33,000 extra people in higher level jobs across South Yorkshire, although it moves away from specific job targets for individual districts. Its vision is to grow an economy that works for everyone; developing inclusive and sustainable approaches that build on our innovation strengths and embrace the UK's 4th Industrial Revolution to contribute more to UK prosperity and enhance quality of life for all.

4.3.3 The strategy for Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire to 2030 is set out in 'Vision 30', the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership's SEP. This seeks to deliver a high-value economy, prosperous, healthy and inclusive, and one of the most productive in Europe. The D2N2 Recovery and Growth Strategy 2021 seeks to support low carbon growth; promote productivity, particularly around employment and skills; business growth and innovation; and endorse connectivity and inclusion, including integrated infrastructure and place shaping.

4.3.4 Local Plans in the Region are at different stages of preparation and cover differing plan periods. They are being, or have been, prepared drawing on relevant and robust evidence to accommodate jobs growth. Table 4 in the Annex sets out the headline jobs figures being planned for in the adopted or emerging Local Plans.

Employment Land Supply and Major Growth Areas

4.3.5 Each place within the region plays an important role in the economy and contributes to our economic ambitions. The roles of different places and their contribution to the regional economy are defined in each Local Plan. Key points from these plans are summarised in Table 7 in the Annex to this Statement.

4.3.6 Working across these places and the different roles they fulfil, key locations have been identified where growth will be supported through investment and infrastructure measures.

4.3.7 In South Yorkshire the SEP identifies eight Major Growth Areas which are:

- Sheffield and Doncaster City Centres and the town centres of Barnsley and Rotherham
- Gateway East[17]

[17] The owners of Doncaster Sheffield Airport began winding down aviation services in October 2022 arguing that its operation was commercially unviable. The City of Doncaster Council and SYMCA continue to explore all appropriate legal remedies in order to secure aviation operations at Doncaster Sheffield Airport.

- Advanced Manufacturing Innovation District (AMID)
- Doncaster Unity
- Goldthorpe in the Dearne Valley

4.3.8 In Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, the Local Industrial Strategy supports the growth of cities, towns and economic corridors to improve quality of place and economic prosperity in the wider region. Key locations are:

- Chesterfield and Worksop town centres
- Markham Vale
- A61 Corridor

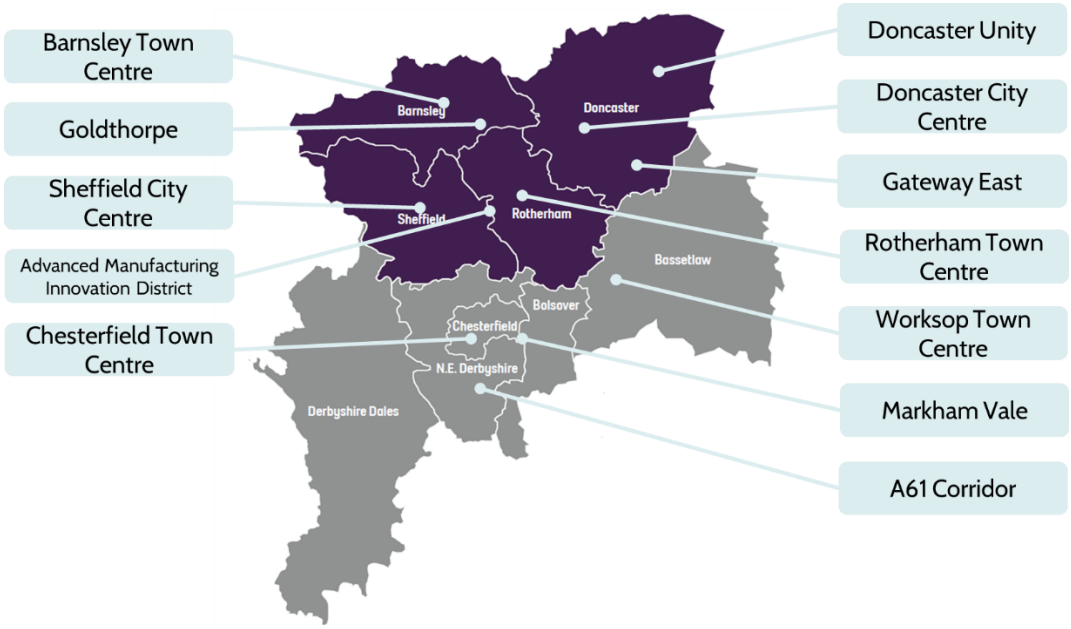


Figure 3: Indicative location of Key Urban Centres and Major Growth Areas

4.3.9 Local Plans will help to drive employment in these urban centres and growth locations, ensuring that an appropriate supply of employment land is available for economic growth and that the infrastructure needed to deliver this is recognised and capable of being funded.

4.3.10 Table 6 in the Annex summarises the employment land requirements from each of the Local Plans in the region.

4.3.11 A high-level appraisal of strategic employment sites across the former Sheffield City Region was undertaken in 2020, with a particular focus on strategic sites of 5 ha or more. It provides a coherent, joined up understanding of current employment land across all nine districts which will inform the decisions of individual planning authorities.

Functional Economic Market Areas and Travel to Work Areas

4.3.12 The geography of commercial and industrial property markets needs to be understood in terms of the requirements of the market, location of premises, and the spatial factors used in analysing demand and supply – often referred to as the Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA).

4.3.13 However, patterns of economic activity vary from place to place and there is no standard approach to defining a FEMA. Instead, the extent of a FEMA needs to be defined on the basis of a number of factors such as travel to work pattern; flows of goods, services and information; service markets for consumers; administrative boundaries; catchment areas for cultural facilities; and the transport network.

4.3.14 Based on this approach, Local Planning Authorities across the region define a FEMA for their own local plans, which are summarised at Table 8 in the Annex. Each Local Planning Authority is individually responsible for identifying employment needs and employment land supply in their local plans to meet their District's economic needs and growth priorities.

4.3.15 The definition of the FEMAs is not always straightforward and there can often be overlaps. At the regional scale there are strong links between the different market areas and travel to work patterns. The previously adopted regional Statement of Common Ground recognised that it is reasonable to consider the whole of the former Sheffield City Region as a Strategic FEMA; which would sit above the local FEMAs defined in Local Plans. We continue to adopt this position in this updated Statement.

4.3.16 We acknowledge, however, that logistics including large scale warehouse and distribution (logistics) uses over 100,000sq ft have a larger than local property market area[18] which may not align with the boundary of the Region and the strategic FEMA. Considering opportunities for large scale logistics would require separate agreements between individual authorities within an evidenced property market area.

4.3.17 Considering the Region as a strategic FEMA within the boundary of the Region will ensure that together we can offer the optimum supply of land to address large scale strategic or inward investment growth requirements that would otherwise be above and beyond the indigenous needs of any one district. This approach will provide further assistance to work already undertaken to plan infrastructure and help support closer integration between policy areas such as planning and transport. It would not prejudice the work done by any individual district in developing their Local Plans.

4.3.18 Pre-coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic data indicates that in total, 88% of the working people who live in the Region also work within the Region; looking at this pattern from the other perspective, nearly 9 in 10 people whose job is in the

[18] It is also recognised that logistics uses may have larger market areas which extend beyond the boundaries of the Region as defined for the purposes of this Statement, and which individual authorities will need to take into account.

Region also live here[19]. In short, the great majority of residents work locally or commute between districts within the Region for work. These internal commuting flows are set out in Figure 4.

4.3.19 At the same time, there are also important links between the region and employment opportunities in Leeds, Wakefield, Derby and the Amber Valley-Ashfield-Mansfield corridor. The extent of these external commuting flows is illustrated in Figure 5.

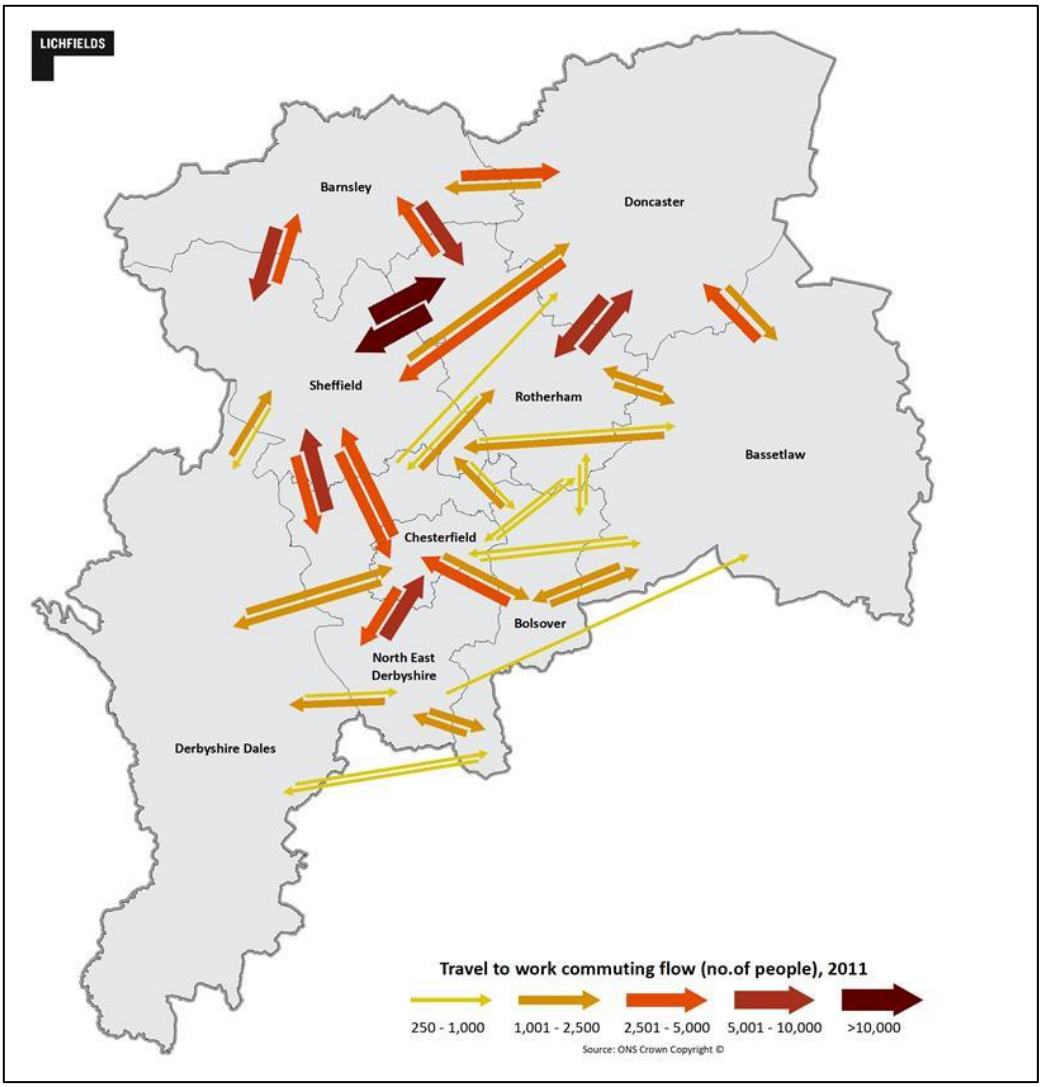


Figure 4: Travel to work commuting flows[20]

[19] Based on 2011 TTWA data (published by ONS in 2015), analysed by Lichfields (2019)
[20] Based on 2011 TTWA data (published by ONS in 2015), analysed by Lichfields (2019)

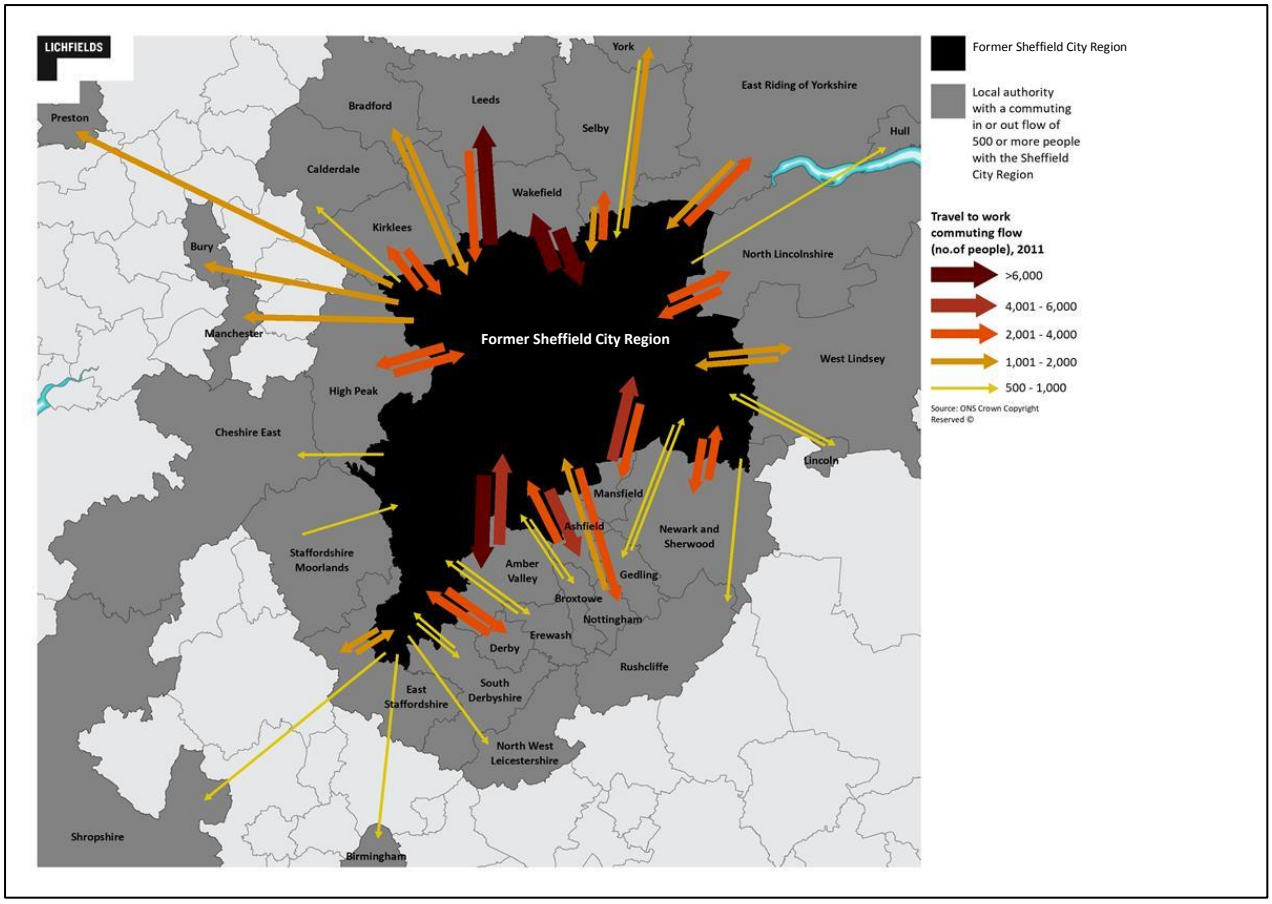


Figure 5: Travel to work commuting flows between the former Sheffield City Region and neighbouring areas

4.3.20 The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic led to major changes in commuter travel patterns. Travel to workplaces declined sharply due to a shift to working from home, being furloughed or in some cases because of job losses. Research suggests that latent demand for permanent flexible working arrangements, including working from home and hybrid office-home working, have been unlocked by the pandemic[21]. Understanding the long-term impacts of changing working and commuting patterns on local and regional economies will be important; particularly in respect of office floorspace supply and demand, impacts on city and town centres and other major growth areas.

Based on the above, the current position is that:

- Local planning authorities will plan for their own employment land needs within their own Local Authority boundaries, taking account of alignment with housing growth proposals, Functional Economic Market Areas and agreements between individual authorities as necessary.

[21] https://post.parliament.uk/the-impact-of-remote-and-flexible-working-arrangements/

- Employment growth in the Key Urban Centres and Major Growth Areas will be supported.
- The delivery of employment land will be monitored, and Local Planning Authorities will ensure an appropriate supply of land in line with growth ambitions.
- The loss of employment land to other uses, in particular residential use, will be monitored.
- We will share local evidence as appropriate and strengthen our collective evidence base, particularly in respect of changing working and commuting patterns.
- We will continue to work collaboratively to achieve the economic ambitions of the SYMCA and D2N2 SEPs and other growth strategies within the Region, developing our evidence and understanding the operation of a strategic FEMA at the regional scale.
- Local Planning Authorities will seek to maintain an adequate supply of land for logistics uses across the Region as a whole (recognising the larger than local property market area)

4.4 Planning for Transport

Transport Strategy

4.4.1 The SCR Transport Strategy[22] sets goals and policies for South Yorkshire but recognises the importance of the wider regional economic geography. It was adopted by SYMCA in January 2019 as a basis for supporting the economic aspirations of the Region. Importantly, the Strategy also looks beyond the immediate boundaries of the region to include interventions that benefit the wider Northern Powerhouse and Midlands Connect sub-national areas, as well as the rest of the UK.

4.4.2 Further detail is set out in the following plans, supporting the Transport Strategy:

- SYMCA Bus Service Improvement Plan[23] (2021)
- SCR Integrated Rail Plan (2019)
- SCR Active Travel Implementation Plan (2020)

4.4.3 Taken together, the Strategy is intended to ensure all parts of the Region are well-connected, with journey times that connect every neighbourhood to a regional hub in 15 minutes; a regional hub to another regional hub in 30 minutes; and all regional hubs to a major centre in 75 minutes[24].

4.4.4 As separate Local Transport Authorities, both Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire have their own Local Transport Plans, covering parts of the region outside of South Yorkshire. These both emphasise the importance of cross boundary working, and have objectives aligned with the SCR Transport Strategy as set out in the table below.

SCR Transport Strategy goals	Derbyshire LTP3 objectives	Nottinghamshire LTP goals
Residents and businesses connected to economic opportunity	*Supporting a resilient local economy.* *Promoting equality of opportunity.*	*Improve access to key services, particularly enabling employment and training opportunities*
A cleaner and greener Sheffield City Region	*Tackling climate change.* *Improving quality of life and promoting a healthy natural environment.*	*Minimise the impacts of transport on people's lives, maximise opportunities to improve the environment and help tackle carbon emissions*

[22] See full strategy on the SYMCA website at https://southyorkshire-ca.gov.uk/explore/transport
[23] On-line at https://southyorkshire-ca.gov.uk/SheffieldCityRegion/media/PDF-library/Transport%20pdfs/37770_Bus-Service-Improvement-Plan_FINAL.pdf
[24] The Transport Strategy defines a neighbourhood as the closest built up area to your home; it defines 11 regional hubs in SCR which are economic centres that people need to access quickly and easily for work, health services, education, shopping and leisure.

SCR Transport Strategy goals	Derbyshire LTP3 objectives	Nottinghamshire LTP goals
Safe, reliable and accessible transport network	*Contributing to better safety, security, and health*	*Provide a reliable, resilient transport system which supports a thriving economy and growth whilst encouraging sustainable and healthy travel*

4.4.5 Since the development of the SCR Transport Strategy and its supporting plans, a number of significant changes in national and regional transport policy have taken place, including:

- New national strategies in respect of active travel[25] and buses[26];
- The national Transport Decarbonisation Plan[27] and Net Zero Strategy[28];
- The updated regional Strategic Economic Plan[29] and Renewal Action Plan[30];
- The Integrated Rail Plan for the North[31], and the South Yorkshire Post-IRP Positioning Plan;
- The recently agreed East Midlands Devolution Deal; and
- A new national Park management Plan seeking low carbon sustainable visits to the National Park.

4.4.6 The changes will be reflected in in the preparation of the new South Yorkshire Local Transport Plan, to be in place for Spring 2024. A new Local Transport Plan will also be prepared for the new East Midlands Mayoral Combined Authority. These changes are also likely to require the renewal of the implementation plans set out at paragraph 4.3.2 above.

4.4.7 We will work closely together on all relevant aspects of the SCR Transport Strategy, transport strategies in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire, and with Local Plans where relevant and planning decisions particularly helping to deliver priorities around economic growth, housing, health, air quality and decarbonisation:

- Growth: improved transport network connectivity and greater capacity are vital in enabling economic growth, both in the region and across the wider North of England.
- Housing: transport contributes to meeting our housing targets by helping to unlock new development sites and provide more sustainable modes of travel for residents.

[25] Gear Change, Department for Transport (2020)
[26] Bus Back Better Department for Transport (2021)
[27] Transport decarbonisation plan (DfT, 2021)
[28] Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener DfT, 2021
[29] SCR_SEP_Full_Draft_Jan_21-(accesssible).pdf (southyorkshire-ca.gov.uk)
[30] https://southyorkshire-ca.gov.uk/getmedia/bf2c27b2-a5c7-4ac5-ac64-b4f8798df095/Sheffield-City-Region-Renewal-Action-Plan-Document-Final.pdf
[31] Integrated Rail Plan for the North and Midlands, DfT, 2021

- Decarbonisation: transport accounts for 38% of territorial emissions in the region, and prompt, well targeted action will be required to reduce carbon emissions as fast as possible in the lead-up to achieving Net Zero at 2040 – in particular for the most significant contributors in respect of medium- and long distance car travel and freight (see paragraph 4.3.12).
- Health and Air Quality: provision for more active travel like walking and cycling as well as public transport alongside development enables more sustainable choices to be made, benefitting health and air quality

National and pan-northern interventions

4.4.8 The SCR Transport Strategy, and subsequent documents, define a number of transport interventions that will have a national and pan-northern impact as they are progressed by SYMCA and partners such as Transport for the North, neighbouring authorities, the National Highways, Network Rail, public transport operators, businesses and Government.

4.4.9 Local Plans in the SCR Transport Strategy area will seek to support the following:

- Maintenance and improvement of bus services in the region, including working with LTAs in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire in respect of services running across Local Transport Authority boundaries.
- Major rail improvements: including faster and more frequent services to Leeds and Manchester.
- Local rail improvements, such as new stations at Rotherham Mainline, and accessibility improvements at local railway stations.
- Securing the long-term future of the tram / tram-train network: including the enhancement of services and supporting infrastructure and improving connectivity to and the accessibility of tram stops.
- Integrated and smart travel programme: with multi-modal, integrated ticketing and real time information.
- Strategic Road Network improvements: which will increase connectivity between the region and neighbouring regions as well as movements within the region itself.

4.4.10 Information in Table 9 of the Annex lists these national and pan-northern interventions. Together they will improve the region's links other Northern towns and cities as well as with the East Midlands region. It will, therefore, be particularly important to work closely with bodies such as Transport for the North, Midlands Connect, Network Rail and National Highways so that people can commute between city regions more quickly and easily, ensuring the right people have access to the right jobs in as sustainable a manner as possible.

Local Interventions

4.4.11 Each part of the Region has its own transport priorities and several local transport authorities have (or are developing) their own Local Transport Strategies, aligned to regional strategies, which are also used to inform Local Plans. At the Regional scale, the SCR Transport Strategy identifies 11 key regional economic centres that need reinforcing with transport infrastructure and 20 priority transport corridors.

4.4.12 We will work together and with SYMCA and other partners to seek to deliver improvements to transport corridors and enhance the strategic transport network with a combination of walking, cycling, bus, tram, bus rapid transit, heavy rail and tram-train.

Transport and climate change

4.4.13 Transport, and in particular road transport, is a major driver of carbon emissions – accounting for 39% of territorial emissions in the Region in 2019. Road transport was responsible for 97% of these emissions. Initial baselining work reveals, within the Region:

- 50% of transport emissions come from cars, 23% from heavy goods vehicles, and 16% from vans;
- 78% of car emissions result from trips exceeding 10 km (6 miles) length, despite only accounting for 45% of trips;
- 55% of car emissions, and 65% of road transport emissions, result from trips to or from destinations outside of the region. 26% of car emissions, and 32% of road transport emissions, have no origin or destination in the region at all i.e. are simply passing through. (There will be a similar effect for other regions, where trips to or from our region pass through others without stopping).
- Only 22% of car emissions, and only 16% of road transport emissions, relate to trips where both origin and destination lie within the same district.
- Around 90% of trips to the National Park take place by private vehicle.

4.4.14 The above baseline position highlights the importance of working with regional and national partners to tackle the medium- and long-distance trips that are disproportionately responsible for carbon emissions – likely through a combination of travel demand reduction, destination shift, mode shift and shift to zero emission vehicles.

Strategic Testing Tools

4.4.15 Since 2017, authorities across the Region have been assessing transport proposals using a region-wide computerised model of transport networks and demand (SCRTM1). This model is due to be updated in the coming years, to reflect changed travel patterns following the Coronavirus pandemic; this process will also see a review of how the model is used to ensure scheme appraisal reflects latest policy.

4.4.16 We will use these Region wide models alongside local transport models, including in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire, to ensure a complementary hierarchy of

modelling is applied. Working at different scales, from strategic interventions of major schemes to micro-simulation of individual sites or junctions, this will ensure the impacts and value for money of projects are understood in a clear, consistent way.

Based on the above, the current position is that we:

- Acknowledge carbon emissions are predominantly driven by medium- and long distance transport, both passenger and freight, and so development and transport impacts may not be fully accounted for in an individual area's territorial emissions – and agree to ensure cross-boundary impacts of development and transport interventions are fully considered and mitigated for.
- Support the development and adoption of new Local Transport Plans for South Yorkshire and the East Midlands by Spring of 2024.
- In South Yorkshire, the development and adoption of new implementation plans to reflect the new Local Transport Plan, covering bus, rail, tram, walking, cycling and private traffic (including freight and shift to zero emission vehicles) in an holistic and co-ordinated manner.
- Support, in the interim, the implementation of policies in the SCR Transport Strategy, but being flexible to adapt to shifts in national, regional policy since that strategy was drafted.
- Help to bring forward the national and pan-northern interventions agreed through the SCR Transport Strategy where remaining relevant or consistent with policy.
- Work together to improve connectivity, particularly within and around the 20 regional transport corridors defined in the Transport Strategy.
- Support the safeguarding and delivery of critical transport routes (both existing and new) and collaborate across boundaries to make the best use of inter-regional rail, tram, road and water transport networks.
- Secure financial contributions (for example, through S106 obligations, Community Infrastructure Levy, or Land Value Capture) wherever appropriate to help leverage funding for relevant transport interventions, particularly for public transport and active travel measures.
- Apply a complementary hierarchy of transport models to understand and assess the impact of local plans, projects and proposals on the transport network at appropriate scales.

4.5 Planning for the Natural Environment

4.5.1 All authorities within the Region recognise the importance of conserving and enhancing the natural environment and are taking a range of actions as a result, both within and outside of the sphere of influence of the planning system. In addition, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield Councils have declared nature or biodiversity emergencies which are complementary to climate emergency declarations, and which point towards the development of further actions and activities.

Local Nature Recovery Strategies

4.5.2 The Environment Act 2021 sets out the requirement for the preparation of Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS). A LNRS is a tool that is designed to drive more coordinated action to help nature and establish a Nature Recovery Network. As identified in the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan, the Nature Recovery Network will be a national network of wildlife rich places. The aim is to expand, improve and connect wildlife rich areas across our towns, cities and countryside, to help deal with the challenges of biodiversity loss, climate change and wellbeing. The LNRS will map the most valuable existing habitats for nature, map specific proposals for creating or improving habitats for nature and environmental goals as well as agreeing priorities for nature's recovery.

4.5.3 Within the Region:

- SYMCA has provisionally[32] been appointed to be the Responsible Authority for the development of South Yorkshire's Local Nature Recovery Strategy.
- Nottinghamshire County Council has provisionally been appointed to be the Responsible Authority for the development of Nottinghamshire's Local Nature Recovery Strategy.
- Derbyshire County Council has provisionally been appointed to be the Responsible Authority for the development of Derbyshire's Local Nature Recovery Strategy.
- The Peak District National Park is also producing a single plan for Nature Recovery to cover the whole of its statutory geography which overlaps these areas.

4.5.4 The Responsible Authorities, supported by partners, including local authorities and Local Nature Partnerships will develop the LNRS, including setting targets for nature recovery in the region. The delivery of the LNRS will then be monitored and reported as a requirement of the Environment Act.

Natural Capital

4.5.5 Natural capital can be defined as the world's stocks of natural assets which include geology, soil, air, water and all living things. It has been shown that the loss of

[32] Subject to the cost of the responsibility being met by Government funds

biodiversity and the degradation of natural capital has consequences for the long-term welfare of people and the sustainability of economic systems[33]. It is therefore vital that an understanding of natural capital plays a role in shaping planning policy and decision making.

4.5.6 A natural capital assessment for the whole of South Yorkshire was commissioned by the SYMCA in 2021. The assessment identifies the existing natural capital assets, the baseline habitat level biodiversity, the flow of ecosystem services they provide, the monetary value of the resulting benefits – currently estimated at £550million per year and the opportunities to restore existing habitats and to create new ones to enhance biodiversity and deliver greater multiple benefits.

4.5.7 The evidence from the natural capital assessment will be used to help inform the development of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for South Yorkshire. It can also be used to inform many other cross cutting policy areas within the planning service, including issues such as open space provision, enhancing health and wellbeing, improving air quality, delivering flood alleviation, improving water quality and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

Biodiversity Net Gain

4.5.8 The Environment Act 2021 also means that from around November 2023 most new developments will be legally required to demonstrate a minimum 10% net gain in biodiversity and achieve those gains for 30 years post development. By November 2023, all Local Planning Authorities will need to be able to assess Biodiversity Net Gain Plans submitted with planning applications and determine if they are legally compliant.

4.5.9 Authorities can help prepare for mandatory biodiversity net gain by setting locally-specific planning policy and guidance, such as within Local Plans or Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD), that provides additional direction on how development should approach biodiversity net gain. While each of the authorities is at a different stage in preparing for mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain and in plan-making, there are benefits to authorities in coordinating their approaches to Biodiversity Net Gain. Rotherham adopted a Biodiversity Net Gain SPD in July 2023. Doncaster already has a Local Plan Policy requiring a minimum of 10% biodiversity gains from development. It has also recently adopted a Supplementary Planning Document on Biodiversity Net Gain that sets out guidance for developers on the standards of information that need to be provided to support planning applications and includes a biodiversity offsetting compensation payment that can be used in certain circumstances. The calculation of such offsetting contributions may need to be different in other areas, but a consistent approach to data requirements and the % net gain requirements could potentially be developed.

4.5.10 Biodiversity Net Gain will be an important mechanism for delivering opportunities identified in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy. The wording of new planning

[33] Dasgupta, P. (2021) The economics of Biodiversity: The Dasgupta Review. (London: HM Treasury).

policy should require offsite BNG delivery to use identified strategies, including the Local Nature Recovery Strategy to determine the 'strategic significance' score that is part of the Biodiversity Metric. This will help to ensure that BNG contributes to wider nature recovery plans and to ensure that the correct habitats will be delivered in the most strategic places.

Based on the above, the current position is that we:

- Will work together to develop and agree Local Nature Recovery Strategies for South Yorkshire, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, including those parts of the Peak District National Park, and to drive their delivery.
- Will use the maps, priorities and targets within the agreed Local Nature Recovery Strategies to inform any reviews of Development Plan documents, policies, guidance and site allocations in order to maximise opportunities for nature recovery.
- Continue to share learning on Biodiversity Net Gain across the Region and aim to develop locally-specific planning policy, either within Local Plans, Supplementary Planning Guidance or advice notes that:
    - Sets a consistent net gain % requirement for all of South Yorkshire.
    - Ensures data submitted to assess biodiversity net gain is of a consistently high standard across the region and that the necessary ecological expertise is available to each authority for net gain assessments to be verified.
    - Encourages the use of the LNRS in determining strategic significance in the Biodiversity Metric, in order to incentivise delivery of opportunities identified in the LNRS.
- Use the findings of the South Yorkshire Natural Capital Assessment to help shape new development plans, including planning polices and site allocations.
- Support the necessary collection and management of data on biodiversity net gain and nature recovery delivered through planning, by ensuring Local Records Centres are adequately equipped to be able to monitor and facilitate the reporting of habitat changes, as well as meet the increasing demand for data to support planning services and users.
- Undertake a review of the South Yorkshire Natural Capital Assessment at a future point in time (approx. 5-10 years) to update ecosystem service flow (physical and monetary) modelling, based on an updated habitat baseline.

4.6 Planning for waste

Current Position

4.6.1 Waste management is a cross boundary strategic planning matter requiring coordination and cooperation between waste planning authorities. Government guidance stipulates that planning authorities should work jointly and collaboratively to collect and share data and information on waste arisings. This reflects the 'duty-to- co-operate' requirement set out in the Localism Act 2011.

4.6.2 Waste Planning policies for Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham are currently contained within the Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham (BDR) Joint Waste Plan (Adopted 2012). Waste Policies for Sheffield are contained within the Sheffield City Council's 2009 adopted Core Strategy. Waste policies in both these plans are in need of a review to take account of amendments in national policy and the government's changing approach to waste, which is diverging away from a linear model to a circular economy model. The waste needs evidence in the BDR Plan is also very out of date, however an updated WNA has been produced for South Yorkshire (see paragraph 4.6.5).

4.6.3 Waste planning policies for other districts in the Region are set out in:

- Saved policies contained within the Derby and Derbyshire Waste Local Plan (adopted 2005).
- The Nottinghamshire and Nottingham Waste Core Strategy (Adopted 2013) and saved policies within the Nottinghamshire and Nottingham Waste Local Plan (adopted 2002).
- The Peak District National Park Core Strategy (adopted 2011) and Development Management Policies (adopted 2019).

4.6.4 Districts in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire are working with their respective County Councils to prepare or update county wide waste plans, ensuring these coordinate with plans in South Yorkshire. Work is progressing to prepare new Waste Local Plans in Derby and Derbyshire (to guide development until 2038) and Nottinghamshire and Nottingham (to guide development until 2038). In the Peak District National Park, a new Local Plan is being prepared which will guide development to 2044.

South Yorkshire Waste Needs Assessment (June 2022)

4.6.5 Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield agreed to produce a Joint Waste Needs Assessment which was completed in June 2022. It identifies each authority's waste facilities, and requirements, both separately and as a whole. The Waste Needs Assessment identifies where South Yorkshire's waste capacity gaps are, which means we now have a starting point to determine what facilities are needed moving forward.

4.6.6 Jointly, the Waste Planning Authorities of South Yorkshire produce just under 3 million tonnes per annum (Mtpa) of various types of waste as set out in figure 7 below. Forecasts indicate that waste arisings could increase to just over 3.5 Mtpa by 2041.

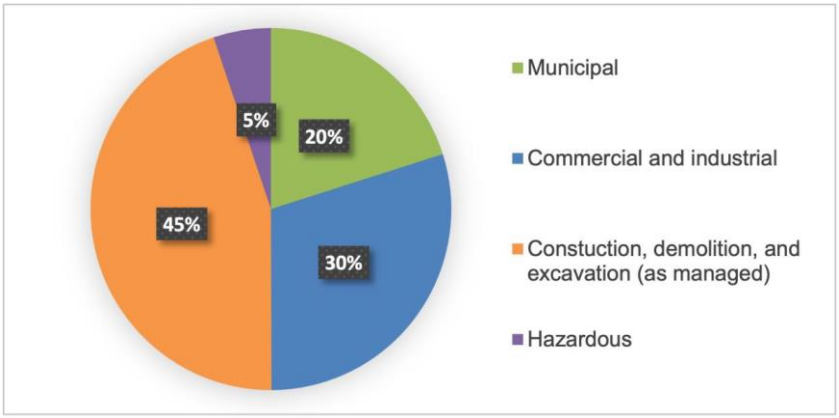


Figure 6: Estimated waste arisings for South Yorkshire

4.6.7 Non-hazardous waste produced in South Yorkshire is currently managed via a range of management methods, achieving a total recovery rate of around 93%. Forecasts indicate that South Yorkshire could achieve a total recovery rate of over 95% by 2030.

4.6.8 A significant amount of residues from treatment processes are also produced from facilities located within South Yorkshire, from treatment of waste arising from both South Yorkshire and from waste imported into South Yorkshire (estimated at just over 0.300 Mt and 0.400 Mt respectively for 2020).

4.6.9 South Yorkshire does not produce low-level radioactive waste from the nuclear industry. A very small amount of low-level radioactive waste is produced from the non-nuclear industry from South Yorkshire[34]. In addition, agricultural waste and wastewater are also produced.

4.6.10 Of total waste arising attributed to South Yorkshire, around a third was exported to other Waste Planning Authorities. The majority of which was received at facilities for treatment and recovery, disposal (mainly non-hazardous (including stable non-reactive hazardous waste landfill), and processing in preparation for reuse and recycling (including composting and inert recycling).

4.6.11 Waste management facilities within South Yorkshire reported receiving a significant amount of waste imported from other Waste Planning Authorities; around three times that exported from South Yorkshire, meaning that the South Yorkshire Waste Planning Authorities are a net importer of waste. Not all waste can be managed within the boundary of the Waste Planning Authority from within which it arises

[34] A survey undertaken by the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) in 2008, Data Collection on Solid Low Level Radioactive Waste from the Non-nuclear Sector, indicated that South Yorkshire produced 31.33m3 of low activity low level radioactive waste from the nonnuclear industry.

due to contractual arrangements and other factors such as the need for specific treatment processes (e.g. hazardous wastes). There will normally be some movement of waste into and out of Waste Planning Authorities; this is reflected by the position of seeking net self-sufficiency. With a broader movement of Waste Planning Authorities also seeking to increase their waste management capacity in line with net self-sufficiency movements are expected to reduce in the future, although some movements will still occur.

4.6.12 Waste arisings forecast up to 2041 and future needs (incorporating relevant targets) are summarised in Table 6 and Figure 8 in the Annex. In addition, some residual waste will be produced as an output from waste treatment processes. This means that there may be a need for additional capacity to push these residual wastes up the waste management hierarchy, but also a need for some disposal to landfill (albeit the least preferred option) where further recovery of such residues is not possible.

4.6.13 Overall, South Yorkshire is making good progress towards achieving net self-sufficiency for waste management. Existing facilities provide for more than sufficient capacity with regards to net self-sufficiency for preparation for reuse and recycling, treatment and energy recovery, and soil treatment over the reporting period, and inert recycling up to 2025. When viewed in terms of total arisings and existing capacity South Yorkshire currently provides waste management capacity that exceeds total arisings; the majority of this capacity is associated with facilities for preparation for reuse and recycling, treatment and energy recovery.

4.6.14 Capacity gaps have been identified for composting, inert recycling, inert recovery, and non-hazardous (including stable non-reactive hazardous wastes) landfill, as well as hazardous recovery and treatment and hazardous landfill.

4.6.15 There is potential, dependant on the scale of the individual facilities and processes employed, for the following facilities to be provided within the South Yorkshire area: composting (or other biological treatment processes), inert recycling, and inert recovery associated with restoration (e.g. colliery or mineral extraction sites). In addition, given the significant amounts of residues arising from treatment processes (from facilities located within South Yorkshire), facilities for further recovery and treatment of residues may support the waste management hierarchy and further diversion of waste from landfill.

4.6.16 The appropriateness of South Yorkshire to accommodate extensions to existing non-hazardous landfill or additional capacity for hazardous recovery and treatment would need to be determined on a site-by-site basis and in compliance with adopted development management policies. Some of the future needs for such capacity is likely to continue to be met at facilities outside of the South Yorkshire area. No strategic or Duty to Co-operate matters have been identified in relation to the principle or continuation of such movements. Ongoing monitoring of waste movements and continued working with relevant Waste Planning Authorities regarding strategic waste planning matters will be necessary to ensure that wastes

are managed, and that any necessary capacity planned for, appropriately. Table 7 in the Annex provides a summary of South Yorkshire waste arisings and future needs up to 2041.

Based on the above, the current position is that:

- We will share and monitor cross boundary waste planning information.
- We will seek to achieve the maximum degree of self-sufficiency possible in net waste movements.
- The South Yorkshire authorities will aim to:
    - Plan jointly to meet South Yorkshire's Waste Needs.
    - Work collaboratively to produce a Joint South Yorkshire Waste Local Plan (JWLP) and prepare a joint/individual Local Development Scheme(s) (LDS) to reflect agreed timescales in individual authority LDS updates.
    - Prepare a JWLP Memorandum of Understanding.
    - Review policies in both the BDR Waste Plan and Sheffield Core Strategy (Waste Chapter).
    - Review current waste plan site allocations and determine need.

4.7 Planning for Digital Connectivity

4.7.1 Fast, reliable digital connectivity can deliver economic, social and well-being benefits for communities. To deliver high quality, reliable digital infrastructure that works across the UK, Government has set a target of a minimum of 85% gigabit capable coverage by 2025 but will seek to accelerate roll-out further to get as close to 100% as possible[35].

4.7.2 Local Bodies (groups of Local Authorities) have been working to increase coverage of Superfast Broadband in their areas. The Local Bodies in the region are:

- 'Superfast South Yorkshire[36]' which covers Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield.
- 'Digital Derbyshire' which includes Chesterfield, North East Derbyshire, Bolsover, Derbyshire Dales.
- 'Better Broadband For Nottinghamshire' which includes Bassetlaw.

Current generation digital connectivity technology

4.7.3 Overall, large parts of the Region are well served by current generation digital connectivity technology such as superfast broadband (fixed line broadband that is capable of download speeds of 30Mbps) and 4G (cellular broadband with average download speeds from 16 to 33Mbps). This is not the case in more rural parts such as Derbyshire Dales where 4% of premises receive less than 10Mbps.

4.7.4 The take-up of superfast broadband in areas where the Superfast South Yorkshire programme has invested has increased from 18% to 75%, Enterprise Zones and business parks in South Yorkshire were amongst the first in the country to access wholesale full fibre broadband; and business development programmes have helped local SMEs understand how digital can sustain and grow their business as well as enabling them to access support for connection charges and innovation projects. At the same time, Sheffield City Centre now benefits from one of the best public access Wi-Fi networks. Overall South Yorkshire now has 99% coverage of superfast broadband.

4.7.5 As the Region develops and grows there will be an increased demand for high speed, ubiquitous connectivity, especially in more rural areas. However, both superfast broadband and 4G technologies are incapable of meeting future demands for speed, capacity, reliability, and responsiveness.

4.7.6 Alongside increased demand by 2025, analogue telephone services accessed by the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) will be switched off as telecoms infrastructure is upgraded to digital connectivity. The copper-based telecoms network, used for analogue telephone services will be retired, with digital Voice

[35] National Infrastructure Strategy. 2020. HM Treasury.
[36] Superfast South Yorkshire is transitioning to become the team which delivers the South Yorkshire Digital Infrastructure Strategy

over Internet Protocol (VoIP) technology taking over and people using their broadband connections for telephone services

Next generation digital connectivity technology

4.7.7 The next generation of digital connectivity technology is gigabit-capable networks and 5G cellular networks. Gigabit-capable broadband provides a download speed of at least 1 gigabit per second (or 1000 megabits per second). It is at least twenty times faster than the current average broadband speed in the UK. Gigabit-capable networks are often delivered through fibre optic infrastructure – flexible glass cables, though a range of different infrastructure types can deliver broadband at this speed. 5G uses a new radio interface that enables much higher radio frequencies to be used allowing faster connections, lower latency, and greater capacity.

4.7.8 5G is being rolled out by operators across the region; however, is likely to remain a largely urban phenomenon with mobile network operators concentrating on upgrading macro sites (infrastructure covering large geographic areas such as monopoles, rooftop sites & lattice towers). Small cell deployment is anticipated in areas of high demand as the rollout progresses.

4.7.9 Coverage of gigabit broadband in South Yorkshire is 68.56% as of Q2 2022/23[37]. Coverage in Nottinghamshire stands at 76.98%[38] and in Derbyshire coverage is 45.15%[39].

4.7.10 The Government's Project Gigabit will deliver support to hard-to-reach parts of the UK towards the cost of gigabit-capable broadband. It will bring full fibre broadband to some of the most rural parts of the region, targeting properties with the slowest speeds that would have otherwise been left behind by commercial plans.

4.7.11 BDUK conducted an Open Market Review and Public Review in 2022 to understand from suppliers if there were any current or planned investment over the next three years in broadband infrastructure across South Yorkshire. 80,777 premises were flagged as having no gigabit network infrastructure with none likely to be developed within 3 years. An intervention area will be confirmed where Project Gigabit support will be directed.

4.7.12 The South Yorkshire Digital Infrastructure Strategy (2021) sets out how we intend to accelerate the development of 'gigabit capable' digital infrastructure and 5G networks across the whole of South Yorkshire and includes proposals for public interventions to support achieving this strategic ambition.

4.7.13 In response to recent government consultation, building regulations have been amended to compel gigabit-capable broadband in new build home, with the new requirements being introduced in December 2022[40].

[37] See current coverage at https://labs.thinkbroadband.com/local/south-yorkshire
[38] https://labs.thinkbroadband.com/local/E10000024
[39] https://labs.thinkbroadband.com/local/E10000007
[40] Section1 (page 2) of " Approved Document R Volume1: Physical infrastructure and network connection for new dwellings"

Based on the above, the current position is that we:

- Support the implementation of Project Gigabit and the digital infrastructure elements of adopted Local Plans.
- Help to bring forward a range of local and regional interventions to improve digital connectivity, improving speeds and addressing gaps in provision.
- Support local communities to utilise the BDUK Gigabit Voucher Scheme to accelerate the roll-out of gigabit capable infrastructure across South Yorkshire and the wider Region.
- Create a supportive planning framework for digital connectivity, including consistent planning conditions that encourage developers to provide infrastructure for at least one, but ideally multiple gigabit capable broadband providers.

4.8 Planning for other Strategic Matters

4.8.1 All nine Local Planning Authorities in the Region commit to work together at a regional scale on other issues where we have a common interest and cross boundary work is required. These are defined around the following areas, with further information and evidence highlighted where this is available:

- Green Belt: Local Planning Authorities in the Region have agreed a common assessment method for reviewing Green Belt and will adopt this where appropriate to ensure a consistent approach.[41]

- Minerals: Local Planning Authorities in the Region have agreed to share evidence on minerals planning, working closely together and with Derbyshire County Council who are currently updating their own Minerals Plans, and Nottinghamshire County Council who adopted a Minerals Plan in 2021. This includes evidence from Local Aggregates Assessments, exploring the benefits of undertaking joint assessments.

- Peak District National Park: Local Planning Authorities and other public bodies recognise the statutory purposes of the Peak District National Park and the special qualities which make it unique, and have regard to these purposes when undertaking their own functions. The Park's Management Plan[42] sets out these qualities, alongside areas of focus for management, so that they can be properly respected in decision making.

- Local Planning Authorities recognise the health and wellbeing challenges facing many areas of the Region and agree to share evidence to ensure that Local Plans are effective in addressing those challenges. This will be in terms of the provision of health services as well as tackling the wider determinants of health such as sub-standard housing, air pollution, social isolation and lack of access to green space. There will be an emphasis on creating environments that are conducive to people being able to be physically active as part of their daily life.

[41] See detailed explanation at https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/sites/default/files/docs/planning-and-development/sheffield-plan/Proposed%20Sheffield%20City%20Region%20Combined%20Green%20Belt%20Review.pdf
[42] See https://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/looking-after/strategies-and-policies/national-park-management-plan

5. Governance Arrangements

5.1 This Statement of Common Ground has been prepared by the Heads of Planning Group, which brings together senior planning managers across all nine local planning authorities as well as from Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire County Councils.

5.2 The Group meets on a bi-monthly basis and has responsibility for preparing the Statement of Common Ground alongside other pieces of collaborative work including the preparation of new evidence and developing a shared planning approach on some service issues. The Heads of Planning Group will ensure that the Statement is consistent with local planning practice and is reviewed on an annual basis[43] and updated as necessary in order to reflect any changes to local practice or arrangements at the regional scale.

5.3 Progress and oversight for the Statement and other joint planning work in South Yorkshire is the responsibility of the SYMCA Housing and Infrastructure Board, which includes Cabinet Portfolio Holders from local districts as well as representatives from the South Yorkshire LEP. Derbyshire Dales, North East Derbyshire, Chesterfield, Bassetlaw and Bolsover Councils all also remain as non-constituent members. The Housing and Infrastructure Board is accountable to the MCA and LEP through wider governance arrangements established for SYMCA[44].

[43] The next review of the Statement of Common Ground will be within one year of the date of adoption, or earlier should the Heads of Planning group identify the need for this.

[44] A full account of SYMCA Governance arrangements is available in the Assurance Framework at https://southyorkshire-ca.gov.uk/mayoral-combined-authority-procedures

Annex

Table 1: Regional housing needs

	2022 Annual Local Housing Need figure (A)	Local Plan target (B)	Difference (B - A)	Local Plan Status
Barnsley	864	1,134	+270	Adopted January 2019
Bassetlaw	279	288	+9	Reg. 22 stage
Bolsover	216	272	+56	Adopted March 2020
Chesterfield	228	240	+12	Adopted July 2020
Derbyshire Dales	230	284	+54	Adopted December 2017
Doncaster	554	920	+366	Adopted September 2021
North East Derbyshire	247	330	+83	Adopted November 2021
Rotherham	564	958*	+394	Adopted 2014/2018**
Sheffield	3018	2,040***	-978	Reg 19. January 2023
Region total	**6,200**	**6,466 ******	**266**	

* Rotherham's Core Strategy is subject to a partial update, which is programmed for consultation in late 2023 (Reg 18).

** The Rotherham Local Plan is made up of a Core Strategy (adopted in 2014) and a Sites and Policies document (adopted 2018).

*** Net annual housing requirement set out in the Publication Draft Sheffield Plan (January 2023).

**** The Peak District National Park Local Plan does not establish a housing target for the National Park; however nominally around 40 homes per year are approved in the Peak District National Park area and these are counted as part of the delivery in constituent Council areas.

Table 2: Regional net completions*

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Barnsley	706	850	1,009	988	1052	590	594
Bassetlaw	338	462	551	434	694	777	766
Bolsover	325	290	248	291	439	446	537
Chesterfield	206	123	110	212	304	276	379
Derbyshire Dales**	157	281	308	411	435	423	258
Doncaster	1,170	1,057	1,173	1,327	1,213	761	1,190
North East Derbyshire	431	282	396	189	436	465	555
Rotherham	585	599	471	422	556	566	1,090
Sheffield	1,432	2,248	2,304	1,976	3,083	1,850	1,774
Region total	**5,350**	**6,192**	**6,570**	**6,250**	**8,212**	**6,154**	**7,143**

*****All data collected directly from the Housing Flows Reconciliation figure used to calculate the Housing Delivery Test (except for Derbyshire Dales where Annual Monitoring Report data is used)[45]. Includes new build completions, change of use from non-residential to residential and conversions from one to multiple dwellings. In some instances, figures may differ from those reported independently by Districts due to further analysis.

** Note discussions with MHCLG concluded that an additional 76 completions should be included in the Derbyshire Dales Housing Delivery Test for 2015/16 and 2017/18, representing completions within the Peak District National Park area. This takes the three year total for the district to 674.

[45] See https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/housing-delivery-test

Table 3: Regional housing land supply*

Local authority	Annualised (net) requirement	Total (net) 5-year supply	Supply in years	Date of publication
Barnsley	1,376	7,637	5.6	Dec-21
Bassetlaw	293	3,962	13.5	Apr-22
Bolsover	286	2,739	10.07	Dec-20
Chesterfield	252	2,249	8.9	Oct-21
Derbyshire Dales	316	1254	3.96	Apr 22
Doncaster	906	6,342	7.0	Feb-23
North East Derbyshire	347	2,405	6.94	Jun-22
Rotherham	566	5,358	9.5	Sept 21**
Sheffield	3,169	11,506	3.63***	Jan-23
Region total	**7,511**	**43,452**	**5.79**	

* Figures taken from the most recently published 5-year supply statements, which allow for any backlog in delivery over recent years. As such annualised requirement figures may vary from Local Plan requirements set out in Table 1.

** Taken from published evidence for The Pitches Sports Club site, Rotherham appeal decision (APP/P4415/W/21/3278557).

***Does not include all proposed allocated sites in the Publication Draft Sheffield Plan (January 2023).

Table 4: Job Figures being planned for in Local Plans

Local authority	Job target	Annualised average equivalent (rounded)
Barnsley	28,840 (2014-2033)	1,518 per year
Bassetlaw	9,735 (2020-2037) (Publication Local Plan, August 2021)	573 per year
Bolsover	A baseline jobs growth of 3,000 used in SHMA for OAN. No specific target set in Local Plan (2014-2033)	158 per year
Chesterfield	5,200 (2018-2035)	306 per year
Derbyshire Dales	A need for 1,700 additional jobs calculated in employment land availability assessment. No specific target set in Local Plan (2013-2033)	85 per year
Doncaster	Growth of 27,100 jobs being planned for. No specific targets set in Local Plan (2015-2035)	1,355 per year
North East Derbyshire	3,000 (2014-2034)	150 per year
Sheffield	43,350 (2022 - 2039) based on the annual jobs growth for Sheffield set out in the previous SEP (2014)	2,550 per year
Rotherham	12,000 – 15,000 (2013-2028)	800 – 1,000 per year
Total	**116,125 – 119,125**	**7,495 – 7,695 per year**

Table 5: Employment Land requirements in Local Plans

Local authority	Employment Land
Barnsley	297 ha (2014-2033)
Bassetlaw	63 ha minimum (2018-2035)
Bolsover	92ha (2015-2033)
Chesterfield	At least 50ha (2018-2025) 52.3ha supply identified within the Plan Period, including 4ha of land at Staveley Works that can come forward dependent on final form of HS2 phase 2b Infrastructure Maintenance Depot (although upto 30ha of land could be available).
Derbyshire Dales	At least 24 ha (2013 – 2033) Evidence to support the emerging Local Plan Review suggests that in the region of 13.7ha – 15ha of employment land may be required for the period 2017- 2040
Doncaster	481 ha (2015-2035)
North East Derbyshire	43 ha (2014-2034)
Rotherham	235 ha (2013-2028)
Sheffield	Evidence to support the emerging Local Plan suggests that around 217.6 ha of land is required to meet employment needs over the period 2022 to 2039.

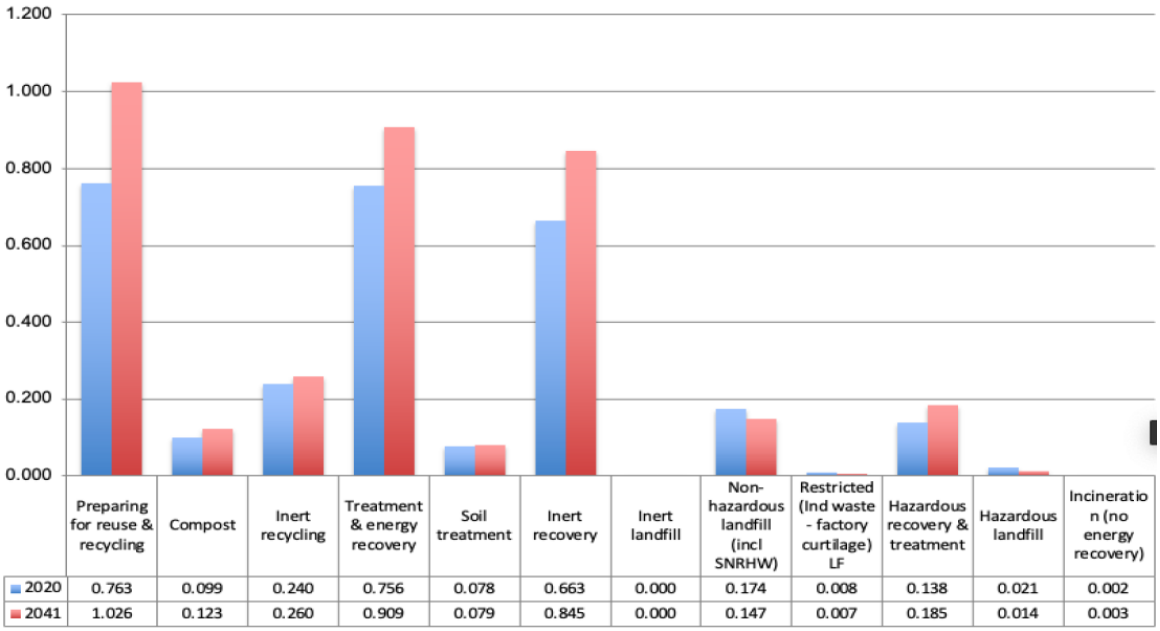
Table 6: Summary of South Yorkshire waste arisings and future needs up to 2041 (million tonnes per annum)

			Indicative total waste management capacity needs				
			2021	2026	2031	2036	2041
Total waste arisings			2.890	3.230	3.375	3.481	3.592
Non-hazardous waste management							
Preparing for reuse and recycling	Materials recycling	Forecast arisings	0.785	0.876	0.933	0.984	1.026
		Existing capacity	1.789	1.789	1.789	1.789	1.789
		Capacity gap	1.005	0.913	0.856	0.805	0.763
	Composting	Forecast arisings	0.105	0.109	0.114	0.119	0.123
		Existing capacity	0.086	0.086	0.086	0.086	0.086
		Capacity gap	-0.019	-0.023	-0.028	-0.033	-0.037
	Inert recycling	Forecast arisings	0.204	0.247	0.259	0.260	0.260
		Existing capacity	0.312	0.188	0.188	0.158	0.158
		Capacity gap	0.108	-0.060	-0.072	-0.102	-0.102
Treatment and other forms of recovery	Treatment and energy recovery [A]	Forecast arisings	0.736	0.775	0.816	0.862	0.909
		Existing capacity	1.702	1.702	1.702	1.702	1.702
		Capacity gap	0.966	0.927	0.886	0.840	0.793
	Soil treatment	Forecast arisings	0.062	0.075	0.079	0.079	0.079
		Existing capacity	0.210	0.210	0.210	0.128	0.128
		Capacity gap	0.148	0.135	0.131	0.049	0.049
Other recovery	Inert recovery [B]	Forecast arisings	0.643	0.797	0.845	0.845	0.845
		Existing capacity	0.449	0.170	0.045	0.045	0.045
		Capacity gap	-0.194	-0.627	-0.800	-0.800	-0.800
Non-hazardous waste disposal							
Disposal - Non-hazardous landfill		Forecast arisings	0.192	0.177	0.150	0.143	0.147
		Existing capacity	0.300	0.200	0.200	0.000	0.000
		Capacity gap	0.108	0.023	0.050	-0.143	-0.147
Hazardous waste management							
Recovery and treatment		Forecast arisings	0.140	0.152	0.161	0.172	0.185
		Existing capacity	0.154	0.154	0.154	0.154	0.154
		Capacity gap	0.014	0.002	-0.007	-0.018	-0.031
Disposal - Hazardous landfill		Forecast arisings	0.015	0.011	0.012	0.013	0.014
		Existing capacity	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
		Capacity gap	-0.015	-0.011	-0.012	-0.013	-0.014

A - Treatment and energy recovery refer to Anaerobic Digestion, Energy from Waste, and other physical/chemical treatment processes.

B - Available data indicates that, within South Yorkshire, inert waste that may elsewhere be disposed of to inert landfill is recovered through deposit of inert waste to land for beneficial purposes such as restoration of mineral extraction sites with extant planning permission. In addition, inert materials will be required for engineering and restoration of non-hazardous landfill sites (estimated at 0.070 Mtpa up to 2025, 0.110 Mtpa 2025-2027, and 0.030 Mtpa 2028-2033); further reducing inert recovery capacity gaps.

A small amount of waste (<1%) is disposed of through incineration without energy recovery and at restricted landfill (associated with a specific industrial process and not receiving other waste types, located within the factory curtilage).



	Preparing for reuse & recycling	Compost	Inert recycling	Treatment & energy recovery	Soil treatment	Inert recovery	Inert landfill	Non-hazardous landfill (incl SNRHW)	Restricted (Ind waste - factory curtilage) LF	Hazardous recovery & treatment	Hazardous landfill	Incineration (no energy recovery)
2020	0.763	0.099	0.240	0.756	0.078	0.663	0.000	0.174	0.008	0.138	0.021	0.002
2041	1.026	0.123	0.260	0.909	0.079	0.845	0.000	0.147	0.007	0.185	0.014	0.003

Figure 7: Comparison of management methods for waste arisings from within South Yorkshire 2020 and 2041 (million tonnes)

Table 7: Summary of economic role of places

Local Plans across the region describe the economic role of each area.

Barnsley

Barnsley has a growing economy, creating an M1 economic corridor, thriving town centre and some outstanding cultural heritage. In terms of current sectors, evidence from Mott Macdonald (2016) identified a higher proportion of employees in manufacturing and construction than comparator areas including the national average. In contrast, Barnsley has lower proportions of IT and finance professionals and a higher proportion of jobs in public administration, health and education (29% compared to a national average of 26%).

Bassetlaw

Bassetlaw's accessibility is the basis for an expanding economy, with a growing economic corridor stretching along the A1, direct access to the East Coast Main Line and close proximity to the M1 attracting business and investment.

The evidence and the D2N2 LEP recognise the role the District can play in developing identified growth sectors: creative and digital technologies; construction, particularly modern methods of construction; renewable energy and low carbon energy production; engineering and civil engineering; and the visitor economy. The logistics sector is also recognised as being well-positioned to integrate with other sectors. The Local Plan capitalises on the District's locational advantage by promoting locations able to provide a continuous and diverse supply of employment land within proximity to the Main Towns and local labour supply. This includes land accessible to the A1/A57, which also provide strategic connectivity to the M1, the wider East Midlands region and South Yorkshire.

Doncaster

Doncaster has a high quality urban centre with attractive retail opportunities within an expanding mixed-use offer. Doncaster's multi-modal connectivity offers access to major conurbations and coastal ports whilst the Doncaster-Sheffield Airport (should it re-open) and iPort areas provide an international gateway with growing engineering and logistics business base. The National College for Advanced Transport and Infrastructure and the new University Technical College are part of a growing vocational education offer.

Doncaster's Economic Strategy 2030 seeks to create a regenerative and inclusive economy for thriving people, places and the planet. By 2030 the aspiration is to have an economy which improves the living standards for all with a more resilient and productive economy, which is also green and regenerative. There are four Sectors of Opportunity: health and care; engineering and manufacturing; creative and digital; and culture. Four 'niches' are also included which will help provide highly productive and innovation-led growth: rail; green technology; future mobility; and advanced materials.

Rotherham

Rotherham has developing strengths in new economic sectors, as part of the region's wider regeneration agenda, with a particular specialism in manufacturing. The adopted Core Strategy identifies the priority of safeguarding this manufacturing base and targeting several priority sectors including Creative and Digital Industries; Advanced Manufacturing and Materials; Environmental and Energy Technologies; Construction Industries; Business, Professional and Financial Services; and Low Carbon Industries. The Advanced Manufacturing Park (AMP) in the Advanced Manufacturing Innovation District lies in Rotherham.

Bolsover

Bolsover is a rural area, with the need and ability to accommodate significant economic growth in key settlements, taking advantage of access to the M1. In the Bolsover Economic Development Needs Assessment (2015) competitive sectors identified were: Wholesale and Retail; Manufacturing; Transport & Storage; Construction; Information & Communication (knowledge-based activity); and Energy & Water.

North East Derbyshire

North East Derbyshire is a predominately rural area with the population concentrated in four towns, and the potential for growth along the A61. It has close links with Sheffield and Chesterfield. Key sectors are Digital and Creative Industries; Advanced Manufacturing; Food and Drink; Construction and Environmental Industries; and Health and Care.

Derbyshire Dales

The Derbyshire Dales economy is based on thriving micro businesses and SMEs with manufacturing the largest employment sector. Pay in the Derbyshire Dales is amongst the lowest in the former Sheffield City Region and England. Businesses in the Dales want to grow but can't find the space locally, and provision of new employment space in the district is the highest priority.

Chesterfield

Chesterfield is a key market town and the sub-regional economic centre for Northern Derbyshire, with a high quality urban core and opportunities for further growth in the Staveley and A61 corridors. Along the M1, Markham Vale is an area recently developed with plans to establish itself as a major employment hub, supporting activity elsewhere in the City Region. The area includes Enterprise Zone sites.

Chesterfield's key sectors are Public administration ; Wholesale/retail; Financial and business services and Manufacturing.

Sheffield

Sheffield is the fourth largest city in England and a major centre of engineering, creative and digital industries, with a wide range of culture and retail facilities. Sheffield City Centre will be the primary office location in the region, providing a high proportion of the region's jobs in business, financial and professional services, higher education and health and wellbeing

services. The retail and leisure offer in the City Centre is expected to grow through the Heart of the City 2 development but will be complemented by that provided at Meadowhall and by other built leisure facilities in the Lower Don Valley.

The Lower Don Valley and Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre (in the Advanced Manufacturing Innovation District) are important employment areas, focused on advanced manufacturing. The area includes an Enterprise Zone at Sheffield Business Park.

Sheffield's key sectors are Advanced Manufacturing and Health.

Peak District National Park

Quarrying, agriculture, and tourism are the mainstays of the Peak District National Park economy. Agricultural businesses account for a third of businesses, with over 87% of the Peak District being farmed. The DEFRA agricultural census indicates that there are over 3,000 farm businesses in the Peak District.

Market towns and local businesses benefit from the National Park's strong rural and visitor economies; tourism alone generates over £1.5 billion for the economy each year. One in five jobs (3,944) within the Peak District National Park are within accommodation and food services.

Between 2016 and 2020 employment in the arts, entertainment, recreation and other services industry grew by nearly a quarter (24%), providing an extra 747 jobs.

The majority of local business units within the Peak District are classified as micro-businesses (employing fewer than 10 people). The rural economy is interdependent with the urban employment centres nearby. About half of the working population travels to jobs outside the National Park, and non-residents fill about 4 out of 10 jobs in the National Park.

Table 8: Summary of Functional Economic Market Areas within the Region

Local Plans across the Region define their Functional Economic Market Areas in line with national planning guidelines.

Barnsley	Part of a wider area of a single Sheffield and Leeds City Region FEMA.
Bassetlaw	The general FEMA is broadly self-contained, with links to the former Sheffield City Region and north Nottinghamshire and north east Derbyshire.
Bolsover	A wide FEMA made up of Amber Valley; Ashfield; Bassetlaw; Chesterfield; Mansfield; and North East Derbyshire DC authority areas.
Doncaster	Defines a standalone FEMA along its own administrative boundary.
Derbyshire Dales	Is divided between surrounding areas, with the southern part of the District in a wider Derby focused FEMA; the Northern area in a Sheffield focused FEMA; and the central part of the district falling in an overlap with influences from Sheffield, Chesterfield and Derby.
NE Derbyshire and Chesterfield	Share an employment market and FEMA.
Sheffield and Rotherham	Share a single FEMA, consistent with a single travel to work area.

It is recognised that large scale warehouse and distribution (logistics) uses over 100,000sq ft have a wide property market area covering the whole of the Region[46].

[46] It is also recognised that logistics uses may have larger market areas which extend beyond the boundaries of the Region as defined for the purposes of this Statement, and which individual authorities will need to take into account.

Table 9: SCR Transport Strategy: national and pan-northern interventions

The following schemes are being progressed by our partners or are included in Transport for the North's initial investment programme for a start by 2027. As such they form a baseline for the Region's interventions.

MAJOR RAIL IMPROVEMENTS

- HS2 – the Region supports the principles of high speed rail services across the North to the rest of the UK, radically reducing journey times and providing enhanced connectivity beyond the HS2 network. The Government's Integrated Rail Plan (IRP) in November 2021, is committed to deliver two HS2 trains per hour between London and Sheffield in 87 minutes. SYMCA wants these trains extended to Leeds.
- Hope Valley line capacity improvements – initial capacity improvements are underway to allow a frequency of three fast trains in addition to one stopping train per hour and freight trains. Currently the third fast train is not committed.
- Sheffield to Leeds – improvements to Sheffield station and the Dearne Valley Line towards Leeds to allow the extension of the HS2 trains, including two new stations in South Yorkshire at Rotherham and Dearne Valley, along with journey time and reliability improvements on the Hallam line via Barnsley.
- Doncaster to Leeds – capacity, journey time and reliability enhancements, including capacity enhancements at Doncaster station.
- South Trans Pennine Line – capacity and journey time improvements between Doncaster and Cleethorpes
- East Coast Main Line power upgrade and capacity improvements to allow 140mph running and improve journey times between Doncaster and London.
- Improvements to allow wider/higher freight trains on the Doncaster to Immingham route
- Electrification of the Midland Mainline to Sheffield to support other major rail investment programmes, as committed to in the Government's Integrated Rail Plan for the North and Midlands.
- Barrow Hill Line – potential reopening of existing freight line for passenger use under the Restoring Your Railways programme, providing direct passenger services between Clay Cross, Chesterfield, North East Derbyshire and Sheffield.

INTEGRATED AND SMART TRAVEL PROGRAMME

- Multi-modal, integrated, contactless ticketing
- Enhanced real time customer information
- Smart ticketing on rail

STRATEGIC ROAD NETWORK IMPROVEMENTS

- Trans Pennine upgrade programme – a package of improvements including –
    - Mottram Moor link road granted a Development Consent Order by the Secretary of State on 16th November 2022 and is due to commence in 2023; and,
    - the A616/A61 Westwood roundabout (completed)
- A1 Redhouse to Darrington – upgrade to motorway standard
- A1(M) Doncaster bypass – widening to a three-lane motorway
- Hollingworth to Tintwistle bypass and capacity improvements on the M67, M60 and M56, which are both outside of the Region but included due to the benefits they can bring to the Region.
- A1 junction improvements with A46 in Bassetlaw.
- Chesterfield Staveley Regeneration Route (CSRR), providing bypass to north of A619 in Chesterfield, linking A61 and M1 Junction 29a.

Table 10: Summary of South Yorkshire authorities' zero carbon and energy strategies

Barnsley

In October 2020 the Council approved a Strategic Energy Action Plan, which identifies four Zero Carbon Community Aims. These will be delivered via five themes and it will align with the 17 United Nations' Development Goals.

Community Goals will be delivered by focusing on delivering projects based on the following Five Themes:

1. Energy Efficiency: To reduce the overall demand for energy in Barnsley across residential, commercial and industrial sectors and improve public health outcomes.
2. Renewable energy: To generate and/or source local energy needs from zero carbon and renewable sources by around 2045.
3. Sustainable Transport: A complete transition to fossil fuel free local travel by around 2030.
4. Resource Efficiency: Use resources; materials, land and food in a sustainable way.
5. Decentralised Heating: In order to provide local resilience and empower communities too heat and light homes through local zero or low carbon generation rather than by centralised natural gas supply.

In July 2022 the Council approved an urban design and sustainability strategy for Barnsley Town Centre prepared by Urbed. This strategy considers urban design issues and also looks how the town centre can move towards being zero carbon. The overarching theme of 'Sustainability Interventions' sits above six other themes: Retail; Culture; Work; Housing; Greenspace and Connections. These are then followed through into a proposed spatial strategy and a list of suggested interventions.

Doncaster

The Doncaster Local Plan was adopted in September 2021 and has a suite of climate change related policies. In 2012 Aecom carried out a Renewable and Low Carbon energy study on behalf of Doncaster. This provides evidence to support Local Plan policy 58 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy.

The study looked to see how policies could be delivered in a sustainable, carbon efficient way and that site allocations and detailed policies incorporate appropriate requirements for carbon reduction through energy efficiency and renewable and low carbon energy generation associated with development. The study:

- Examined the current and future energy demand from the existing housing and non-domestic building stock, as well as the energy requirements from new build delivered through the growth strategy set out in the Core Strategy.
- Provided an updated audit of the current renewable energy provision in Doncaster.

- Built on the Yorkshire and Humber Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Study (2010) to assess the potential technical capacity of renewable and low carbon energy in Doncaster.
- Balanced technical potential with delivery appetite.
- Provided policy recommendations.

Rotherham

Rotherham has developed an annual climate change action plan with actions identified under seven themes: Energy, housing, Transport, Waste, Built and Natural Environment, Influence and engagement.

This action plan supports the Council's established targets of:

- The Council's carbon emissions to be at net zero by 2030 (NZ30)
- Borough-wide carbon emissions to be at net zero by 2040 (NZ40)

Annual targets have also been set based on the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research's carbon budget calculations. The aim is to develop a portfolio of realistic actions based on scientific evidence, as well as reflecting local political, economic and social priorities. Wherever possible, actions will be drawn from examples of best practice both nationally and internationally. The Council will endeavour to address both mitigation actions (which will address the causes of climate change) and adaptation actions (which will address the impact of climate change).

This programme also aims to work in a complementary way with the declared nature crisis and will be expanded to include actions for recovery and enhancement of Rotherham's biodiversity.

Sheffield

The Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research has written a report that establishes a 'carbon budget' for the city (updated October 2022). It recommends that Sheffield must not exceed a budget of 15.2 million tonnes of carbon emissions over the next 20 years.
At current rates of energy consumption we will use this budget in less than 5 years from 2022.

The Council has a ten point plan which sets the framework for action for the transition to Net Zero. It is based on the evidence in the Pathways to Zero reports developed for the city by consultants Arup and Ricardo which identify the actions that needs to be taken for the city to become carbon neutral by 2030. As well as taking immediate action, Sheffield is in the process of developing route maps on the key areas for decarbonisation.

The ten point plan for climate action is to:

1. put climate at the centre of our decision-making
2. be proactive in finding ways to resource the action that is needed
3. act in a way which supports social justice

4. work towards reducing Council emissions to net zero by 2030
5. work to bring the city together to make the changes we need
6. work with the city to develop route maps for the areas where change needs to happen
7. work with and support people, businesses and organisations to take the action that is needed
8. work to build the skills and economy we need for the future
9. work to ensure we have the planning and infrastructure we need for the future
10. prepare the city to adapt for a changing climate

Peak District National Park

Climate Change aims and objectives are set out in the Peak District National Park Management Plan.

The overarching aim is that the Peak District National Park is more resilient and net-zero by 2040 through its exemplary response to climate change. Supporting objectives relate to lowering greenhouse gasses significantly, sequestering and storing substantially more carbon and reversing damage to nature, biodiversity and cultural heritage.

Headline targets are that:

- By 2028 there will be a 25% reduction in total greenhouse emissions in the Peak District National Park.
- By 2028 there will be a 2,878 tonnes net decrease in carbon emissions from moorlands.
- By 2028 we will secure funding for four measures that increase the resilience of existing habitats and species, cultural heritage and the built environment.

Glossary of abbreviations

4G - Fourth generation wireless mobile telecommunications technology with average download speeds from 16 to 33Mbps

5G - Fifth generation wireless mobile telecommunications technology which delivers higher peak data speeds, ultra-low latency, greater connectivity and increased network capacity.

BDUK – Building Digital UK, the Government programme to deliver superfast broadband and local full fibre networks.

BNG – Biodiversity Net Gain. Under the Environment Act 2021, all planning permissions granted in England (with a few exemptions) will have to deliver at least 10% biodiversity net gain from November 2023.

D2N2 – the Local Enterprise Partnership for the Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire area.

FEMA – Functional Economic Market Area, the spatial level at which economies and markets operate.

FLUTE – Forecasting Land Use, Transport and Economy, a forecasting model used across South Yorkshire.

HDT – Housing Delivery Test, an annual measurement of housing delivery across relevant plan making authorities.

HS2 – High Speed 2, the new rail line proposed between the south and north of England.

LEP – Local Enterprise Partnership, a partnership between local authorities and businesses to set economic priorities for an area and negotiate growth deals with Government.

LIS – Local Industrial Strategy, strategy to promote the coordination of local economic policy and national funding streams and establish new ways of working between national and local government, the public and private sectors.

LNRS – Local Nature Recovery Strategy, which will establish priorities and map proposals for specific actions to drive nature's recovery and provide wider environmental benefits.

LTA – Local Transport Authorities

MCA – Mayoral Combined Authority, a corporate body enabling two or more local councils to collaborate and take collective decisions, established with a directly elected Mayor.

MHCLG – the former Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government which is now called Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

NHS – National Health Service

NPPF – National Planning Policy Framework, sets out the Government's planning policies and how these are expected to be applied.

OECD – Organisation for Economic Collaboration and Development, an international organisation set up to promote world trade and stimulate economic progress.

ONS – Office for National Statistics, executive office of the UK Statistical Authority responsible for collecting and publishing statistics related to the economy, population and society of the UK

PSTN - Public Switched Telephone Network, closing on 31 December 2025 as part of a switch to a fully digital network

S106 - Section 106 legal agreements between Local Authorities and developers; which are linked to planning permissions

SCR – the former Sheffield City Region geography and Partnership

SCRTM1 – Sheffield City Region Transport Model version 1, a model of transport networks and demand across for the SCR area.

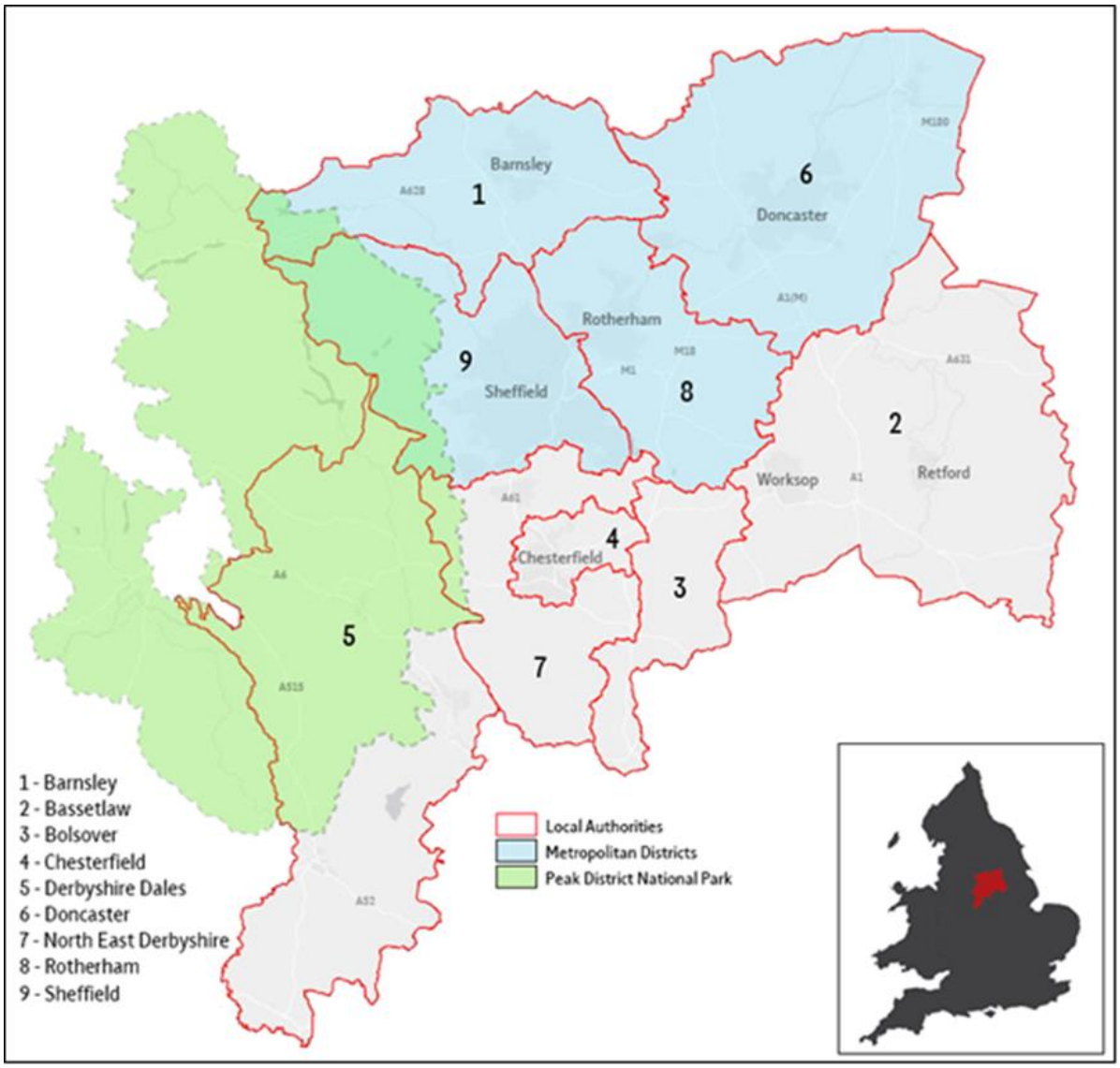
SEP – Strategic Economic Plan, setting out the LEP/MCA plan to transform the economy, create jobs and encourage new businesses.

SYMCA – the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority
TTWA – Travel to Work Area, a geography created by the ONS to approximate labour market areas.

VoIP - a system that uses an internet connection to make and receive calls.

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Appendix 2
Map of Joint Regional Statement of Common Ground coverage



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Appendix 3
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: Sheffield City Region Statement of Common Ground	
Directorate: Regeneration & Environment Services	**Service area:** Planning Policy Team Planning, Regeneration and Transport
Lead person: Winsze Lam Assistant Planning Policy Manager	**Contact number:** 01709 82 2874
Is this a: ☐ **Strategy / Policy** ☐ **Service / Function** ☑ **Other** **If other, please specify** A statement of common ground between several local planning authorities on strategic land use planning issues.	

2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening
The report is seeking Cabinet approval that the Council be a signatory to the Joint Regional Statement of Common Ground. The Statement covers the former Sheffield City Region area. In 2021 the Combined Authority changed its name from “Sheffield City Region” to the “South Yorkshire

Mayoral Combined Authority" to better reflect the organisation and the communities it serves.

The Statement covers strategic planning issues such as energy and climate change, housing, employment, transport, natural environment, waste, digital connectivity and other matters of strategic interest.

The Statement, while not a strategy in itself, will be valuable to individual local planning authorities in taking their local plans through the government examination process. It will help demonstrate that a local planning authority has met the statutory "duty to cooperate" with neighbouring authorities and bodies in preparing its local plan.

3. Relevance to equality and diversity

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

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

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

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

If you have answered no to all the questions above, please explain the reason

The Joint Regional Statement of Common Ground is a high level strategic document that indicates in very broad terms how the targets for new homes and jobs across the region will be met. It concludes that each local planning authority will meet its own

needs within individual local authority boundaries, without any need for the redistribution of growth between authorities. The Statement does not set targets for local planning authorities, it reflects the existing targets that each authority is already planning for through adopted and emerging local plans. It demonstrates that, in aggregate, these local plan targets will meet the wider needs of the region as a whole.

As such, the Statement does not directly affect the considerations and characteristics set out for screening. Individual local plans may affect these characteristics, in how they translate targets into development sites and policies, and are subject to their own screening and assessment process. For example, the adopted Rotherham Local Plan was subject to an Integrated Impact Assessment as part of its drafting, which considered the plan's effect on equalities and diversity. This is a separate process to the Joint Regional Statement of Common Ground.

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:	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
Andy Duncan	Planning Policy Manager	19/06/2023

6. Publishing	
This screening document will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given. If this screening relates to a **Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision** a copy of the completed document should be attached as an appendix and published alongside the relevant report. A copy of **all** screenings should also be sent to equality@rotherham.gov.uk For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file and also published on the Council's Equality and Diversity Internet page.	
Date screening completed	19/06/2023
Report title and date	Joint Regional Statement of Common Ground
If relates to a Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision – report date and date sent for publication	Cabinet – 18 September 2023
Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	20/06/2023

Appendix 4

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?	Reduces emissions	n/a	The Statement highlights Government has set higher performance targets for non-domestic buildings (Future Building Standard), which will have to be 'zero carbon ready' by 2025. This involves uplifting minimum energy efficiency standards, uplifting minimum standards for new and replacement thermal elements (i.e. walls, floors, roofs) and controlled fittings (e.g. windows, roof-lights and doors).	Local planning authorities will seek to encourage higher standards than the Building Regulations in force at the time of the development, where practicable and economically viable to do so. Local planning authorities will work towards seeking whole life carbon assessments (covering both operational and embodied carbon) where appropriate.	n/a
Emissions from transport?	Reduces emissions	n/a	The Statement acknowledges carbon emissions are predominantly driven by medium and long distance transport, both passenger and freight, and so development and transport impacts may not be fully accounted for in an individual area's territorial emissions. Transport, and in particular road transport, is a major driver of carbon emissions – accounting for 39% of territorial emissions in the Region in	Ensure cross-boundary impacts of development and transport interventions are fully considered and mitigated for. In South Yorkshire, the development and adoption of new implementation plans to reflect the new Local Transport Plan, covering bus, rail, tram, walking, cycling and private traffic	Air quality monitored via the Local Plan Annual Monitoring Report.

			2019. Road transport was responsible for 97% of these emissions. Initial baselining work reveals, within the Region: • 50% of transport emissions come from cars, 23% from heavy goods vehicles, and 16% from vans; • 78% of car emissions result from trips exceeding 10 km (6 miles) length, despite only accounting for 45% of trips; • 55% of car emissions, and 65% of road transport emissions, result from trips to or from destinations outside of the region. 26% of car emissions, and 32% of road transport emissions, have no origin or destination in the region at all i.e. are simply passing through. (There will be a similar effect for other regions, where trips to or from our region pass through others without stopping). • Only 22% of car emissions, and only 16% of road transport emissions, relate to trips where both origin and destination lie within the same district.	(including freight and shift to zero emission vehicles) in an holistic and co-ordinated manner.	
Emissions from waste, or the quantity of waste itself?	Reduce Emissions	n/a	The Waste Planning Authorities of South Yorkshire produce just under 3 million tonnes per annum (Mtpa) of various types of waste. Forecasts indicate that waste arisings could increase to just over 3.5 Mtpa by 2041. Of total waste arising	South Yorkshire authorities will work collaboratively to produce a Joint South Yorkshire Waste Local Plan (JWLP) and prepare a joint/individual Local Development Scheme(s) (LDS) to reflect agreed	SYMCA will monitor cross boundary waste planning information. Waste quantity monitored via the Local Plan Annual Monitoring Report.

			attributed to South Yorkshire, around a third was exported to other Waste Planning Authorities. The majority of which was received at facilities for treatment and recovery, disposal (mainly non-hazardous (including stable non-reactive hazardous waste landfill), and processing in preparation for reuse and recycling (including composting and inert recycling). South Yorkshire is making good progress towards achieving net self-sufficiency for waste management.	timescales in individual authority LDS updates. LPAs will seek to achieve the maximum degree of self-sufficiency possible in net waste movements to reduce transport and strengthen the reuse and recycling facilities.	
Emissions from housing and domestic buildings?	Reduce Emissions	n/a	The Statement acknowledges the Future Homes Standard, which from 2025 will require co2 emissions produced by new homes to be 75-80% lower than homes that are built to the 2023 Building Regulations standards. Homes will need to be zero carbon ready with no retrofit work required to benefit from the decarbonisation of the electricity grid and the electrification of heating. The intention is to future proof new homes for low carbon heating systems and meet higher standards of energy efficiency.	Utilises the plan making system to maximise delivery of sustainable housing development. Local planning authorities will seek to encourage higher standards than the Building Regulations in force at the time of the development, where practicable and economically viable to do so. Local planning authorities will work towards seeking whole life carbon assessments (covering both operational and embodied carbon) where appropriate.	CO_2 emissions per capita monitored via the Local Plan Annual Monitoring Report.

Emissions from construction and/or development?	Reduce Emissions	n/a	Whole life carbon emissions relate to the carbon emissions associated with a building over its entire lifetime arising from materials, its construction and its use. Traditionally it has mainly been operational emissions that have been assessed.	Local planning authorities will work towards seeking whole life carbon assessments (covering both operational and embodied carbon) for major development where appropriate. Local planning authorities will collaborate where appropriate to accelerate progress towards a carbon neutral Region, reflecting in local plans or supplementary planning documents such as the SYMCA energy strategy and renewal plan.	CO_2 emissions per capita monitored via the Local Plan Annual Monitoring Report.
Carbon capture (e.g. through trees)?	Reduce Emissions	n/a	The SYMCA will be the responsible body to prepare a Local Nature Recovery Strategy. The aim of the LNRS is to expand, improve and connect wildlife rich areas across our towns, cities and countryside, to help deal with the challenges of biodiversity loss, climate change and wellbeing.	The evidence from the natural capital assessment will be used to help inform the development of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for South Yorkshire. It can also be used to inform many other cross cutting policy areas within the planning service, including issues such as open space provision, enhancing health and wellbeing, improving air quality, delivering flood alleviation, improving water quality and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.	CO_2 emissions per capita monitored via the Local Plan Annual Monitoring Report.

Identify any emission impacts associated with this decision that have not been covered by the above fields:
The Joint Regional Statement of Common Ground acknowledges, as an overarching imperative, the role of the planning system in responding to the challenges of the climate change crisis and the need to reduce carbon emissions in order to meet national, regional and local net zero carbon targets. It recognises that tackling the climate emergency, supporting sustainable development and transport solutions and delivering environmental improvements and a net gain in biodiversity are cross-cutting and cross-boundary in nature.

Please provide a summary of all impacts and mitigation/monitoring measures:
A number of the topics covered in the Joint Region Statement of Common Ground are instrumental in reducing and mitigating the effects of climate change, in particular biodiversity and natural environment and transport. This includes influencing where new housing, employment and other development is located which in turn affects the need to travel and access to more sustainable travel modes. The Statement comprises of some agreed actions which will contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation.

The Heads of Planning Group (SYMCA local authorities) will ensure that the Statement is consistent with local planning practice and is reviewed on an annual basis and updated as necessary in order to reflect any changes to local practice or arrangements at the regional scale. Progress and oversight for the Statement and other joint planning work in South Yorkshire is the responsibility of the SYMCA Housing and Infrastructure Board, which includes Cabinet Portfolio Holders from local districts as well as representatives from the South Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership.

Supporting information:	
Completed by: **(Name, title, and service area/directorate).**	Winsze Lam, Assistant Planning Policy Manager Planning Policy Planning, Regeneration and Transport
Please outline any research, data, or information used to complete this [form].	Joint Regional Statement of Common Ground and appendices Rotherham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) Rotherham Local Plan Sites and Policies Document (2018)
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]	Andy Duncan Planning Policy Manager Climate Champion, Built Environment – Planning

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Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Public Report
Cabinet

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting
Cabinet – 18 September 2023

Report Title
LGA Corporate Peer Challenge and Action Plan

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)
Simon Dennis, Corporate Improvement and Risk Manager
simon.dennis@rotherham.gov.uk

Tanya Lound, Corporate Improvement and Risk Officer
tanya.lound@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected
Borough-Wide

Report Summary

All Councils are encouraged to receive a Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC) once every five years. The CPC is carried out by the Local Government Association (LGA) using a process, which is designed to provide robust, strategic and credible challenge and support and avoid insularity.

The LGA CPC took place between 5 – 8 June 2023 and the findings were received in August 2023 (see Appendix 1). The report concludes that: *"Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council serves the town well and is today an impressive organisation."*

In response to the findings and the seven recommendations in the report, the Council has produced a high-level Action Plan (see Appendix 2) for approval by Cabinet.

Recommendations

That Cabinet:

1. Note the observations and key recommendations made by the Corporate Peer Team to the Council.

2. Approve the high-level action plan which is the Council's response to the findings.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 LGA Corporate Peer Challenge (RMBC) Feedback Report
Appendix 2 LGA Corporate Peer Challenge (RMBC) Action Plan
Appendix 3 Equality Screening Assessment
Appendix 4 Carbon Impact Assessment

Background Papers

Corporate Peer Challenge Website - Local Government Association

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

None

Council Approval Required
No

Exempt from the Press and Public
No

LGA Corporate Peer Challenge and Action Plan

1. Background

1.1 All Councils are encouraged to receive a Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC) once every five years. This is delivered at no cost to the Council. The CPC is carried out by the Local Governance Association (LGA) using a process which is designed to provide robust, strategic and credible challenge and support and avoid insularity.

1.2 CPCs are focused on ensuring that Councils have the capacity, governance, leadership, and finance to deliver their ambition. The process is not an inspection and is designed to be forward-looking to help accelerate and drive improvement.

1.3 Rotherham Council's CPC took place between the 5th and the 8th June 2023 and the findings were received in August 2023. The full report is attached at Appendix 1. In response to the findings the Council has produced a high-level Action Plan for approval by Cabinet and this is attached at Appendix 2.

2. Key Issues

2.1 During the Council's CPC, the peer team considered the following five themes, which form the core components of all Corporate Peer Challenges:

1. **Local priorities and outcomes** - Are the Council's priorities clear and informed by the local context? Is the Council delivering effectively on its priorities?
2. **Organisational and place leadership** - Does the Council provide effective local leadership? Are there good relationships with partner organisations and local communities?
3. **Governance and culture** - Are there clear and robust governance arrangements? Is there a culture of challenge and scrutiny?
4. **Financial planning and management** - Does the Council have a grip on its current financial position? Does the Council have a strategy and a plan to address its financial challenges?
5. **Capacity for improvement** - Is the organisation able to support delivery of local priorities? Does the Council have the capacity to improve?

2.2 In addition to these five areas, the Council asked the peer team to provide observations and feedback on the Council's progress in the last five years and the work being undertaken to create an inclusive economy.

2.3 The CPC was delivered by experienced elected member and officer peers and these peers were selected based on their relevant expertise. The peers involved in the Council's CPC were:

- **Denise Park** (Chief Executive – Blackburn with Darwen Council)
- **Councillor Cllr Eamonn O'Brien** (Leader – Bury Council)
- **Dame Mary Ney** (LGA Associate and former Government Commissioner at Rotherham MBC)
- **Stephan Van Arendsen** (Executive Director for Corporate Resources and Customer Services – Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council)
- **Richard Roe** (Corporate Director for Place – Trafford Council)
- **Satvinder Rana** (Senior Regional Adviser – LGA)

2.4 The peer team prepared by reviewing evidence submitted by the Council and then spent three days onsite at Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council between 5th and 8th June 2023. During this time the team:

- Gathered information and views from over 40 meetings, in addition to further research and reading of over 70 pieces of evidence.
- Spoke to over 100 people including a range of council staff together with members and external stakeholders.
- Went on a tour of the Town Centre and part of the wider borough.

2.5 The 'LGA Corporate Peer Challenge (RMBC) Feedback Report' received in August 2023 provides a summary of the peer team's findings (see Appendix 1). Positively, the report concludes that:
"Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council serves the town well and is today an impressive organisation. Being named the 'Most Improved Council' in the country at the Local Government Chronicle (LGC) Award in 2022 provides ample evidence that it is now in a very good place. It is ambitious and has well-established and robust foundations, along with several notable and commendable practices that other councils can learn from."

2.6 To report includes seven recommendations to support the Council's continuous improvement journey, which are:

- **Recommendation 1** *Celebrate the council's achievements!*
- **Recommendation 2** *Develop an externally facing compelling and positive narrative of place which will help to promote and market the borough and capitalise on Rotherham's assets.*
- **Recommendation 3** *Use the significant investments underway to expand and attract private sector investment at scale, maximising its potential and supporting a more inclusive economic future.*
- **Recommendation 4** *Develop effective pathways and mechanisms for local people, especially young people, to benefit from inclusive growth that can help to deliver improved health outcomes and address inequalities.*

- **Recommendation 5** *Review performance management with a focus on demonstrating impact and an improvement in outcomes in delivering the council's ambition; and use the strong leadership, capacity and capability of the top-team to drive and deliver further organisational transformations and change across the borough at pace.*

- **Recommendation 6** *Building on the Neighbourhood working model, develop a clearer and shared understanding of integrated locality working across the public sector and increase the pace of digital transformation across the organisation to deliver improved outcomes for residents and consistently improve the customer experience.*

- **Recommendation 7** *Continue to keep the medium-term financial strategy under review – testing assumptions and undertaking sensitivity analysis – and continue to report to Members on a regular basis.*

2.7 A high-level action plan has been developed in response to the findings and is attached (see Appendix 2) for Cabinet's approval. The action plan includes 20 actions in total. Once approved, the action plan is to be published on both the Council's and the LGA's website.

2.8 The Chief Executive will oversee the action plan and the development of anymore detailed action plan documents.

2.9 The LGA have advised that a progress meeting is to take place in 2024 to review the progress being made against the recommendations of the CPC. This meeting will take note of any changes in the context the Council is working in and will also capture any case studies about the impact of the CPC. A progress report will be published 12 months after the CPC.

2.10 The Council's next Corporate Peer Challenge should take place in 2028.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

3.1 The LGA provides guidance and templates for local authorities participating in a Corporate Peer Challenge to ensure that there is a consistent approach and these templates have been used to develop the action plan attached at Appendix 2.

3.2 Cabinet is asked to consider and agree the high-level action plan which is the Council's response to the findings.

4. Consultation on proposal

4.1 The feedback report and draft action plan has been developed in consultation with the Strategic Leadership Team and relevant Assistant Directors.

Additional consultation will also be undertaken as part of the development of the more detailed action plan by November 2023.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

5.1 The feedback report and action plan will be published on the Council's and LGA's website after approval by Cabinet.

5.2 Next steps are outlined in paragraphs 2.8 - 2.10, above.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. The Action Plan will be delivered within the resources approved as part of the Council's Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

6.2 Recommendation 7 relates to the Medium-Term Financial Strategy which will continue to be reviewed and reported to Members.

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 this report.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

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

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

9.1 There are no direct implications for children and young people arising from this report.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 The actions contained with the Action Plan are aimed at achieving the best possible outcomes for local people and residents, as well as addressing inequalities.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

11.1 There are no direct implications relating to CO2 emissions and climate change arising from this report.

12. Implications for Partners

12.1. Partners played a key role in the Corporate Peer Challenge process and working with partners across the public, private and voluntary and community sectors will be integral to the delivery of the Action Plan.

12.2 Following publication and consideration at Cabinet, the findings will be shared with partners via the Rotherham Together Partnership.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 The LGA CPC process results in a public report which requires a formal response from the Council in the form of an action plan. The principal risk is that the Council fails to fully implement the action plan and, as a result, fails to improve.

13.2 To address this risk, the actions included in the action plan will be monitored quarterly using the process already in place for all external inspections and reviews. This will also be reported to the Audit Committee every six months in line with our current process.

14. Accountable Officer

Sharon Kemp, Chief Executive

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	**Date**
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	04/09/23
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	30/08/23
Head of Legal Services (Deputy Monitoring Officer)	Bal Nahal	30/08/23

Report Author: Simon Dennis, Corporate Improvement and Risk Manager
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This report is published on the Council's website.

LGA Corporate Peer Challenge

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

5th – 8th June 2023

Feedback report



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Local Government Association company number 11177145 Improvement and Development Agency for Local Government company number 03675577

1. Executive summary

Rotherham is a historic minster and market town in south Yorkshire with a rich history, impressive cultural and architectural heritage, an attractive geography, and active communities. It has made, and continues to make, a valuable contribution to the region.

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council serves the town well and is today an impressive organisation. Being named the 'Most Improved Council' in the country at the Local Government Chronicle (LGC) Award in 2022 provides ample evidence that it is now in a very good place. It is ambitious and has well-established and robust foundations, along with several notable and commendable practices that other councils can learn from.

There is a good collective understanding of place, accompanied by a clear vision and ambitious goals. These are widely acknowledged and supported by everybody from Members and staff to partners and other stakeholders. People speak highly about the vision and aspirations of the council and are committed to delivering it.

There is strong and visible political and managerial leadership in the council at borough and sub regional level. The Leader and the Chief Executive have demonstrated drive in bringing about the necessary change across the council to get it to the position it is now at. More widely there are excellent and effective Member and officer relationships built on mutual trust at a variety of levels. Members spoke highly of the support they receive from officers and were complementary of the systems put in place for them to receive the necessary information and timely responses to their ward-related enquiries.

The peer team met some really good quality staff from across the council. They were motivated, dedicated and determined to deliver the best outcomes for residents. They knew the priorities of the council and wanted to do their best to deliver against them. There is also good evidence of effective governance and a positive and healthy organisational culture that supports the council in delivering some good quality services. These attributes should now be used to achieve outcomes, demonstrate impact and facilitate further organisational transformation to help continue improving the customer experience.

It was pleasing to learn that the council's children's services have been judged as

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'good' twice in a row by OFSTED. The council is now aiming for an 'outstanding' rating in future OFSTED assessments and has a clear ambition, plan and staff motivation to achieve that. This is testament to the progress the council has made over the last five years.

The council has forged robust partnerships and cultivated good working relationships that have stood the test of time. These can now be further developed to deliver integrated public services at the local level, with the goal of enhancing health outcomes and addressing inequalities.

There is strong stewardship of financial resources in the council and a clear understanding of the financial challenges and landscape that reflects and supports council priorities. This has led to a stable financial position which is supported by a sustainable financial strategy. Going forward the council will need to keep its capital programme, borrowing levels and the level of reserves under constant review to mitigate against volatility in the economy.

The council has been successful in attracting significant public sector investment and has an extensive (£610m) capital programme to deliver over the next three years. This will help the council to address the challenge in attracting private sector investment at scale to support the need and desire for an inclusive, sustainable and more diverse economy that is not overly reliant on the public sector.

The time is right for Rotherham Council to build on this success with heightened confidence and unleash the full potential of the place. There is a positive story to be told about the place, and the council together with its key stakeholders should start the process of building a compelling outward focused narrative that can market and promote Rotherham to the outside world.

2. Key recommendations

There are a number of observations and suggestions within the main section of the report. The following are the peer team's key recommendations to the council:

2.1 Recommendation 1

Celebrate the council's achievements!

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There is a lot to be proud of in Rotherham. The council has undergone an impressive transformation and has many exemplary and commendable practices that other councils can learn from. These, as well as the external validations the council has received, should be more actively profiled and celebrated widely.

2.2 Recommendation 2

Develop an externally facing compelling and positive narrative of place which will help to promote and market the borough and capitalise on Rotherham's assets.

A strong, consistent and compelling outward focusing story about Rotherham told over and over again will help to market the borough, promote the place and its assets and inject confidence to attract inward investment as well as change perceptions of the town as a great place to live, work and visit.

2.3 Recommendation 3

Use the significant investments underway to expand and attract private sector investment at scale, maximising its potential and supporting a more inclusive economic future.

By diversifying investment sources, the council can not only mitigate the risk of a decline in activity if public funds were to diminish but also foster the growth of a more inclusive and mixed economy, thereby ensuring long-term sustainability for the borough.

2.4 Recommendation 4

Develop effective pathways and mechanisms for local people, especially young people, to benefit from inclusive growth that can help to deliver improved health outcomes and address inequalities.

Facilitating local people to connect into growth opportunities through clear pathways to new skills, jobs and business opportunities will ensure that economic growth is inclusive and brings tangible social value.

2.5 Recommendation 5

Review performance management with a focus on demonstrating impact and an improvement in outcomes in delivering the council's ambition; and use the strong

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leadership, capacity and capability of the top-team to drive and deliver further organisational transformations and change across the borough at pace.

Streamline performance management and continue to work with scrutiny to ensure that the process of taking items to scrutiny before they reach Cabinet does not slow down decision-making. Furthermore, maximising the potential of the top-team to take on greater levels of corporate responsibility can drive and deliver future change and transformations at pace, whilst maintaining the strong foundations and good governance that has been put in place.

2.6 Recommendation 6

Building on the Neighbourhood working model, develop a clearer and shared understanding of integrated locality working across the public sector and increase the pace of digital transformation across the organisation to deliver improved outcomes for residents and consistently improve the customer experience.

This will help to further modernise the organisation and improve efficiency and effectiveness. Digital transformation should lead to the discontinuing of parallel paper-based processes to avoid duplication, increase efficiency and improve the customer experience. Integrated locality working through increased co-design and co-production of solutions and services alongside partner organisations can deliver enhanced outcomes for residents through improved services and solutions which are tailored to their needs.

2.7 Recommendation 7

Continue to keep the medium-term financial strategy under review - testing assumptions and undertaking sensitivity analysis – and continue to report to Members on a regular basis.

Using scenario planning and reviewing the medium-term financial strategy helps to identify options when there are uncertainties over future funding arrangements and volatility in the economy. This will enable the council to stress test demand-led budgets and assess risks to fully understand and reflect the impact of variables going forward. Continuing to keep Members updated on the fiscal health of the organisation and associated risks will ensure they maintain a strong grip on the budget.

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3. Summary of the peer challenge approach

3.1 The peer team

Peer challenges are delivered by experienced elected Member and officer peers. The make-up of the peer team reflected the focus of the peer challenge and peers were selected on the basis of their relevant expertise. The peers were:

- **Denise Park** (Chief Executive - Blackburn with Darwen Council)
- **Councillor Cllr Eamonn O'Brien** (Leader - Bury Council)
- **Dame Mary Ney** (LGA Associate and former Government Commissioner at Rotherham MBC)
- **Stephan Van Arendsen** (Executive Director for Corporate Resources and Customer Services - Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council)
- **Richard Roe** (Corporate Director for Place - Trafford Council)
- **Satvinder Rana** (Senior Regional Adviser - LGA)

3.2 Scope and focus

The peer team considered the following five themes which form the core components of all Corporate Peer Challenges. These areas are critical to councils' performance and improvement.

1. **Local priorities and outcomes** - Are the council's priorities clear and informed by the local context? Is the council delivering effectively on its priorities?
2. **Organisational and place leadership** - Does the council provide effective local leadership? Are there good relationships with partner organisations and local communities?
3. **Governance and culture** - Are there clear and robust governance arrangements? Is there a culture of challenge and scrutiny?
4. **Financial planning and management** - Does the council have a grip on its current financial position? Does the council have a strategy and a plan to address its financial challenges?
5. **Capacity for improvement** - Is the organisation able to support delivery of

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local priorities? Does the council have the capacity to improve?

In addition to these questions, the council asked the peer team to provide observations and feedback on the council's progress in the last five years and the work being undertaken to create an inclusive economy.

3.3 The peer challenge process

Peer challenges are improvement focused; it is important to stress that this was not an inspection. The process is not designed to provide an in-depth or technical assessment of plans and proposals. The peer team used their experience and knowledge of local government to reflect on the information presented to them by people they met, things they saw and material that they read.

The peer team prepared by reviewing a range of documents and information in order to ensure they were familiar with the council and the challenges it is facing. The team then spent three days *onsite* at Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council, during which they:

- Gathered information and views from over 40 meetings, in addition to further research and reading of over 70 pieces of evidence.
- Spoke to over 100 people including a range of council staff together with members and external stakeholders.
- Went on a tour of the Town Centre and part of the wider borough.

This report provides a summary of the peer team's findings. In presenting feedback, they have done so as fellow local government officers and Members.

4. Feedback

4.1 Local priorities and outcomes

The council has clearly defined ambitions, priorities, and a strategic context around people, economy, environment and neighbourhoods. These are consistently articulated in high-quality corporate documents such as the Rotherham Plan 2025, the Council Plan 2022-25, the Year Ahead Delivery Plan 2023-24, and the Performance Management Framework 2022-25. These strategic documents are

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further supported by service plans, team plans, ward plans, and other operational strategies and plans, demonstrating a strong alignment between strategic goals, corporate priorities and delivery mechanisms.

There is a clear sense of place and a good understanding of ambitions, and priorities among Members, staff and partners who are all supportive of what the council is trying to achieve. Everybody the peer team met was well-informed about the council's objectives and showed eagerness to contribute their part in achieving them – *"it's an ambitious council at all levels".*

The current performance and risk management practices are robust, but they primarily focus on activities and key performance indicators (KPIs) rather than demonstrating impact and tangible improvements in outcomes. In the next phase of developing the council plan and supporting performance management framework, it will be important to establish a stronger connection that illustrates how these activities and KPIs are directly contributing to better outcomes for individuals, the community and the place. This may involve reinforcing the alignment of outcome targets and performance measures with the council's ambitions to demonstrate how the vision, priorities, and projects translate into meaningful results that enhance the quality of life for residents.

The council has successfully stabilised its organisational position by focusing on improving its people services, which has put it in a very good position. It is now placing greater importance on its role in shaping the town and surrounding towns and villages and has ambitious regeneration plans that are making progress. It is demonstrating aspirations for the borough and providing effective leadership within the community. Its commitment to creating an inclusive economy is evident. Investments are being made in Forge Island, housing developments in the town centre, and enhancing public spaces to boost civic pride and increase footfall.

The council now needs to utilise these investments as leverage for attracting private investment, thus creating a more economically sustainable and diversified economy with high-quality employment opportunities and ensuring that all residents can benefit from these prospects. Achieving outcomes, making impact and demonstrating social value is paramount.

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4.2 Organisational and place leadership

The council demonstrates effective local leadership both at the borough and sub-regional levels. It effectively fulfils its role as a system leader through strong, visible, and highly respected political and managerial leadership. People speak highly of the Leader and the Chief Executive, commending their dedication and determination in bringing about the required transformations within the council - *"they have set the right tone and culture".* They are supported by a capable and effective top-team made up of Cabinet Members and the strategic leadership team who all offer scope for greater levels of corporate responsibility to drive future change and transformations at pace.

The council has well-established and successful working relationships with public sector partners, as well as with voluntary and community sector and faith partners. These relationships are fostered through both informal and formal structures, ensuring effective collaboration. However, there is an opportunity to expand and strengthen relationships with a broader range of local private sector partners. By engaging these partners, the council can benefit from their expertise and resources to further support the delivery of its ambitions and priorities.

The council's Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy aspires to strengthen the role of Ward Members as community leaders who can work with their communities, their partners and those delivering service in communities to bring about the changes that communities want to see. The peer team was impressed by the exemplary approach to community engagement at ward level, where dedicated and well-supported Ward Members take the lead.

However, presently most of the neighbourhood working occurs at ward level with the involvement of council staff and there is an opportunity to expand upon this approach by promoting integrated locality working through increased co-design and co-production of solutions and services with partner organisations. This collaborative effort has the potential to deliver enhanced outcomes for residents, ensuring improved services and solutions tailored to their needs.

The council delivers a good standard of core services, and it was pleasing to learn that the council's children's services have been judged as 'good' twice in a row by OFSTED. The council is now aiming for an 'outstanding' rating in future OFSTED

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assessments and has a clear ambition, plan and staff motivation to achieve that.

Rotherham has positive attributes such as its location at the heart of a regional economy, excellent rail and motorway connectivity, its industrial past and post-industrial heritage, coupled with the presence of green spaces - all contributing to its unique character. The town also boasts stable and well-established communities, as well as a promising potential for developing and expanding the skills base. These attributes need to be used to market and promote the economic potential of the borough widely.

The peer team heard that the council has done a lot in building and bringing about internal pride among council staff, Members and residents. The time is now right to put similar type of effort into developing an externally facing narrative of place which will help to attract inward investment, market the borough, and promote the place.

This can be done by leveraging the knowledge and understanding of the town held by Members, staff and partners - especially private sector partners. It is possible to shape this narrative into a powerful pitch that can resonates not only within Rotherham but also in the wider world. This should be done through improved and continuing external communication, focusing on the future and Rotherham's place in it.

4.3 Governance and culture

There are clear, robust and embedded governance arrangements, accompanied by effective overview and scrutiny mechanisms. People are clear about the governance arrangements, and both the scrutiny arrangements and the Audit Committee work well and are in line with what is expected. The peer team received positive feedback on the work carried out by scrutiny through scrutiny reviews, the support Members receive from officers, and the influence scrutiny has on the council's decision-making process, particularly through pre-decision scrutiny – *"there is transparency in decision-making".*

There is an opportunity now to review performance management and decision-making processes to ensure they continue to be proportionate and support the required pace in the council to deliver its place shaping ambition. The council should keep the process of taking items to scrutiny before it reaches Cabinet under review to

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ensure that it does not slow down decision-making.

Cabinet Members and the strategic leadership team are visible and accessible, fostering effective collaboration and a strong sense of team spirit. The strategic leadership team works well together, displaying a cohesive and cooperative approach. Moreover, there are exemplary and highly effective relationships between Members and officers, built on mutual trust and respect. Members from all political groups expressed appreciation for the support they receive from officers, as well as the well-supported systems in place to provide them with the necessary information and efficiently respond to their ward-related enquiries.

The council has developed a positive organisational culture, underpinned by clear values that are widely understood and embraced by the staff – *"the 'people and culture' are the key success factors in Rotherham"*. Internal communication and engagement through staff networks are both effective and highly valued by employees. The staff groups that the peer team met came across as motivated, dedicated and determined to deliver the best outcomes for residents. They knew the area and the priorities of the council well and wanted to do their best to deliver against them. They feel empowered and viewed the council as a great place to work. Relationships with trade unions are *"the best they've ever been"*, further contributing to a harmonious and cooperative working environment. These should now be used to facilitate further organisational transformation to help continue improving the customer experience.

The council has a well-developed Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy which focuses on communication and engagement; delivering accessible and responsive services; providing leadership and organisation commitment; and ensuring a diverse and engaged workforce. It is also developing a route map to reach 'excellent' under the Local Government Equality Framework.

Women make up a high percentage of the council's workforce (albeit with many working in part-time roles) and it has an under-representation of people under 25 and an under-representation of people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities when compared to the profile of the local population. However, it was good to see that staff training, development and support networks are all in place to assist with career development and to foster an inclusive and supportive

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organisational culture.

The council has good relationships with faith organisations and is developing its approach to equality, diversity, inclusion and engagement to strengthen conversations with local communities. It continues to support several community events celebrating and championing equality, diversity, and inclusion, including Holocaust Memorial Day, International Women's Day, Black History Month, Interfaith Week, The Rotherham Show and Disability Awareness Month to name a few.

The council should build on these foundations to ensure that all groups benefit from not just investments in services but also the economy and access to education, training and good quality jobs across the board.

4.4 Financial planning and management

Strategic financial planning in the council is robust, with strong alignment to the corporate plan. The proposal for the 2023/24 budget shows a balanced position, and multi-year savings plans have been developed. The council's transformation plans are backed up by a flexible use of capital receipts strategy.

The capital programme is ambitious and has a recent history of under delivery and slippage. Cost and market pressures have also been an issue and borrowing is set to increase as a proportion of funding - the 2023/24 delivery target is high.

The Medium-Term Financial Strategy has been developed to bolster reserves, but they are still low in comparison to peer councils. The latest Audit opinion on the accounts is unqualified, although there were significant weaknesses in Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) identified in the Value For Money (VFM) opinion. The council is participating in the Safety Valve Programme to further develop SEND provision and positive recognition has been received from the Department for Education (DfE) in relation to the progress made to date.

Generally, the peer team found there to be strong stewardship of financial resources in the council and a clear understanding of the financial challenges and landscape that reflects and supports council priorities. The council has done a lot of work in the last few years to get to a position where it is now in a sustainable financial position. This position is supported by the external auditor.

The 'golden triangle' between the section 151 officer, the head of paid service and

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the monitoring officer is strong and works well. The section 151 officer and deputy are respected professionals providing strong financial leadership. They have built a robust and effective finance function with good relationships across council departments.

The 2022/23 fiscal year required proactive financial management to reduce the £18m forecasted overspend. This was reduced to £8.4m by December 2022, helped in part by £4.9m short term in-year savings. It should be noted that children's services has overspent year on year and this should be managed. To reflect continuing pressure in demand led budgets, the council should ensure increased rigour in the budget planning process around assumptions and continuously stress test these demand-led budgets.

With the huge (£610m) capital programme in place, it is essential to continue to formally review capital investment plans to ensure they remain robust and appropriate with updated sensitivity and risk analysis undertaken. Any sensitivities and risks identified should then link into the council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy as well as its reserves. This means keeping the required level of reserves under review and regularly taking the risk register to Cabinet as part of the risk management process and to ensure Members maintain a grip on the levels of borrowing. This is particularly important considering the overspend in 2022/23 and volatility in the economy that may impact on the council's capital programme.

The economy is very volatile and can have a huge impact on the council's ability to deliver its ambitious capital programme. This calls for the council to develop a robust plan to monitor market trends and market performance of assets which are required to deliver an income stream to finance borrowing, as part of the annual budget setting process.

4.5 Capacity for improvement

There is a high level of self-awareness within the council among both Members and officers and they use 2016 as a reference point to measure progress – *"we are now able to have challenging conversations across the council"*. The council engaged well with Commissioners and used the intervention period to accelerate improvements. Since then, the council has welcomed external challenge, has supported formal inspections, and has opened itself to a range of peer reviews to support a learning

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culture. It was named the ‘Most Improved Council’ in the country at the Local Government Chronicle (LGC) Award in 2022.

The council is in a good position to support the delivery of its priorities and has the capacity, ambition and capability to bring about further transformation in its services to improve the customer experience – *“we want to be the best there is”.* People have acknowledged the council's leadership role in safeguarding residents during the pandemic, its handling of migration issues, and its current efforts to support those in need to deal with the cost-of-living crisis.

Going forward, the council needs to continue reviewing its required skills and capacity to deliver its significant capital programme and ambitions for an inclusive economy. It should think about ways to increase flexibility in skills and capacity. This might involve collaborating more closely with the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority and the private sector to make sure that the required skills and capacity are accessible whenever they are needed, particularly when the council is unable to hire those specialised skills directly.

Like many other local authorities, recruitment in some key areas is an issue that will require proactively marketing and highlighting the benefits of working in Rotherham and continuing to review the overall pay and reward package through the delivery and progression of the Workforce Plan. Promoting how Rotherham is a fantastic place to work, has brilliant staff and a favourable organisational culture can help to address some of these recruitment issues.

There is scope to enhance digitisation and service transformation consistently across the council and in collaboration with partners to improve the customer experience. This opportunity should be seized to modernise services and improve efficiency and effectiveness, including by tackling parallel paper-based processes that are still in existence within the organisation.

Additional areas of specific focus

Nine years ago, the council faced significant challenges and experienced serious failures in its governance and service. However, it has undergone an impressive transformation and is now a vibrant, ambitious and proactive organisation with high aspirations for the future. It was inspiring to see a complete transformation in the

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atmosphere, culture, and relationships, as these lie at the core of all the changes and improvements that have taken place. The council has undertaken an extensive amount of work to shift people's mindsets resulting in the council's current strong position - effort which not everyone beyond Rotherham can see.

It is time for Rotherham to shift its focus towards the future with confidence. The prospects ahead are promising, and it is the council's responsibility to determine how bright it wants to make them. Despite the current unsettled and uncertain external economic climate, Rotherham possesses positive qualities that can support its advancement and enable it to seize opportunities. There is evidence suggesting that the council has already started embracing a more outward-looking perspective and is making progress. Now, it must continue to progress rapidly and confidently.

To a large extent it has already started the process of doing this and is placing greater importance on place shaping and delivering joined up services at the neighbourhood level. It is demonstrating aspirations for the borough and providing effective leadership within the community. For example, Rotherham has seen the establishment of a university centre, a major theme park, and various other projects in the town centre and local high streets.

Furthermore, construction has also commenced on improving the railway station and the Forge Island leisure development, which will introduce a new cinema, hotel, and five restaurants, attracting visitors to the town centre and utilising the recreational potential of the river. Moreover, valuable investments of £40m have been secured through the Levelling Up Fund by the council. This is being used to boost the development of the borough's leisure and tourist economy and skills with grants provided to Wentworth Woodhouse, Gulliver's, Maltby Academy, and Magna as well as facilitating the redevelopment of its own country parks at Rother Valley and Thrybergh. £20m of this grant will be used to further the regeneration of the town centre boosted with an additional £31.6m from the Towns Fund to carry out ambitious regeneration projects across the town centre, Eastwood and Templeborough. These are all very positive and exciting developments, and the peer team encourages the council and its partners to demonstrate greater confidence in pursuing further opportunities and maximising the full potential of the whole area.

The council is on track in achieving its new council housing targets and there is some

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private sector development but a greater focus on developing a broader range of housing tenures across the borough to meet future housing needs of the local population would support the council's ambition of a higher waged mixed economy and help to spread economic benefits. There are also opportunities to grow and develop a coordinated visitor economy, capitalising on Rotherham's heritage, natural assets and the new regeneration schemes.

The council has achieved success in attracting significant public sector investment which means the current regeneration underway in Rotherham is primarily funded by the public sector. It is important that this investment is used as a leverage for attracting additional private sector investment, fostering the growth of a mixed economy and ensuring long-term economic sustainability for the borough.

Furthermore, by diversifying its investment sources, the council can mitigate the risk of a decline in activity if public funds were to diminish. To help do this, the council should utilise the investment of public funds to establish market conditions to create an environment that is attractive to the private sector, encouraging them to invest in Rotherham. This approach will provide a consistent stream of investment, even if public funds become limited in the future.

Therefore, there is work to be done to achieve a truly mixed and an inclusive economy that makes a strong and visible connection between the regeneration of the 'place' to meet the needs of the 'people'. The council can create greater social value and demonstrate the tangible impact it is making on addressing, for example, health inequalities and improving the quality of life of residents. Investments in skills development, employment support, local and sustainable procurement, focused planning policies, etc should complement the investment and opportunities being created through the physical regeneration.

Enabling local people to connect into those opportunities through clear pathways to new skills, jobs and business opportunities will ensure local jobs and business opportunities are more likely to be accessible to local people.

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5. Next steps

It is recognised that senior political and managerial leadership will want to consider, discuss and reflect on these findings.

Both the peer team and LGA are keen to build on the relationships formed through the peer challenge. The CPC process includes a six-month check-in session, which provides space for the council's senior leadership to update peers on its progress against the action plan and discuss next steps.

In the meantime, Satvinder Rana, Senior Regional Adviser is the main contact between Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council and the Local Government Association. Satvinder is available to discuss any further support the council requires. His contact details are Email: satvinder.rana@local.gov.uk Tel: 07887 997 124.



Satvinder Rana
Senior Regional Adviser, LGA
(On behalf of the peer challenge team)

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Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan

September 2023

Recommendation 1: Celebrate the council's achievements!	
What the peers said: There is a lot to be proud of in Rotherham. The council has undergone an impressive transformation and has many exemplary and commendable practices that other councils can learn from. These, as well as the external validations the council has received, should be more actively profiled and celebrated widely.	
Actions we plan to take	**Timescales for delivery**
Build on our current communications approach, ensuring that we celebrate achievements and good news stories and actively promote successful delivery of the Council Plan and Year Ahead Delivery Plan commitments.	March 2024
Engage with our workforce to obtain their ideas for capturing our successes and sharing them. To kickstart this, we will hold a celebration event with the workforce and a focused Wider Leadership Team session to share the peer challenge feedback, celebrate the achievements and say thank you.	March 2024

Recommendation 2: Develop an externally facing compelling and positive narrative of place which will help to promote and market the borough and capitalise on Rotherham's assets.	
What the peers said: A strong, consistent and compelling outward focusing story about Rotherham told over and over again will help to market the borough, promote the place and its assets and inject confidence to attract inward investment as well as change perceptions of the town as a great place to live, work and visit.	
Actions we plan to take	**Timescales for delivery**
Hold an event to bring stakeholders together, to capture people's views to help update the Rotherham Story and have a positive place narrative for the borough.	November 2023
Develop an Inward Investment Plan to attract private sector investment in the borough.	March 2024
Alongside our partners, develop a plan to promote the success and achievement of key milestones in the Rotherham Plan.	March 2024

Work with colleagues to develop the Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) for South Yorkshire to strengthen Rotherham's position and promote a coherent place narrative. We will also partner with the LVEP and emergent wider Yorkshire Destination Development Partnership to secure external funding.	March 2025

Recommendation 3: Use the significant investments underway to expand and attract private sector investment at scale, maximising its potential and supporting a more inclusive economic future.	
What the peers said: By diversifying investment sources, the council can not only mitigate the risk of a decline in activity if public funds were to diminish but also foster the growth of a more inclusive and mixed economy, thereby ensuring long-term sustainability for the borough.	
Actions we plan to take	**Timescales for delivery**
Continue to focus on delivery of projects currently in the Place Based Investment Strategy to build investor confidence and create opportunities for private investment, including working with the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA).	March 2026
Use the Place Based Investment Strategy to work with businesses and developers to identify opportunities to unlock or accelerate private sector investment.	December 2024
Building on the success of the Council's housing development and acquisitions programme, engage with the wider sector to secure housing-led private investment particularly in areas of economic growth.	Ongoing

Recommendation 4: Develop effective pathways and mechanisms for local people, especially young people, to benefit from inclusive growth that can help to deliver improved health outcomes and address inequalities.	
What the peers said: Facilitating local people to connect into growth opportunities through clear pathways to new skills, jobs and business opportunities will ensure that economic growth is inclusive and brings tangible social value.	
Actions we plan to take	**Timescales for delivery**
Ensure that we have a consistent employment offer, supporting all ages with an additional focus on young people, which will bring together existing programmes including skills, employment pathways and access to employment under a distinct Council wide work programme. This will provide strategic and	March 2025

operational direction for the employment pathways, supporting the Council's delivery of an Inclusive Economy.	
Ensure that new business initiatives such as the new £5.4m incubation hub at Manvers and the South Yorkshire MCA new investment zone provides growth opportunities, aiming to incentivise local training, skills development and employment in those areas and whilst fostering entrepreneurship and economic diversity.	September 2024
Continue to embed the Council's Social Value Policy and commitment to the Real Living Wage, with the ambition to create more jobs and skills in the borough.	August 2024

Recommendation 5: Review performance management with a focus on demonstrating impact and an improvement in outcomes in delivering the council's ambition; and use the strong leadership, capacity and capability of the top-team to drive and deliver further organisational transformations and change across the borough at pace.	
What the peers said: Streamline performance management and continue to work with scrutiny to ensure that the process of taking items to scrutiny before they reach Cabinet does not slow down decision-making. Furthermore, maximising the potential of the top-team to take on greater levels of corporate responsibility can drive and deliver future change and transformations at pace, whilst maintaining the strong foundations and good governance that has been put in place.	
Actions we plan to take	**Timescales for delivery**
Develop an outcome-focussed Council Plan for 2025-29 and refreshed performance management framework that is informed by best practice. Performance reporting arrangements will also be reviewed to ensure there is a focus on evidencing outcomes and impacts, using case studies, and linking these to storytelling (as outlined in the actions under recommendation 1).	March 2025
Identification of opportunities for the top team to take on greater levels of corporate responsibility to drive transformation and change	January 2024
Support the Assistant Director Cohort to develop their collective capacity as a team	March 2024

Recommendation 6: Building on the Neighbourhood working model, develop a clearer and shared understanding of integrated locality working across the public sector and increase the pace of digital transformation across the organisation to deliver improved outcomes for residents and consistently improve the customer experience.	
What the peers said: This will help to further modernise the organisation and improve efficiency and effectiveness. Digital transformation should lead to the discontinuing of parallel paper-based processes to avoid duplication, increase efficiency and improve the customer experience. Integrated locality working through increased co-design and co-production of solutions and services alongside partner organisations can deliver enhanced outcomes for residents through improved services and solutions which are tailored to their needs.	
Actions we plan to take	**Timescales for delivery**
Develop a clear vision and work programme for integrated locality working under the Thriving Neighbourhoods workstream, in line with the ambitions set out in the Council Plan and Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy.	March 2024
Continue to deliver the Customer Service work programme to increase the ease of access to the number of services that can be accessed online and to drive further digital transformation	Ongoing work programme
Continue to deliver the Customer Experience Programme through the Customer Experience Board	Ongoing work programme

Recommendation 7: Continue to keep the medium-term financial strategy under review - testing assumptions and undertaking sensitivity analysis – and continue to report to Members on a regular basis.	
What the peers said: Using scenario planning and reviewing the medium-term financial strategy helps to identify options when there are uncertainties over future funding arrangements and volatility in the economy. This will enable the council to stress test demand-led budgets and assess risks to fully understand and reflect the impact of variables going forward. Continuing to keep Members updated on the fiscal health of the organisation and associated risks will ensure they maintain a strong grip on the budget.	
Actions we plan to take	**Timescales for delivery**
Continue to review and revise the MTFS working assumptions throughout the year along with continued formal reporting: - MTFS update/position statement briefing to Overview and Scrutiny Management Board - MTFS update/position statement report to Cabinet - Budget and MTFS report to Cabinet and Council	Ongoing November 2023 November 2023 February 2024
Continue to report finance updates to Cabinet on a regular basis in accordance with the constitution	Ongoing, with next report in September 2023

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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: LGA Corporate Peer Challenge and Action Plan	
Directorate: Assistant Chief Executive	**Service area: Policy, Performance and Intelligence**
Lead person: Fiona Boden	**Contact: Simon Dennis**

Is this a:

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

If other, please specify:

Reporting the result of an external inspection and obtaining Cabinet's approval to a high level action plan.

2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening
The LGA Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC) took place between 5 – 8 June 2023 and the findings were received in August 2023 (see Appendix 1 of the main report). In response to the findings the Council has produced a high-level Action Plan (see Appendix 2) for approval by Cabinet.

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? *(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)*	✓	
Could the proposal affect service users? *(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)*		✓
Has there been or is there likely to be an impact on an individual or group with protected characteristics? *(Consider potential discrimination, harassment or victimisation of individuals with protected characteristics)*	✓	
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns regarding the proposal? *(It is important that the Council is transparent and consultation is carried out with members of the public to help mitigate future challenge)*		✓
Could the proposal affect how the Council's services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom? *(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from commissioning or procurement)*	✓	
Could the proposal affect the Council's workforce or employment practices? *(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from your HR business partner)*		✓

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 publication of the LGA report has no direct impact in itself on Council Services and accessibility. However, the high-level action plan will lead to impacts on equalities as the actions either involve both continuing to deliver initiatives already in place or prompt the development of a more detailed action for the future. Any future initiatives or events arising from the plan should be subject to their own separate assessment.

- **Key findings**

Whilst the overall publication of the report does not impact on equalities, there are specific actions in the high-level action plan that could have an equalities implication. These include, but are not limited to:

- The need to ensure that the wider celebration event for the workforce and any stakeholder event is held in a way to enable all employees to participate irrespective of protected characteristics.
- The action to "Hold an event to bring stakeholders together, to capture people's views to help update the Rotherham Story and have a positive place narrative for the borough" needs to ensure that all relevant stakeholders are appropriately engaged and this event will need to be carried out in line with the requirements of the Consultation and Engagement Toolkit.
- The need to ensure that the response to recommendation 4 of the Peer Challenge (which requires the development of effective pathways and mechanisms for local people, especially young people) effectively addresses the need to ensure any pathway specifically addresses all protected characteristics and not just young people.
- The improvement of outcomes for all residents, required as part of recommendation 6, needs the Council to ensure that improved outcomes and customer experience is delivered irrespective of the protected characteristics of those residents.

Any further consultation that is required as part of the response to the action plan will be delivered in line with the Consultation and Engagement Toolkit and these outcomes will inform future the equalities assessments connected to those actions.

- **Actions**

A full Equality Analysis will be completed once the detailed action plan has been produced. This will be done following the consultation event in November 2023.

Should any of the listed actions require a separate Cabinet decision, they will be subject to a separate Equality Analysis in the usual manner.	
Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	November 2023
Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	January 2024
Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title):	Simon Dennis Corporate Improvement and Risk Manager

5. Governance, ownership and approval

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

Name	Job title	Date
Fiona Boden	Head of Policy, Performance and Intelligence	23/8/23

6. Publishing

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

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

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

Date screening completed	22/8/23
Report title and date	LGA Corporate Peer Challenge and Action Plan 18th September 2023
If relates to a Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision – report date and date sent for publication	Cabinet report 18th September 2023 – publication date 4th September 2023
Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	23rd September 2023

Appendix 4 - Carbon Impact Assessment – LGA Corporate Peer Challenge and Action Plan

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?	None				
Emissions from transport?	None				
Emissions from waste, or the quantity of waste itself?	None				
Emissions from housing and domestic buildings?	None				
Emissions from construction and/or development?	None				
Carbon capture (e.g. through trees)?	None				
Identify any emission impacts associated with this decision that have not been covered by the above fields:					

This report is principally concerned with formally publishing the outcome of the recent LGA Peer Challenge and its associated high level action plan. The report itself has no direct impact on emissions and, should there be any emissions impact from action arising in the high level action plan at Appendix 2, these will be assessed separately.

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

At this point there are no relevant emission impacts to consider. Where progress on actions contained in the action plan imply a specific definable impact on emissions, this will be included indicatively.

Supporting information:	
Completed by: (Name, title, and service area/directorate).	Simon Dennis Policy, Performance and Intelligence, Assistant Chief Executives Directorate.
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]	CIA137