

IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION

Date and Time :- Tuesday 6 February 2024 at 1.30 p.m.

Venue:- Town Hall, Moorgate Street, Rotherham.

Membership:- Councillors Wyatt (Chair), Tinsley (Vice-Chair), Andrews, Atkin, Aveyard, Barley, Bennett-Sylvester, C Carter, Castledine-Dack, T Collingham, Cowen, Ellis, Havard, Khan, McNeely, Reynolds, Taylor.

Co-opted Members:- Mrs. K. Bacon, Mrs. M. Jacques.

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

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

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

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

2. Communications

To receive communications from the Chair in respect of matters within the Commission's remit and work programme.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 12 December, 2023 (Pages 3 - 20)

To consider and approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on 12 December, 2023 as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

4. Declarations of Interest

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

5. Questions from members of the public and the press

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

6. Exclusion of the Press and Public

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

7. IPSC Rotherham Markets & Library Redevelopment Update (Pages 21 - 57)

To consider the update on the response to the recommendations from the Improving Places Select Commission spotlight review of Rotherham Markets carried out during 2022.

8. Social Housing Regulation Update (Pages 59 - 72)

To consider a report which summarises the changes and provides an update on Housing Services' preparedness activities.

9. Improving Places Select Commission - Work Programme 2023-2024 (Pages 73 - 74)

To consider and endorse the outline schedule of scrutiny work for the 2023/24 municipal year.

10. Urgent Business

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

11. Date and time of the next meeting

The next meeting of the Improving Places Select Commission will take place on Tuesday 19 March 2024 commencing at 1.30pm in Rotherham Town Hall.



SHARON KEMP,
Chief Executive.

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Tuesday 12 December 2023

Present:- Councillor Wyatt (in the Chair); Councillors Atkin, Aveyard, Barley, Bennett-Sylvester, C Carter, Ellis, Havard and Jones.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Alam, Andrews, McNeely and Yasseen.

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

38. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 24 OCTOBER 2023

Resolved:- That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 24th October, 2023 be approved as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

39. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest to report.

40. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

There were a number of questions from members of the public. The Cabinet Member with responsibility was unable to attend the meeting so responses to the questions below would be provided in writing.

The Chair authorised the reading of the following questions from Mr. Azam so they could be recorded in readiness for a written response.

Question 1 – With regards to Section 2.2 of the public report could the Cabinet Member confirm the total amount Dignity had been fined for the financial year 2022/23? This appeared to be missing from the report and it would be in the public's interests if this could be included to see what Dignity have been fined for the last financial year.

Question 2 - In Section 2.3 of the report in the financial year 2021-22 Dignity were fined a total of £350k with allocation of £150k for various works. Could the Cabinet Member provide a breakdown of how the £150k had been spent and what additional funding was being sought? Reading the report it appeared that a meeting had been requested about additional funding, but it was difficult to decipher how this funding had been spent.

Question 3 – Within the Dignity Report at Section 4.2 could the Cabinet Member provide a breakdown of how the £250k additional capital investment had been spent in the Muslim Section? Whilst there had been some additional investment to improve footpaths and resolve the water issues and to the land graves themselves, it would be interesting to see

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how funding had been spent. The way the report was written also appeared to suggest the Muslim Community had been given special treatment with additional spend. This did not seem fair so needed to be recorded accordingly.

Question 4 – With regards to the Annual Report : SIP 4, the thirty-five year plan stated that Dignity have not produced this report yet the RAG status was green in the five year plan which was submitted to the Council on 1st October, 2023. Could the Cabinet Member please state why this had not been made available? The Leader had also written to the group represented and had confirmed this would be presented to Scrutiny to ensure it was reviewed.

Question 5 – With regards to the Annual Report : SIP 9 this refers to talking with and liaising with faith leaders, but it does not go into detail as to what was being asked of those faith leaders or why the RAG status was amber.

With regards to the annual report and projects for 2024/25 within the Muslim section this replicates from a previous report with seventy-three vaults being installed. If the report is correct with the potential projects during 2024/25 on landscaping there needed to be detail on how this was to be done.

For clarification it appears operational matters were the responsibility of Dignity, but the Council was responsible for landscaping matters. The report does indicate the Council had approved the approach to be taken, so why was this the case and why was the Muslim Community not informed.

Question 6 – It was requested that identification of all graves be undertaken within the next year, along with improvements behind the gable wall for infant graves, improvements to the waterlogged graves which remained unresolved and for aesthetically refuse bins to be provided at the Crematorium and Cemetery. It was not a pleasant sight for visitors to see over full metal bins when driving into the site.

The Chair also authorised the reading of the following two questions from Ms. Yousaf so they could be recorded in readiness for a written response.

Question 1 – With reference to the Public Report for Annual Bereavement Services and particularly Section 2.3.2 whilst it was understood as to the history involved could the Cabinet Member please provide clear timescales as to when the review for Islamic burials was likely to happen in 2024.

Question 2 – With reference to the Five Year Service Development Plan and in particular the renovation of old office block whilst the Florist and Café were mentioned, would this also incorporate prayer facilities and a public toilet which was much needed.

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The Chair authorised a further question from the floor which confirmed the community were awaiting on the annexe to the graveyard and approval from Planning, but asked if there was a back up plan if approval was not given as the graveyard was quickly running out of space for burials and what immediate action could be taken as there was no alternative.

41. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

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

42. ANNUAL BEREAVEMENT SERVICES REPORT

Consideration was given to the Annual Bereavement Services Report presented by Bal Nahal, Head of Legal, Registration and Bereavement Services, which provided an update on the Council's Bereavement Services management of the contract between the Council and Dignity Funerals Limited.

The report was last presented to Scrutiny in December 2022 and today's annual report provided a further update and progress in relation to the management of the Dignity contract, capital projects, disused cemetery and chapels council, retained cemetery boundaries, digital autopsy contract and death management.

The Commission were asked to note the thirty-five-year contractual agreement with Dignity Funerals which the Council entered into in 2008. The partnership saw Dignity take on the responsibility for capital works and maintenance of the East Herringthorpe Cemetery and Crematorium, along with maintenance of the eight other municipal cemeteries located through the borough.

Dignity Funerals Ltd. were also required to provide annual assurances to make sure they were undertaking their duties in accordance with the contract and meeting the key performance targets and service improvements. This was monitored through regular meetings with the Council.

The Council also had a contract with digital autopsies in conjunction with Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council.

The key issues from the last Improving Places meeting and the recommendations were highlighted. From the recommendations an all member session was convened on 23rd March 2023 and it was also suggested that Bereavement Services and Dignity worked together to better demonstrate how equalities duties were adhered to.

An update was provided in terms of progress made in relation to Bereavement Services and it was noted that meetings took place with

Dignity on a regular basis in relation to performance indicators.

It was also noted that in March 2023, Cabinet granted approval for Capital Works to several Council retained assets in the cemeteries. Further approval was still required for additional capital allocation due to changes in costs of materials and labour since the estimations were made. An outline was provided on the current progress on capital works and estimated dates of completion.

The Council also retained responsibility for some cemetery chapels, some of which were in a state of disrepair requiring future capital investment. This was outlined within the report.

Furthermore, in relation to cemetery boundaries, further works have been undertaken - again fully detailed within the report.

The digital autopsy contract, which initially began as a pilot, had been running successfully. This was a much better way of performing digital autopsies without causing too much distress for families through having an invasive autopsy. This contract was being managed and performance was on target.

In terms of Death Management, the Council's response to the COVID emergency was well documented and various work streams were arranged as a result; one of which was death management. In addition, mortuary capacity had also improved. Death management figures were now back on track and close to what they were before the COVID pandemic.

With regards to religious awareness training the majority of relevant staff within the Council, Dignity and Glendale have had religious awareness training. There had also been training for some coronial and mortuary staff.

The Chair invited Mr. Richard Shepherd, Business Leader – Rotherham Crematorium and Cemeteries, to provide an update on progress and on the annual report submitted. He provided a brief summary of his involvement with the contract and partnership working to date.

It was apparent from the historic charges and failings that things needed to improve and work was now taking place to ensure there was engagement with communities and to the overall experience with Dignity.

Dignity was a privately allowed owned company which now allowed for swift adaptability and increased investment opportunities.

Dignity was also in the process of investing a further £1.5 million into new cremator equipment which would ensure that Rotherham was equipped well beyond the current contract, but also ensuring best practice for environmental issues and reducing the carbon footprint.

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At the start of his involvement there were around twenty contractual failures that were RAG rated in red, which have been worked upon and improved significantly. There were currently around eight outstanding that were still being worked upon and would be reflected in next year's annual report.

Dignity have continued to invest heavily in new pathways and infrastructure at many of the sites within the borough. The positive feedback from community groups was very encouraging and there were still three sites remaining to be completed in the new year with a further £300,000 investment earmarked.

This would ensure that Masbrough, Wath and Moorgate would receive the same level of care that the other cemeteries have.

The report also highlighted the ongoing improvement works within the Muslim section at East Herringthorpe and personal thanks were offered to the Muslim community for their close partnership working.

There was still work to be done on landscaping and further pathways, but the area was much improved compared to how it looked only a few years ago. With working with the community grave covers were now in place that allowed for graves to be prepared in advance which negated any of the traditional issues with short notice burials in the past. These provisions have been welcomed and other local authorities were looking to replicate this same provision.

Discussions were further required around the existing land and expansion for East Herringthorpe. The thirty-five year plan provided an overview of the capacity and health of the cemetery sites currently. This document would assist and guide the Council with decision making around future cemetery expansions for generations to come.

In terms of the ongoing cemetery expansions, Wath received permission to proceed with building of the new section, something that was much needed for the community of Wath and work would commence to prepare the site as soon as possible after the Christmas period.

East Herringthorpe is still going through the planning process, but hopefully this will follow suit shortly, given all the needs are met.

An overview was provided on how Dignity engaged with and actively chaired meetings with local friends' groups which had helped with community feedback and ideas. There had also been active organisation and support with local events including the one hundred year anniversary of the miners' disaster at Maltby, unveiling of a new plaque for Charles John Stoddart with John Healey, M.P, the Christmas memorial service, a celebration of Eid by decorating the main reception area and the great turnout for the remembrance service back in November. This list was not

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exhaustive, but provided some insight into how Dignity was actively engaged in the community with future events planned for next year as well.

A survey had also been introduced to allow visitors to fill in and provide their feedback on the service provision and improvements. This would be available online and via QR code on the notice boards. It was hoped this would lead to even more inclusion and allow Dignity to focus on what the community actually needs and wants to see from the provision going forward.

Complaints have also seen a dramatic decline and an open-door policy was in operation for anyone who wished to make contact. Working with partners, Glendale have improved overall maintenance and the impression for visitors. There had been many improvements over the last six months, but there was still more to do.

A new natural burial ground had also been introduced at Greasbrough Lane Cemetery, but with limited success with planting at the time. This was redressed with meadow seed and towards the back end of the year it became a beautiful area attracting wildlife. There were further plans in spring to improve the area further.

The last six months had seen many improvements and there was more to do, but it was hoped the Council and communities would observe the inroads and improvements being made with the investment and commitment to providing the best service and all those involved were thanked for their support.

The Chair invited questions, but first read a question submitted by Councillor Yasseen which referred to previous concerns raised about Rotherham Bereavement Services, adherence to the statutory equality duty and how it was disheartening to note that the documents for this meeting, specifically the Annual Bereavement Services Report lacked the equality screening assessment form. Additionally, there was a notable absence of equality information from Dignity so asked if insights could be provided into the reasons for these omissions?

The Governance Adviser confirmed that an equality screening/impact assessment form was not always required for Scrutiny reports so this would be fed back to Councillor Yasseen.

The Commission did note from the report reference to Dignity submitting an Equalities Impact Assessment in February, 2023 and an update on this was requested as it did form part of one of the recommendations and could be what Councillor Yasseen was referring to in her question.

It was noted that the information provided in February, 2023 was Dignity's Equalities Policy and in response to the question raised this addressed all concerns and was in accordance with the Council's equalities policy. As a

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private company Dignity were entitled to have their own policies, but the one submitted was in accordance and in collaboration with the Council.

A number of questions were raised about the report and these included the management of the Dignity contract and how it continued to levy a number of financial penalty charges. It was asked how many there were and the reasons for them.

Officers did not have this information to hand but were happy to provide a full breakdown in writing to the Commission with a list of all performance targets and where a financial charge was imposed when those targets were not met within a set timeframe.

The Commission whilst noting the progress made in the last six months since the new appointment, expressed some concern that the contract with the Council had still been in operation for the last fifteen years where a number of financial penalty charges have been levied. It would be unreasonable to judge purely on the last six months when the contract had obviously been failing. From the information within the report, the RAG ratings still listed in red appeared to total eleven and not eight as suggested.

The Representative from Dignity confirmed that the eight RAG ratings outstanding were the most up-to-date position following the monthly meeting this morning since the report was written as the fire risk assessment and online survey as previously reported were now rated as green.

Whilst the improving position was noted some Members expressed their disappointment that information had not been shared sooner.

The Commission in noting Dignity's performance failures believed it fundamentally important that detail on the financial penalties that have been charged should be included in all future reports presented and insisted this be actioned.

The Chair on behalf of the Commission commended the excellent working with the friends' group and how crucial this was moving forward, along with ensuring the disused cemetery chapels were repaired. In addition, the progress with the Digital Autopsy service was positively received and was significantly reducing the number of invasive post-mortems required.

Further questions were raised about waterlogged graves and flooding in the Muslim section and whilst it was understood some work had been undertaken over the summer to hopefully resolve the concerns the weather in summer was very much different to that in winter. On this basis an update was requested on current performance, whether any issues remain given that the community still raises concern and when it was likely these would be complete.

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The Representative from Dignity confirmed the drainage put in place was having to cope with one of the wettest periods of rainfall and was inspected by Glendale on a daily basis and by Dignity on a weekly basis. Work was ongoing with the community to raise any areas of concern. It would appear that the works to date had improved the situation and whilst there was still further work to be completed, any further areas of concern would be rectified.

Further reference was made to the five-year plan which was welcomed and in particular the works to Wath Cemetery which, it was hoped, would be complete this year. Whilst it was noted that Wath Cemetery had now received expansion approval by the Planning Board, the plan set out on Page 62 was not the same plan that received approval following residents' concerns and it was suggested that some collaboration take place to ensure the correct plan was available for public inspection.

The Representative of Dignity would ensure this was corrected and confirmed the team carrying out the works to the pathways were on track to carry out works shortly and as a priority.

The Commission did express some concerns that some of the issues being picked up by Members were not being picked up at the relevant performance monitoring meetings.

Further discussion ensued on the capital projects and the delay for the independent review of the Muslim burial provision, and why no explanation had been provided as to why it was rearranged for next year. The Commission were advised that the consultant who was employed to undertake the review was unable to carry out the piece of work and a suitably qualified replacement was being sought. The review would then take place during 2024 on the whole of Bereavement Service and not just on the Muslim section.

The Commission were also concerned about references in the report to the completion of works by the end of March 2024 and suggested that as part of recommendations an update report be provided as soon as possible after that date.

Further information was also sought on the national issue of disused cemetery chapels and how their fundamental purpose had changed. Whilst there were plans in Rotherham for some to be repaired, perhaps there needed to be further investigation about their future use or whether it was false economy to repair when they were no longer of any purpose.

The Representative from Dignity confirmed the responsibility for the maintenance of cemetery chapels lay with the Council and whilst some in other authorities had been brought back into use, there were still some restrictions with buildings being listed as historical monuments, such as the one at Moorgate. Their future use would be subject to further approval and discussion.

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The Commission noted the listing of the Moorgate Chapel, but whilst further funding was needed for disused chapels, discussions on their future use would need to be recognised. The report did indicate a working group had been established to put together a rolling programme of works, it was unclear when this would be concluded or when this would be presented to this Commission or the Cabinet Member.

It was pointed out that the work on this had commenced, but it was uncertain on the timeframe. It was important to ensure that further deterioration did not occur and safety was maintained. There were many examples across the country where these types of buildings had been used within communities.

The Commission listened carefully to Councillor Jones where he described the concerns within his own Ward with some of the chapels and the works that had taken place. He also referred to a discussion he had had a number of years ago about bringing back into use and re-establishing ready made areas which were dismissed, but he pointed out it was the friends' groups that could draw down external funding to bring these beautiful buildings back into use. The working group should be looking at these kind of issues and making sure they were talking to the right people. Officers agreed to take this information away and investigate further.

Further information was also sought on the religious awareness training and how there would be further sessions, but it was unclear how often this would take place. Officers in noting the concerns were in agreement for this to take place annually if this was recommended.

The Commission acknowledged that whilst there appeared to be some negative feedback on the report, they commended many aspects and in particular the Digital Autopsy Service and its introduction. The Chair advised the Commission that the whole of the Bereavement Service needed to be considered, whilst taking account of the client side.

It was also pointed out that there were still some areas in the borough where burials were not provided by Parish Councils or via the Dignity contract and these were St. Margaret's at Swinton and St. Thomas' at Kilnhurst who did not receive funding for the services they provided.

- Resolved:-**
- (1) That the report be received and the contents noted.
 - (2) That the annual report from Dignity Funerals Limited be received and the contents noted.
 - (3) That consideration be given as to how performance failure/financial penalty charges could be incorporated into future annual reports.
 - (4) That an update be provided on the programme of work on disused

chapels, recognising that this was a longer-term piece of work.

(5) That an updated and corrected version of the Annual Report be provided and circulated to all Members.

(6) That a full breakdown be provided with a list of all performance targets and where a financial charge was imposed when those targets were not met within a set timeframe.

(7) That consideration be given to including details of the customer satisfaction surveys within the annual report.

(8) That religious awareness training be provided on an annual basis.

43. ROAD SAFETY AND CUMWELL LANE UPDATE

Simon Moss Assistant Director for Planning, Regeneration and Transport, supported by Richard Jackson, Head of Highways, Andrew Lee, Service Manager for Traffic and Road Safety, and Matthew Reynolds, Head of Transportation Infrastructure, provided further information on the post-scheme appraisal of the road safety intervention measures approved for implementation along Kingsforth Lane and Cumwell Lane during the 2022/23 fiscal year, following concerns raised about the safety of road users.

Background information was provided on the road improvements following the two fatal collisions in the winter of 2021/22. In May 2022 there was a petition presented requesting road safety improvements and then in the Summer of 2022 there were several improvement measures introduced on Kingsforth Lane and Cumwell Lane.

In December 2022 there was a further update to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board which recommended an update to this meeting post scheme improvements.

Following an annual evaluation of the improvements some speed surveys have been undertaken (details within the report) along with summaries of three collisions recorded. Based on the latest information available there was no indication that an Average Speed Camera system would have directly prevented the three collisions reported since 1st September 2022 given the recorded contributory factors.

Discussion ensued on the speed survey results and the apparent lack of confidence in the data and whether the improvements to date had had the desired effect for reducing speed. Further information was available to indicate that there were updated methods for conducting speed surveys which were easier, simpler and much more cost effective and whether these would be used in the future.

Representatives from Transportation were confident in the data analysis

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and the reporting of speed. The reasons referred to were aimed at explaining why there were some increases in speeds in the early mornings or late at night and whether these were directly as a result of the new measures in place possibly giving confidence for some drivers. The roadworks in the area meant that measurements were not taken from one site, but the service were always willing to improve the methods for collecting and evaluating data.

The after survey was undertaken in June, 2023 so it was suggested this be done again in February, 2024 to give a like-for-like comparison in terms of tube survey analysis industry standard and was probably right for this kind of location which were highlighted for specific risk.

Within the service's suite of analytical tools it had a piece of software which used transponder data from cars giving more real-time information. This was on a link basis over a longer and longer stretch. This was why it was important that a like-for-like comparison was undertaken.

In terms of why speeds may have increased the £150,000 interventions (which were a substantial part of the budget) which were put in place were about making the road conditions suitable for drivers. The improvements mean drivers may be less likely to take risks and whilst there had been no huge reduction in speed, the accident record was showing that improvements were positive.

The service preferred to do a full appraisal on a road safety scheme, but data was usually taken over three years and not just one, so this was something that would be picked up as part of the usual activity around road safety statutory requirements across the borough.

Reference was made to the petition that had resulted in the referral to the Overview and Scrutiny Management board and what response had been sent to the lead petitioner.

Representatives from Transportation did not have the information and would provide the response in due course.

It was noted, however, the petition as submitted was calling for improvements following accidents in that area which resulted in substantial improvements being made in the summer of 2022 which were in the report.

The Commission also expressed their disappointment that data showed that despite the huge improvements in this area to reduce speed, speeds had not reduced that much and there was a slight increase in speeds later in the evening which was bizarre. The reasons for this were not clear or determined and for this reason the decision to revisit the survey in February, 2024 was welcomed and not just going with industry standards, especially now further development was taking place on Cumwell Lane

Representatives from Transportation confirmed the February, 2024 count to ensure a like for like scenario and whilst speed did go up during the summer months, it was anticipated that the more inclement weather in February would slow drivers further.

The developments on Cumwell Lane had led to more measures being implemented with no waiting restrictions, a shared use pathway protecting pedestrians. As part of the general assessment of whether the scheme had achieved what it was aimed to do, the service would be doing the February survey and then also going back for the three-year analysis. This would then be routinely picked up in day-to-day activity.

The Chair thanked Representatives from Transportation for the update on the measures carried out on this section of road.

Resolved:- That the report be received and the measures implemented noted.

44. SOCIAL FRONTIERS IN ROTHERHAM WEST AND THEIR IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY

The Chair welcomed representatives from Sheffield University and Rotherham United Community Trust, Dr. Aneta Piekut, Prof. Gwilym Pryce, Dr. Zanib Rasool and Dr. Henry Staples, to give a presentation on an international piece of work centred around the social frontiers in Rotherham West and their impacts on the community.

The presentation and discussion provided information:-

- About the Project.
- Social Frontiers in Rotherham West (2011 Census).
- Case Study Data in Rotherham West.
- Physical Barriers overlapping Social frontiers.
- Social Frontiers in Rotherham West.
- Participated Created Map.
- Impacts on Safety, Mobility and Socialising.
- Scarcity of social and community infrastructure.
- The few places to meet and socialise.
- Tensions related to the scarcity of social and community infrastructure.
- Unequal distribution of resources.
- Lack of infrastructure for all communities.
- The importance and limits of community encouragers/leaders.
- Important of community encouragers/leaders.
- Support is not systematic.
- A vibrant and initiative taking community.
- Community organisations and initiatives in Rotherham West.
- Rotherham Plan 2025 – Building Stronger Communities.
- Blurring the Edges – Video.
- Recommendations.
- Organisations involved in the project.

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The Commission welcomed the presentation and information shared and recommended that the Blurring the Edges be shared and viewed more widely.

Discussion/comments were made and a question and answer session ensued and the following issues were raised and discussed:-

- Recognition of the physical barriers and cultural divisions.
- Impact and influence on decision making.
- Historic background to the work, communities involved and previous funding arrangements.
- Mismatch for funding communities.
- Reintegration of communities and links.
- Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Use of Ward budgets.
- Valuable research and ongoing work to do.
- Referral of the project to the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority.
- Infrastructure funding.
- Referral to Neighbourhoods.
- Alternative ways of bringing communities together.

The Chair thanked all those involved with the presentation and the awareness raised and recommended the video be shared more widely for viewing.

Resolved:- (1) That the presentation be received and the contents noted.

(2) That the project details be referred to the Mayoral Combined Authority, Cabinet Member for Social inclusion and officers in Neighbourhoods.

45. WORK PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to the Work Programme circulated with the agenda.

The Chair advised there were only two meetings left this municipal year and work was already ongoing with two outstanding reviews.

Reference was made to the recent Council Meeting where it was agreed that Improving Places would be recommended to look at undertaking a review into school crossing patrols and safety outside school gates. This would be an in depth piece of work that may not be scheduled within this municipal year.

The Work Programme as set out in the agenda papers detailed items scheduled for the February and March meetings which would be include in due course.

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Resolved:- (1) That the Work Programme be received and the contents noted.

(2) That consideration be given to scheduling the review into school crossing patrols and safety outside school gates at the earliest opportunity.

46. URGENT BUSINESS

The Chair advised that there were no urgent items of business requiring the Commission's consideration.

47. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

Resolved:- That the next meeting of the Improving Places Select Commission will take place on Tuesday, 6th February, 2024 commencing at 1.30 p.m.

Councillor Saghir Alam – Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Community Safety and Finance

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E-mail: clrsaghir.alam@rotherham.gov.uk

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Ref	Direct Line:	Please Ask For
SA/LH	01709 255959	Cllr Saghir Alam

25th January 2024

Mr Arshad Azam
Via email:

Dear Mr Azam

Questions raised at Improving Places – 12th December 2023

Thank you for the questions raised at Improving Places which I am pleased to provide a response as follows:

Question 1 – With regards to Section 2.2 of the public report could the Cabinet Member confirm the total amount Dignity had been fined for the financial year 2022/23? This appeared to be missing from the report and it would be in the public’s interests if this could be included to see what Dignity have been fined for the last financial year.

Dignity have been invoiced for £328,290 of contractual charges during the financial year 22/23.

Question 2 - In Section 2.3 of the report in the financial year 2021-22 Dignity were fined a total of £350k with allocation of £150k for various works. Could the Cabinet Member provide a breakdown of how the £150k had been spent and what additional funding was being sought? Reading the report it appeared that a meeting had been requested about additional funding, but it was difficult to decipher how this funding had been spent.

Additional Capital Funding was required due to the initial £148k Capital Works being based on initial survey estimates, with actual bids coming in much higher due to fluctuating market and material costs. This additional funding has now been approved and will be allocated as follows:

Project	Works to be undertaken	Costs
Maltby Cemetery Lych Gate	Restoration and repair of the historic lychgate at the entrance to the cemetery. Specialist contractors required. This work was completed in July 2023.	£25,160

Maltby Cemetery Perimeter	<p>Perimeter fence to be installed along the three internal boundaries of the cemetery to improve security and prevent unauthorised access from neighbouring properties.</p> <p>Work to commence 29th January 2024. Estimated completion date of 23rd February 2024.</p>	£47,038
Greasbrough Lane Cemetery Perimeter Fence	<p>Along the top perimeter of the cemetery that abuts the site of the old swimming baths, a perimeter fence is to be installed to improve security and restrict unauthorised access into the cemetery.</p> <p>Successful contractor appointed. Works to commence asap.</p>	£67,498
All Cemeteries	<p>Benches will be installed in each cemetery across the Borough – subject to consultation with the Friends Groups. Granite benches procured from Dignity are to be used to be in keeping with the rest of the cemetery furniture.</p> <p>Discussions being held with Dignity.</p>	£10,000 (per orig. est.)
East Herringthorpe Cemetery	<p>Installation of a Qibla stone in the Muslim section – this will be a compass design pointing to the Qibla.</p> <p>After recent discussions with the community, this project will be discontinued.</p>	£10,000 (per orig. est.)
Independent Expert Report	<p>Bereavement Services will commission an independent expert report on the bereavement facilities available in Rotherham. Plus, associated community work.</p> <p>Bereavements services are seeking a suitably qualified person to do this review as the initial independent reviewer advised they were no longer able to undertake the review.</p>	£20,000 (per orig. est.)
High Street Cemetery	<p>Assessment of retaining wall, installation of new perimeter fence, installation of new path, repairs to existing stone walls.</p> <p>Works commenced in October 2023. Final stages being completed with installation of new path.</p>	£53,590
	Contingency	£5,560
	Total	£238,846
	Additional spend	£90,846

Question 3 – Within the Dignity Report at Section 4.2 could the Cabinet Member provide a breakdown of how the £250k additional capital investment had been spent in the Muslim Section? Whilst there had been some additional investment to improve footpaths and resolve the water issues and to the land graves themselves, it would be interesting to see how funding had been spent. The way the report was written also appeared to suggest the Muslim Community had been given special treatment with additional spend. This did not seem fair so needed to be recorded accordingly.

Dignity's commitment to all in the community and the service provision is paramount. They act accordingly and would not wish to appear to favour one section over another. Investments and improvements are continually and fairly made across all sites. Kindly highlighted within the question, Dignity have invested in key areas within the Muslim section to raise standards for all and are committed to continuing this in 2024. Dignity would be happy to meet to discuss any concerns around the allocation of investments so far.

Question 4 – With regards to the Annual Report : SIP 4, the thirty-five year plan stated that Dignity have not produced this report yet the RAG status was green in the five year plan which was submitted to the Council on 1st October, 2023. Could the Cabinet Member please state why this had not been made available? The Leader had also written to the group represented and had confirmed this would be presented to Scrutiny to ensure it was reviewed.

At the time of the IPSC the 35 year strategic plan was still in draft form. This plan will be made publicly available by the end of January 2024, when Dignity will be able to share operational planning implications and answer questions from the community.

Question 5 – With regards to the Annual Report : SIP 9 this refers to talking with and liaising with faith leaders, but it does not go into detail as to what was being asked of those faith leaders or why the RAG status was amber.

SI9 clearly states “Improved working with Faith leaders to provide reasonable adjustments and engagements during religious festivals”. Dignity have successfully made contact with a number of religious leaders across Rotherham to draw up a calendar of religious festivals including any additional considerations that might be required during those periods. A further requirement of the SI is for Dignity to regularly attend the Faith Leaders periodic meetings chaired by Bereavement Services. This SI will turn green when this has been achieved.

With regards to the annual report and projects for 2024/25 within the Muslim section this replicates from a previous report with seventy-three vaults being installed. If the report is correct with the potential projects during 2024/25 on landscaping, there needed to be detail on how this was to be done.

This is duly noted, and Dignity would be happy to meet and discuss any concerns about ongoing improvement works that Dignity have planned for the Muslim section in 2024/25. They intend to work closely with the community during this time.

For clarification it appears operational matters were the responsibility of Dignity, but the Council was responsible for landscaping matters. The report does indicate the Council had approved the approach to be taken, so why was this the case and why was the Muslim Community not informed.

Dignity are responsible for all operational matters including any landscaping of the cemetery sites. In reference to the Muslim section at East Herringthorpe, the Council had been consulted over the time scales involved in the landscaping required there due to contractual charges being applied and not over the planning.

Question 6 – It was requested that identification of all graves be undertaken within the next year, along with improvements behind the gable wall for infant graves, improvements to the waterlogged graves which remained unresolved and for aesthetically refuse bins to be provided at the Crematorium and Cemetery. It was not a pleasant sight for visitors to see over full metal bins when driving into the site.

Dignity is committed to continual improvements within all our cemeteries and crematoria facilities. They have met on several occasions and been open with members of the community. In which they have discussed their phased plans to improve the site. Dignity welcomes all suggestions and are committed to the continuation of improvement works already implemented.

Question 7 – With reference to the Public Report for Annual Bereavement Services and particularly Section 2.3.2 whilst it was understood as to the history involved could the Cabinet Member, please provide clear timescales as to when the review for Islamic burials was likely to happen in 2024.

No date has yet been arranged so cannot indicate when it is likely to take place at this stage. Bereavements services are seeking a suitably qualified person to do this review as the initial independent reviewer advised they were no longer able to undertake the review.

Question 8 – With reference to the Five Year Service Development Plan and in particular the renovation of old office block whilst the Florist and Café were mentioned, would this also incorporate prayer facilities and a public toilet which was much needed.

In conjunction with the 5-year plan proposal. Dignity have also recently identified an alternative option, which is also being explored away from the old office block. It will better utilise the space available and one that will serve the communities of Rotherham that visit East Herringthorpe. It will also help negate any traffic flow issues. Initial discussions and concepts have been discussed with RMBC and we intend to move this forward given public backing. Public toilets are available during opening hours in the waiting room area of the Crematorium for all visitors.

Question 9 - The community were awaiting on the annexe to the graveyard and approval from Planning, but asked if there was a back up plan if approval was not given as the graveyard was quickly running out of space for burials and what immediate action could be taken as there was no alternative.

Dignity's 35 Year Strategic Plan and subsequent operational considerations, which will be made publicly available at the end of January, will address these concerns.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Yours sincerely



Cllr Saghir Alam OBE
Boston Castle Ward
Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Community Safety and Finance

Public Report
Improving Places Select Commission

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Improving Places Select Commission - 06 February 2024

Report Title

IPSC Rotherham Markets & Library Redevelopment Update

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

No

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Paul Woodcock, Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment

Report Author(s)

James Green, Regeneration & Development Manager

james.green@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide or Boston Castle

Boston Castle

Report Summary

This report provides an update on the response to the recommendations from the Improving Places Select Commission spotlight review of Rotherham Markets carried out during 2022. The review examined the recovery and regeneration of the markets in Rotherham Town Centre.

The initial summary of findings and recommendations from the review were presented to Cabinet on the 19 December 2022 and subsequently to 13 February 2023 Cabinet detailing the response to the recommendations.

Recommendations

1. That the progress of the Rotherham Markets & Library redevelopment is noted and the update to the Scrutiny Review Recommendations – Markets: Engagement and Recovery provided in Appendix 1, is considered.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 Update on IPSC Recommendations

Appendix 2 Initial Equality Screening Assessment Markets and Library (Part A)

Appendix 3 Equality Analysis Form Markets and Library (Part B)

Appendix 4 Carbon Impact Assessment - Markets and Library_ref CIA 220

Background Papers

Rotherham Markets & Library Redevelopment: [Cabinet Report 18 December 2023](#)

Rotherham Markets & Library Redevelopment: [Cabinet Report 07 August 2023](#)

Rotherham Markets & Library Redevelopment: [Scrutiny Board 02 August 2023](#)

Rotherham Markets & Library Redevelopment: [Cabinet Report 13 February 2023, Cabinet response to the Scrutiny Review Recommendations – Markets: Engagement and Recovery](#)

[19 December 2022 Cabinet - Scrutiny Review Recommendations – Markets: Engagement and Recovery](#)

[12 October 2022 – Overview and Management Scrutiny Board - Scrutiny Review Recommendations – Markets: Engagement and Recovery](#)

[07 June 2022 Scrutiny Review Recommendations - Markets: Engagement and Recovery](#)

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

Council Approval Required
No

Exempt from the Press and Public
No

IPSC Rotherham Markets & Library Redevelopment Update

1. Background

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the response to the recommendations from the Improving Places Select Commission (IPSC) Spotlight Review of Rotherham Markets agreed by the Improving Places Select Commission on 7 June 2022. The Spotlight Review examined the recovery and regeneration of the markets in Rotherham Town Centre, post pandemic.
- 1.2 At the time of the review Members undertook a site visit to tour the Markets Complex before a discussion with officers and other stakeholders regarding the current situation facing the Markets and the proposals for their redevelopment.
- 1.3 During the site visit and discussions IPSC Members identified the Market rules and regulations as an area they wished to review in greater detail. A subsequent meeting was held on 19 July 2022 to consider opportunities to update and simplify the rules and regulations.
- 1.4 The Cabinet Report prepared in December 2022 accepted the recommendations from the Improving Places Select Commission spotlight review of Rotherham Markets carried out during 2022. A further report presented to Cabinet in February 2023 outlined the response to these recommendations.
- 1.5 On 07 August 2023 a Cabinet report detailed the proposed redevelopment of the Rotherham Markets Complex and new Library, including an update on progress to date, a summary of the proposals, delivery programme, and sequencing. The report also sought authority to award an enabling works contract. Enabling works on site commenced in September 2023.
- 1.6 On 18 December 2023 Cabinet approved a further report providing an update on progress and proposals for the redevelopment of the Rotherham Markets complex. The report also outlined and sought approval to proceed to the next phase of development and delivery of the project.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 Appendix 1 sets out the Improving Places Select Commission's recommendations and an update on the response initially provided in February 2023.
- 2.2 The recommendations from the IPSC are:
 - a) That face-to-face consultations and clear communication be prioritised in all interactions with vendors and traders.
 - b) That the service consult case studies and resources available in the libraries of NABMA and NMTF to inform the redevelopment of Rotherham markets.
 - c) That the service re-evaluates the support offer for new vendors, in consultation with the NABMA and NMTF, with a view to encouraging

more new vendors to continue trading beyond the six-month introductory period.

- d) In view of relevant expert advice in respect of sustaining a market during redevelopment works, that retaining traders through the redevelopment phase be considered top priority.
- e) That any redesign of markets spaces duly considers usability and aesthetics, consulting market research to optimise spaces for inclusiveness and accessibility, and to make the offer especially attractive to students and young people.
- f) That consideration be given to how the redesign and operation of the markets may best cater to the needs and interests of younger generations by strengthening links with Rotherham College, North Notts College and Dearne Valley College (RNN Group) student populations and extending opportunities to new entrepreneurs through the Young Traders Scheme.
- g) Recognising that the town centre markets represent a unique and distinct community of buyers and sellers with its own accompanying needs and character, that consideration be given to the ongoing management resource required to sustain the markets economy successfully over the long term.
- h) That consideration be given to design and development choices that would help the markets to incorporate cashless, up-to-date approaches to commerce that their potential customers expect.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 Option 1 – That the progress of the Rotherham Markets & Library redevelopment is noted and the update to the Scrutiny Review Recommendations – Markets: Engagement and Recovery provided in Appendix 1, is considered. (Recommended option).

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 Throughout the entire design period, extensive engagement has been undertaken on emerging proposals with a wide range of stakeholders as detailed further in the August 2023 Cabinet paper and associated Appendices.
- 4.2 Engagement with businesses operating within the Markets complex will continue through the redevelopment period. Acknowledging this challenging and disruptive period, the Council has already approved a rent concession (as agreed as in the March 2023 budget report) of 50% for impacted businesses that was implemented from August 2023.
- 4.3 The successful redevelopment and continued operation of Rotherham Markets is inextricably linked to implications for a number of key partners, most notably the RNN Group located adjacent to the site at Eastwood Lane. The Council are working closely with RNN and have already established links to be further developed between the Markets, the College and its students.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

5.1 This report is an update and therefore no decisions are involved.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations contained in this report.

6.2 As an update report, there are no direct procurement implications arising from the recommendations detailed.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

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

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

8.1 If a review of the Management resource is required then this should be in line with RMBC policy and procedures.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

9.1 There are no direct implications arising from this report.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 Equalities Screening Form (Part A) and Analysis (Part B) are included at Appendices 2 and 3 respectively.

10.2 The Market is intended to provide an inclusive, safe and welcoming environment for all users. It is recognised that the building structure and mechanical services are aging and in need of investment to provide services suitable for users.

10.3 Consultation has been carried out with stakeholders and information from those consultations has been and will continue to be used to inform the redevelopment designs and future operations.

11. Implications for CO₂ Emissions and Climate Change

11.1 There are no direct implications arising from this report. Carbon Impact Assessment attached at Appendix 4.

12. Implications for Partners

12.1 The successful redevelopment and continued operation of Rotherham Markets is inextricably linked to implications for a number of key partners, most notably the RNN Group located adjacent to the site at Eastwood Lane. The Council are working closely with RNN and have already established

links to be further developed between the Markets, the College and its students.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 The future of the Markets is heavily linked with the successful redevelopment. **Mitigation** – the redevelopment is being led by RIDO and overseen by the Markets Board. Relevant issues raised by the IPSC will be fed into this process.

13.2 Already difficult trading conditions are made more difficult/complicated by the impact of the redevelopment. **Mitigation** – A support package for traders, i.e. 50% rent concessions, was developed and rolled out in Summer 2023. The aim of the redeveloped Markets is to have a more attractive proposition for both customers and traders.

14. Accountable Officer(s)

Paul Woodcock, Strategic Director, Regeneration & Environment

Simon Moss, Assistant Director, Planning Regeneration and Transport

Simeon Leach, Economic Strategy and Partnerships Manager

Tim O'Connell, Head of Economic Development

Report Author: James Green, Regeneration & Development Manager

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

			The main works contractor appointed to help finalise designs, programming and implementation of the redevelopment, Henry Boot Construction Ltd, has extensive experience in Market development work and is applying this experience to inform the development proposals in Rotherham.		
c) That the service re-evaluate the support offer for new vendors, in consultation with the NABMA and NMTF, with a view to encouraging more new vendors to continue trading beyond the six-month introductory period.	Accepted	<p>All new traders are now offered an initial meeting and follow up sessions with RiDO Business Support Advisors who can deliver one-to-one mentoring to all new businesses in the Markets, to help them develop a financially sustainable business and prepare for the move to full rent payments.</p> <p>To address the disruption associated with the redevelopment a support package of 50% rent concessions across the Markets portfolio was implemented in Summer 2023 which extends the financial support offer to assist new traders to establish a viable business beyond the six-month introductory period.</p>	Tim O'Connell, Head of Economic Development Tim O'Connell, Head of Economic Development in consultation with Finance	Ongoing Completed in Q2 2023/2024	
d) In view of relevant expert advice in respect of sustaining a market during redevelopment works, that retaining traders through the redevelopment phase be considered top priority.	Accepted	<p>As the economic and social heart of the town centre, supporting a substantial number of local small scale independent retailers and local jobs, the Council's objective is to enhance existing facilities to create a key hub for the local community, providing space to shop, meet and relax, for both local residents and visitors. Proposed works would create a modern, efficient facility that reflects its primary purpose to serve as a place for small business owners to trade and engage with customers, whilst also including elements of flexible space, suitable for easy adaptation to host temporary and changing uses.</p> <p>Retaining traders throughout the redevelopment process has been a key consideration throughout the planning and design period. A further development of the temporary market space proposal is being undertaken to relocate the indoor market traders into the temporary space during the redevelopment of the indoor market. The general approach has now been fundamentally altered to accommodate a temporary market option rather than works being undertaken with traders in situ. This change was made following feedback from traders that a temporary market would be preferable as a way of sustaining trade. This change in approach was presented to Market Traders in the sessions undertaken in February and March 2023 and was generally well received and supported.</p> <p>The Council has also prepared and implemented a support package to traders in the form of 50% rent concession, across the entire Markets portfolio, to help mitigate expected impacts throughout the construction period. This is specifically aimed at retaining traders by reducing overheads during a period of disruption.</p> <p>The relocation of the Outdoor Covered Market (OCM) activities to the street in November 2023, which was necessitated by the start of the enabling works in September 2023, was supported through communications via corporate channels to reach out to the market customers and ensure their awareness of the new locations for Markets activities. An example of a news release can be viewed online at https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/news/article/913/relocation-of-rotherham-outdoor-market</p> <p>An ongoing marketing campaign has been established to address the Indoor Covered Market (ICM) traders' concerns around footfall since the OCM relocation to the street. This includes new signage, advertisements, and social media posts to promote all Indoor Market businesses. A double-page feature to promote market activities is also included in the bi-monthly Around Town magazine. The current focus is on supporting indoor market traders with each edition promoting a different theme.</p> <p>A well-received social media campaign focusing on individual traders was delivered in the run up the Christmas.</p>	Tim O'Connell, Head of Economic Development	On-going Completed in Q2 2023/2024 Completed: November 2023 On-going	
e) That any redesign of markets spaces duly consider usability and aesthetics,	Accepted	The need to address existing accessibility issues has been identified early in the design process and included as a key component in the design brief prepared and shared with the external design team.	Tim O'Connell, Head of	Ongoing	

	consulting market research to optimise spaces for inclusiveness and accessibility, and to make the offer especially attractive to students and young people.		<p>The brief identified a need to not only improve the accessibility of entrances to the complex, but also movement and useability throughout the complex itself. Further information on how the redevelopment will address equality matters is provided in the December 2023 Cabinet Report (Appendix 4 Part B Equality Analysis Form Markets & Library).</p> <p>One of the examples of the improved accessibility is the current redesign proposal for Market Square which, correspondingly, aims at improving the accessibility of the main entrance to the Markets.</p> <p>Rotherham College and young people are highlighted as key stakeholders in the 'Markets Consultation Strategy' document. Early engagement has taken place with these stakeholders at the concept design stage and further engagement has continued at key stages throughout the design period.</p> <p>The design of the proposed Market Gardens element of the redevelopment, which is the area adjacent to Rotherham College buildings, will incorporate a range of improved accesses and links to the wider complex, as well as pleasant green space areas to dwell. The provision of the new 'Food Hub' is also intended to improve the attractiveness and encourage more students and young people to access of the wider complex. These areas have been designed following engagement exercises to promote cohesion between the Markets and the Library and to create a welcoming and flexible space conducive to social interaction.</p>	Economic Development	
f)	That consideration be given to how the redesign and operation of the markets may best cater to the needs and interests of younger generations by strengthening links with Rotherham College, North Notts College and Dearne Valley College (RNN Group) student populations and extending opportunities to new entrepreneurs through the Young Traders Scheme.	Accepted	<p>Young people, especially from the RNN town centre College site, have been identified as essential stakeholders for the sustainable success of the redeveloped Markets. Increasing their use of the building as both customers and tenants is being pursued in a number of ways, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opening up the rear of the Markets through demolition of the former Charter Arms and its replacement with quality public realm. This will open up both the view and access to the Markets for students. - College courses that can tap into the activities that will take place during the redevelopment. i.e. courses in construction, marketing, etc. - Discussions are taking place with the College about a potential presence in the Food Court when redevelopment is complete. <p>Regular meetings are held with RNN and the Markets redevelopment is a standing item on the agenda. This engagement with RNN Group has highlighted a number of key considerations during the construction phase, such as keeping work and noise to a minimum opposite the College in Fresher's Week and exam periods with suitable actions implemented. The ongoing engagement with RNN also includes discussions about programmes for young traders to be designed in the lead up to the completion of the construction phase.</p>	Tim O'Connell, Head of Economic Development	On-going
g)	Recognising that the Town Centre markets represent a unique and distinct community of buyers and sellers with its own accompanying needs and character, that consideration be given to the ongoing management resource required to sustain the markets economy successfully over the long term.	Accepted	<p>The feasibility of a number of new Markets (for example Farmers' Markets, etc.) are being explored alongside the existing markets in the outdoor covered area and on the street, building on the success of current provision such as the Tuesday Street Market and the Bazaar.</p> <p>The redevelopment work will provide new equipment and an improved electricity supply, which is vital to attract some markets, especially food, to come to Rotherham.</p> <p>Staffing within the markets is continually reviewed to ensure it meets the operational needs of the market during the redevelopment and subsequently the operation of the finished building. Training needs for staff are identified through the PDR process and equipment is replaced as needed to ensure it is fit for purpose (for example new gazebos for the Outdoor Covered Market and Street Market).</p>	Dean Thurlow, Markets Service Manager and Simeon Leach, Economic Strategy and Partnerships Manager	On-going
h)	That consideration be given to design and development choices that would help the markets to incorporate cashless, up-to-	Accepted	A digital "change" project identified various improvements to provide a more digital and cashless service offer, for the Markets. However, the current IT infrastructure has made implementation of parts	Dean Thurlow, Markets Service Manager	On-going + 2025/26 for new IT network

	<p>date approaches to commerce that their potential customers expect.</p>	<p>of this problematic. An improved IT network is part of the redevelopment project and will allow these changes to be implemented.</p> <p>Since the relocation onto the street for OCM activities, the Market Service has implemented a cashless rent collection. An increasing number of Indoor Market tenants are now paying by direct debit which is being actively encouraged by all Market Service staff.</p> <p>Further implementation is reliant on the improved connectivity that will be delivered through the redevelopment.</p>		
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Appendix 2

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: Rotherham Markets and Library Redevelopment	
Directorate: Regeneration and Environment	Service area: Markets and Libraries Boston Castle
Lead person: James Green	Contact number: 01709 255837
Is this a:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Strategy / Policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Service / Function
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	
If other, please specify Renovation and redevelopment of Rotherham Markets, relocation of the Central Library and improvement works to the surrounding public realm.	

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

Redevelopment and repurposing of the Rotherham Markets Complex, new Central Library relocation and public realm improvements, delivering key components of the

Rotherham Town Centre Masterplan 2017.

Previous public and stakeholder consultation for the Town Centre Masterplan and the Cultural Strategy identified a need to improve the cultural and leisure offer within Rotherham town centre. This involves improving the proximity and connectivity between key amenities, upgrading the quality of the built environment and delivering inclusive access to the different facilities on offer. The scheme, together with the Forge Island development, will regenerate the town centre, creating new economic opportunities through well designed, lower carbon and inclusive spaces. This will have spill over effects for the wider town.

Bringing together the library, markets, food hall, citizens advice service and gallery/ event spaces on one site will provide the potential to increase footfall and in turn help support and sustain the future of the library service and the market. It will also provide the opportunity for the library and markets to work closely together in order deliver a more compelling offer to a wider range of residents and visitors.

The aim of the scheme is to provide a safe, welcoming and accessible environment freely open to all which encourages participation, creativity and mutual learning and support. This will be enhanced through more collaborative working internally and externally with partners and services such as the markets, colleges, local schools, voluntary organisations, to ensure that all needs are captured.

3. Relevance to equality and diversity

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

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

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

Questions	Yes	No
Could the proposal have implications regarding the accessibility of services to the whole or wider community? <i>(Be mindful that this is not just about numbers. A potential to affect a small number of people in a significant way is as important)</i>	X	
Could the proposal affect service users? <i>(Be mindful that this is not just about numbers. A potential to affect a small number of people in a significant way is as important)</i>	X	
Has there been or is there likely to be an impact on an individual or group with protected characteristics? <i>(Consider potential discrimination, harassment or victimisation of individuals with protected characteristics)</i>		X
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns regarding	X	

the proposal? <i>(It is important that the Council is transparent and consultation is carried out with members of the public to help mitigate future challenge)</i>		
Could the proposal affect how the Council’s services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom? <i>(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from commissioning or procurement)</i>		X
Could the proposal affect the Council’s workforce or employment practices? <i>(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from your HR business partner)</i>		X
If you have answered no to all the questions above, please explain the reason		

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

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

4. Considering the impact on equality and diversity

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

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

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

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

The aim of the project is to increase use of the markets, library, the public realm and the wider town centre, to create accessible, thriving spaces through inclusive, community-led facilities. Throughout the entire design period, extensive engagement has been undertaken on emerging proposals with a wide range of stakeholders.

Following an 18-month programme of consultation and engagement, the Library Strategy 2021 – 2026 was adopted by the Council on 11th November, 2020. A key priority detailed within the Strategy was to create a new library for the town centre. Following this a design brief was created through information collected by RMBC’s libraries team on current uses, and ways to improve the service so that more people can benefit from the services on offer.

The project is being designed with the service users fully in mind, through assessing and

accommodating wherever possible, the requirements of different groups.

For the design of the markets, extensive consultation has been undertaken with businesses currently operating and trading from within the Markets complex itself (see Appendix 1).

Engagement with businesses operating within the Markets complex will continue through the redevelopment period with a range of relocations, both temporary and permanent, required to facilitate the planned works. Acknowledging this challenging and disruptive period, the Council has already approved a rent concession of 50% for market traders to be implemented from the Summer of 2023 and to be continued throughout the construction programmes duration.

- **Key findings**

Despite the library at Riverside House delivering a good service, highly-valued by existing customers, borrowing and physical visits never recovered following the transfer of location from Walker Place in 2012. The relocation resulted in an immediate 31% reduction in the number of annual visits to the central library. Relocation to be part of a wider cultural hub will create more of a destination, with better public transport links, and walking and cycling routes. Schools and a number of community groups are located in the Eastwood area, which is convenient for the new site.

The Council's Improving Places Select Commission undertook a review of Rotherham Markets and the emerging redevelopment proposals as reported at the meeting held 07 June 2022. A key finding of this was:

That any re-design of markets spaces duly consider usability and aesthetics, availing market research to optimise spaces for inclusiveness and accessibility, and to make the offer especially attractive to students and young people.

For both services the aim is to provide spaces for different groups to meet, fostering a sense of community. There will be opportunities to host a range of events in the new facilities. This will positively benefit community cohesion within the town centre.

- **Actions**

Our key action is to undertake a Part B Equality Analysis Form which will consider the following:

- Further consultation with traders and community groups around the design of spaces and sequencing of construction works.
- Make reasonable adjustments to the design of the building and public realm in line with the Equality Act, and Part M of Building Regs.
- Disabled access during construction process – maintaining clear pathways and keeping noise and disturbance to a minimum

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On completion, marketing of the facilities and dissemination of information to be fully accessible. • Maintain the rent concession throughout the construction phase, to encourage businesses to stay. • Request Equal Opportunities statements from all partners (ie Developer, Construction Firm) 	
Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	09/06/23
Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	30/06/23
Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title):	James Green Regeneration and Development Manager

5. Governance, ownership and approval

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

Name	Job title	Date
Tim O'Connell	Service Manager, RIDO	11/05/23

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	09/05/23
Report title and date	
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	15/05/23

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Appendix 3

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: Rotherham Markets and Library Redevelopment	
Date of Equality Analysis (EA): 10/07/23	
Directorate: R&E	Service area: RiDO
Lead Manager: James Green	Contact number: 01709 255837
Is this a: <input type="checkbox"/> Strategy / Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Service / Function <input type="checkbox"/> Other	
If other, please specify	

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

Name	Organisation	Role (e.g., service user, managers, service specialist)
James Green	RiDO	Regeneration & Development Manager
Eleanor Bainbridge	RiDO	Project Manager
Tanya Shvab	RiDO	Project Officer

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, other groups or stakeholder/s e.g., service users, employees, partners, members, suppliers etc.)

Redevelopment and repurposing of the Rotherham Markets Complex, new Central Library relocation and public realm improvements, delivering key components of the Rotherham Town Centre Masterplan 2017.

Previous public and stakeholder consultation for the Town Centre Masterplan and the Cultural Strategy identified a need to improve the cultural and leisure offer within Rotherham town centre. This involves improving the proximity and connectivity between key amenities, upgrading the quality of the built environment and delivering inclusive access to the different facilities on offer. The scheme, together with the Forge Island development, will regenerate the town centre, creating new economic opportunities through well designed, lower carbon and inclusive spaces. This will have spill over effects for the wider town.

Bringing together the library, markets, food hall, citizens advice service and gallery/ event spaces on one site will provide the potential to increase footfall and in turn help support and sustain the future of the library service and the market. It will also provide the opportunity for the library and markets to work closely together in order deliver a more compelling offer to a wider range of residents and visitors.

The aim of the scheme is to provide a safe, welcoming and accessible environment freely open to all which encourages participation, creativity and mutual learning and support. This will be enhanced through more collaborative working internally and externally with partners and services such as the markets, colleges, local schools, voluntary organisations, to ensure that all needs are captured.

Key Stakeholders are:

- Market Traders (both indoor and outdoor)
 - NMTF Committee
- Market Customers

- Library Service Users
- Markets Staff (Council employees)
- Library Staff (Council employees)
- Neighbouring Businesses (including Council leaseholders)
- Facilities Management
 - RMBC Staff

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

Contextual information from a range of sources, including the 2011 and 2021 Census, [Population – Rotherham Data Hub](#) and the Council Plan consultation, is provided below.

Population

- Between the last two censuses (held in 2011 and 2021), the population of Rotherham increased by 3.3%, from around 257,300 in 2011 to around 265,800 in 2021.
- The population is ageing; People aged 65 years or over comprise 19.6% of Rotherham's population, which is a higher proportion than 18.6% across England and Wales.
- Rotherham's BAME population is concentrated in the inner areas of the town whilst the outer areas were 96% White British in 2011. 42% of BAME residents live in areas that are amongst the 10% most deprived in the country and for some groups the figure is higher. This compares with the Borough average of 19.5%.
- The age and gender profile of the town centre population is set out below:

Age range	Male	Female	TOTAL
0-15	248	221	469
16-29	380	303	683
30-44	464	280	744
45-64	364	159	523
65+	124	119	243
All Ages	1,580	1,082	2,662

Health and Wellbeing

- The percentage of people who identified as being disabled and limited a lot in Rotherham decreased by 2.10% between 2011 (12% 29,080) and 2021 (9.9%, 26,115). In 2021, 11.40% (30,065) were identified as being disabled and limited a little, compared with 11.20% (27,520) in 2011. In England, the percentage of people who identified as being disabled and limited a lot was 2.40% lower than Rotherham. Overall, the percentage of disabled residents, both limited a lot and a little was lower in England (17.70%) than in Rotherham (21.30%), with a difference of 3.6%.
- In the Council Plan consultation, in response to the question on what would have the biggest positive impact on wellbeing and quality of life, men (30%) and those without a disability (27%) were more likely to state environmental improvements

(23% overall), while more women and those with a disability stated, 'More things to do in the community' (16% women, 22% with disability, 13% overall).

Economy

- Rotherham has a polarised geography of deprivation and affluence with the most deprived communities concentrated in the central area whilst the most affluent areas are to the south, although the overall pattern is complex.
- In the consultation for the Council Plan, 45% of respondents stated there were not enough job opportunities in their area, as opposed to 19% who stated there were enough. Those with no disabilities were more likely to state there were enough job opportunities in their area (21%) than those with disabilities (15%), with female respondents more likely to be unsure about the opportunities (37%), than men (32%).

Consultation

The Town Centre Masterplan has been subject to wide consultation with business and stakeholder groups. A public event was held in All Saint's Square on 28th June 2017 attended by 75 people over the course of the day. Feedback was wide ranging but there was a clear desire to see improvements in the town centre including a stronger leisure offer to serve the needs of local people who currently needed to travel to other centres to access facilities. The consultation also highlighted safety and the management of anti-social behaviour as important priorities.

Further consultation included a meeting with Rotherham Older People's Forum at Talbot Lane Methodist Church which highlighted a need for new developments to be older person friendly, to include more seating with and provide easy level access wherever possible and with good connections to public transport. Consultation with the Looked After Children's Council focused on the need for things to do in the town centre and the importance of creating a safe environment. The consultation emphasised a cinema as being an important attraction that is missing from the town centre offer for young people.

Rotherham Sight and Sound group were consulted on public realm proposals in the town centre on 16th January 2020. The group highlighted the importance of design in ensuring public spaces are accessible including the choice of materials, surface finishes, improved lighting and accessible seating.

Our Rotherham, Our Borough consultation and engagement to inform the new Council Plan took place from 9th August to 19th September 2021 to seek the views of Rotherham residents and other local stakeholders. The consultation included focused groups, short interactions, online and postal survey and Rotherham Show, with over 1,300 interactions taking place in total across all methods of engagement.

The short interactions and focus groups aimed to make up some of the engagement gaps, by engaging stakeholders working with some of the groups whose views were underrepresented in the survey, and those sharing protected characteristics.

Throughout the whole consultation and engagement, a common theme was a desire to see Rotherham town centre vibrant, flourishing, clean, safe and attractive to all. There

were many suggestions as to how this may be achieved including incentives such as free parking, reduced rents to encourage a wide range of shops and businesses, improved safety and security measures in certain areas, plus investments made to attract families with children, and young people into the town centre.

Linking to messages concerned with the town centre, retaining business and encouraging trade and industry into the area, were responses concerned with local jobs for local people. Street scene matters were also frequently mentioned for the town centre and across the borough.

Many expressed a desire for a wider range of “decent” shops, more activities for families with young children, and greater accessibility for disabled and those with sensory impairments.

Of the children and young people consulted, young people wished for Rotherham town centre to be a place that people want to visit, for there to be more shops, activities, and places for young people to go. They also spoke about wanting to feel safe and secure in the town centre.

Results from the Rotherham Residents Survey comprising a sample of 503 adults who were polled between 8th and 22nd June 2021 showed that 24 per cent of respondents felt ‘very optimistic’ or ‘fairly optimistic’ about the future of Rotherham town centre (as they did about the future of the wider borough. Forty-one per cent of respondents were not optimistic at all about the town centre, slightly more than in the previous survey. People aged 25-34 years were most likely not to be optimistic at all, whilst young people aged 18-24 years were the most optimistic. Low skilled workers were notably more optimistic than professional and managerial workers.

Specific Library and Markets Consultation

The aim of the project is to increase use of the markets, library, the public realm and the wider town centre, to create accessible, thriving spaces through inclusive, community-led facilities. Throughout the entire design period, extensive engagement has been undertaken on emerging proposals with a wide range of stakeholders.

Following an 18-month programme of consultation and engagement, the Library Strategy 2021 – 2026 was adopted by the Council on 11th November 2020. A key priority detailed within the Strategy was to create a new library for the town centre. Following this a design brief was created through information collected by RMBC’s libraries team on current uses, and ways to improve the service so that more people can benefit from the services on offer.

The project is being designed with the service users fully in mind, through assessing and accommodating wherever possible, the requirements of different groups.

For the design of the markets, extensive consultation has been undertaken with businesses currently operating and trading from within the Markets complex itself.

Engagement with businesses operating within the Markets complex will continue through the redevelopment period with a range of relocations, both temporary and permanent,

required to facilitate the planned works. Acknowledging this challenging and disruptive period, the Council has already approved a rent concession of 50% for market traders to be implemented from the Summer of 2023 and to be continued throughout the construction programmes duration.

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

No- All groups responded, and a wide selection of views gathered. Where individual market traders have been unresponsive to consultation events we have followed-up one-on-one to gather their views and respond to any concerns.

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

As the Markets/ Library complex is a run by Council, service delivery is continually monitored.

The Council plans to recommission an annual Town Centre survey, to monitor activity including market use and access concerns

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

29/05/2018-15/06/18 Indoor Market exhibition

Rotherham Markets: Past, Present and Future Exhibition comments

- Reduce the rents and get more people to trade
- Better signage and opening up the front
- More Parking
- Visible security
- Proper lighting
- Repair and improve the roof
- Changing spaces needed with adequate room
- Free short stay vehicle access – disability and collection
- Opening times to reflect modern needs – i.e., opening later
- Encouragement of e-business – purchase via web
- Public food court
- Provide other reasons to visit i.e., sports centre, health centre, learning and education uses.
- School stalls and community stalls given for free, pop-up style
- Integration of postal service facility for businesses
- More choice of stalls
- New flooring, air conditioning
- More and improved access to top level
- Meeting places
- Market should be more accessible for everyone, the main entrance could be easier as it is quite a

	<p>slope, perhaps some kind of escalator which could accommodate wheelchairs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More events • Modernise stalls, better entertainment • Keep lower indoor market, concentrate on that, and make street market twice weekly, Tuesday and Saturday. <p>06/11/2019- Town Centre - Student Focus Group Markets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food hall with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ a variety of foods ○ healthier options ○ street food ○ cultural foods ○ Arcades and games • More stalls choice • More green spaces • Playgroup (for parents to leave kids as they shop) • Improvements to crossing from college (Eastwood Bldg) to markets • Events – festivals • Better social area – USB points • Breakfast places – open earlier? • Wi-Fi <p>06/11/2023- Occupants of the RAIN Building – Carer’s Corner, NHS Mental Health, Credit Union</p> <p>Officers presented the latest options,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • option 1 two individual buildings, larger space available for both Library and Community Hub • option 2 adjoining buildings, smaller space available for both Library and Community Hub <p>Feedback on design options presented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The smaller building will not have enough space to accommodate all of the services currently in the RAIN Building and so would likely only hold the Citizens Advice Rotherham. • Issue would then be where to accommodate the displaced services. • The current set up has an operational requirement for 15 of the small meeting rooms to deliver the services offered. • There is no room for growth, something they have aspirations for in the future. • Security/health & safety issues raised with the design, they did not approve of having meeting
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	<p>rooms on a floor where there is no reception or office staff presence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is not essential for the Credit Union to have their own reception, a shared reception for the building would work. • All tenants will require a street presence regarding signage. <p>Option 1 is the preferred option.</p> <p>09/03/2020 and 10/03/20 – Market Traders with Design Team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Queries raised on the level of rent that will be expected. Comment made that rents need to be competitive. • Traders suggested a temporary market on the street. • Discussion on food ensued as to whether it should be distributed throughout units or in one location, such as an oasis. • Officers advised of the intention to connect the indoor and outdoor market with a food court area for seating. • Traders queried whether there would be a reduced number of stalls? Officers advised that they should be of similar number. • Traders raised the issue of inconvenience during the course of the works, that they would incur costs. • Traders raised the issue of social media and the absence of any presence of the market on social media. Also, social media gave an adverse impression of the town centre out of hours, providing adverse press. • Traders suggested that young people were scared to come into the town centre and this needs to be addressed by RMBC. • Traders identified, and attendees agreed, that the library had been relocated to the wrong place out of the town centre, and that the relocation into the town centre and thus it's inclusion in the scheme was understandable. <p>03/09/2021 - 05/09/2021- Gazebo at Rotherham Show (approx. 750 people across 3 days). Public information event to showcase the updated markets redevelopment plans.</p> <p>01/10/2021 – 05/10/2021 Indoor Market Stall public information event</p>
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	<p>(Approx. 200 people reached)</p> <p>09/03/2021 and 10/03/21 – Market Traders with Design Team</p> <p>Public information event to showcase the updated redevelopment plans.</p> <p>19/10/2021 and 21/10/21 – Market Traders with Design Team Workshops</p> <p>Key questions raised by traders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will there be a financial package available for traders while works are ongoing? Will be reflected in leases and rent reductions • What will happen to the food retailers on the ground floor? The food retailers will be put together in one area. Will speak to each individually • What sizes will the stalls be, will they provide market dividers to split the units up and allow stock display? To be decided • Can the empty space in the markets be used to build the new stalls and traders move into and continue trading? • Will there be options to trade elsewhere? • Will storage of goods be provided? • Will the lifts and stairs remain in the same place? • Will the permitter units be redeveloped? • Will the fronts and signage change for everyone? • If cladding is being added will the markets be lit better? <p>06/06/22-20/06/22 – Online survey with 295 responses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 125 comments made which included: feeling safe and secure is priority, more free parking, additional seating, better access to library, more shops, better food offer, study space in library, more themed markets and events <p>14/06/22-16/06/22 – On-street consultation</p> <p>(approx. 200 attended)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fruit trees should be planted • Charge for toilets to reduce ASB • More events
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gallery exhibition space would be useful to work with the college <p>03/09/22-04/09/22 – Gazebo at Rotherham Show to share information and respond to queries Over 1,000 people attended</p> <p>23/02/23 and 28/02/23 – Indoor Market Traders Consultation</p> <p><i>What about specific requirements for i.e., cafes</i> Council will support businesses moving and plans will be put in place for specific businesses like cafes, food outlets and butchers etc. including water and drainage etc.</p> <p><i>On the moving day, how will you compensate businesses?</i> Can discuss the move individually with businesses and look at specific details</p> <p><i>What will happen with the trader's car park?</i> Council looking to put temporary arrangements in place for parking as it will be out of action for a while. Will maintain loading and access for traders though</p> <p><i>Will there be advertising to let the public know about the relocation?</i> Marketing will be undertaken including signage, social media and adverts etc.</p> <p><i>Footfall already falling off now</i> <i>Some traders not happy as some people are paying £50 per week. Everyone should pay the same.</i> Officers clarified that all traders will get access to the 50% off rent deal, not including existing concessions.</p> <p><i>When the redevelopment is finished, will the rents increase?</i> No plans to. Intention is to keep the same as they are currently.</p> <p>07/03/23, 17/03/23 and 11/04/23, 19/04/23 – One-on-one meetings with stall holders</p> <p>36 businesses attended</p> <p>07/06/23, 12-13/06/23 – visits to market units: 66 stalls covered, spoke to 40 traders</p>
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Engagement undertaken with staff (date and group(s) consulted and key findings)	Markets and Libraries Service staff have been key stakeholders in the decision-making process throughout the development of this project, including at the various Working Groups and the Markets Board.
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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)

Careful consideration has been given to the needs of a broad range of people including those with protected characteristics who will use the Markets/ Library for purposes outlined below to ensure that the proposed development promotes social inclusion:

- Customers for the Markets
- User-groups for the library
- Visitors using the public realm
- Markets and Library staff
- People using the neighbouring commercial units and wider town centre.

Feedback from consultations has been considered by the design team and aspects of the design have been developed in response to these considerations to ensure that all people have free access to use the scheme:

- Creation of accessible routes to all of the different functions of the development, suitable for all pedestrians, wheelchair users and people with prams or buggies.
- Accessible routes around the site during construction wherever possible.
- Providing pictogram signs that reinforce the routes through the site for people with difficulties in reading text
- Providing appropriate lighting, recognised tactile surfacing and sufficient contrast between floor and wall surfaces for people with visual acuity difficulties

In response to specific concerns raised by existing Market Traders:

- Maintain affordable rents to retain existing Market Traders and protect their livelihoods.
- Ensure car parking is maintained in a safe, well-lit area
- Improve welfare facilities for Traders

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

The project is intended to create an inclusive, safe and welcoming environment for all users of the space. The project intends to bring together diverse groups within the community and provide spaces for exchange.

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

The project will address accessibility concerns with the current site, where access ramps are non-compliant with building regs.

The Indoor Market complex is currently in a poor condition, with damaged flooring and non-contrasting surfaces which do not create an accessible space. The redevelopment will address these issues, making a safe, accessible space for all.

All other areas of the scheme will be fully compliant with Building Regs and provide greatly improved public realm for the diverse communities that visit the town centre, to enjoy.

By maintaining affordable rents, the existing market traders will be retained to the extent possible.

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 project is expected to help foster improved community relations, with a wider range of services available to groups, and improved accessibility to the site.

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: Rotherham Markets and Library Redevelopment
Directorate and service area: R&E RiDO
Lead Manager: James Green
Summary of findings:
<p>Consultation has been undertaken with a diverse range of stakeholders. This includes Market Traders, Library Staff, and users of these services. This represents individuals of differing age ranges, individuals from different ethnic/religious groups and traders/businesses within the local area. This consultation involved activities such as events, focus groups, workshops and online questionnaires in order to gain a wide-ranging reach, accessibility in relation to engagement and multiple opportunities for community feedback.</p> <p>This approach has informed the redevelopment scheme design from inception through to construction, where feedback has been captured and taken into account to improve the design wherever feasible.</p>

Action/Target	State Protected Characteristics as listed below	Target date (MM/YY)
Ongoing consultation with market traders and community groups around the design of spaces and sequencing of construction works.	All	Ongoing
Designs of the buildings and public realm make reasonable adjustments in line with the Equality Act, and Part M of Building Regs. Improve the main entrance	A, D	02/24

ramp which does not comply with Building Regs as is. Provide appropriate lighting, recognised tactile surfacing and sufficient contrast between floor and wall surfaces for people with visual acuity difficulties		
Working with the main contractor to ensure disabled access during construction process – maintaining clear pathways and keeping noise and disturbance to a minimum	A, D	03/26
On completion, marketing of the facilities and dissemination of information to be fully accessible	All	04/26
Request Equal Opportunities statements from all partners (i.e., Main Contractor	All	02/24

***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
Tim O'Connell	Service Manager, Rotherham Investment and Development Office	11/07/23

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	10/07/23
Report title and date	Rotherham Markets and Library Redevelopment
Date report sent for publication	
Date Equality Analysis sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	11/07/23

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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?	<p>Increases emissions during construction.</p> <p>Reduces emissions during operation.</p>	<p>The final development will reduce emissions from the operation of the Council-led Markets and Libraries services.</p> <p>The development will refurbish the 1970s indoor market, extending its useable lifespan and improving environmental performance, such as more effective passive heating/ cooling.</p> <p>The existing outdoor market and surrounding buildings will be demolished and rebuilt, resulting in an increase in emissions during construction. In operation the new buildings will generate less emissions than the existing. The markets building currently runs off gas heaters, which will be switched for air-source heat pumps</p>	<p>Overall effect on emissions from non-domestic buildings across the borough is too complex to estimate. Main emission benefits have been accounted for in this document.</p>	<p>The design brief for the buildings includes measures to maximise energy efficiency and reduce emissions including for example BREEAM rating and travel plans, low energy lighting, passive heating/ cooling, clean fuel sources (switching from gas to electric) and thermal efficiency. The buildings have been designs so that renewable energy systems (such as solar PV panels) can be added once funding has been secured.</p> <p>Through reusing existing structures where possible and upgrading functionality, significant carbon emission savings will be made.</p>	<p>The main contractor will ensure compliance with all building regs and relevant legislation. This will be monitored by RMBC.</p> <p>During the award and construction stages regular workshops will be held to ensure the entire design and construction teams know their responsibilities in terms of BREEAM scoring.</p> <p>After completion and handover further client/ construction team liaison will be required for items such as seasonal commissioning which should be a targeted credit in terms of both BREEAM but also energy in use during all times of the year. Post occupancy</p>

		which are powered by electricity.			reviews and measurement/targeting of energy use will also assist.
Emissions from transport?	Increases emissions during construction. Reduces emissions during operation.	During the construction phase, there will be an increase in traffic and machinery on site, having an impact on emissions.	The site is well connected to public transport links. The public realm will be revitalised to encourage walking and cycling. We envisage the revitalised and better-connected library site and public realm will reduce reliance on cars for shopping and leisure.	The site is within walking distance of the bus interchange, tram train and railway station and the design brief for the scheme includes consideration of measures to enhance pedestrian connectivity with key arrival points including public transport nodes across the town centre. Active travel will be built into the scheme, including cycle parking and facilities.	The main contractor appointed will be required to abide by standards to minimise emissions. Once in operation, RMBC may monitor active travel more generally and the impact of the project on this.
Emissions from waste, or the quantity of waste itself?	Increases emissions during construction. No impact on emissions during operation.	Increased emissions due to demolition, site clearing works and waste from construction.	Increased emissions due to demolition, site clearing works and waste from construction.	Waste Management Plan to be prepared and be in place as part of planning condition requirements before operations on site can commence and impacts experienced. In line with Part H of building regs., waste will be kept to a minimum, with reuse and recycling wherever possible.	As above the main contractor will be responsible for compliance, which will be monitored by RMBC. Prior to any work commencing on site (including demolition), a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) was submitted to Planning by the

				Reuse of the existing indoor markets building reduces waste significantly compared with new construction.	main contractor, to promote sustainable development.
Emissions from housing and domestic buildings?	No impact	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Emissions from construction and/or development?	<p>Increases emissions during construction.</p> <p>Reduces emissions during operation.</p>	<p>The proposed construction works will have a direct impact on emissions. This includes, traveling to site, operation of vehicles on site, operation of any other vehicles needed to construct/dig proposed components, and the use of local power generation (generators) until permanent power is available.</p> <p>The embodied energy required to produce construction materials will increase emissions.</p>	<p>The works will be designed to minimise the impact on the town centre and surrounding areas, including reuse of existing buildings where possible and sustainable/ low-carbon design.</p>	<p>Compliance with relevant building regs will ensure emissions and waste are kept to an absolute minimum.</p> <p>The proposal for the redevelopment of the Central Library aspires to achieve BREEAM Very Good and has achieved this ambition at the design stage pre-assessments.</p> <p>The scheme has been future-proofed to allow for renewables to be installed once funding has been secured.</p>	<p>RMBC will monitor works and ensure that the main contractor is complying with all relevant regulations and BREEAM targets.</p> <p>The BREEAM tracker is updated periodically to reflect any design changes, and an updated BREEAM assessment will be conducted following the conclusion of the RIBA Stage 4 design.</p>

Carbon capture (e.g. through trees)?	No impact	The final development arrangement does not have any quantifiable impact on carbon capture.		The development will provide new soft landscaping and planting, but not significantly increase carbon capture.	Captured through Borough/Region wide indicators and monitoring – no site-specific monitoring proposed.
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Identify any emission impacts associated with this decision that have not been covered by the above fields:

The information in this Appendix will be updated as the more detailed design is developed and agreed.

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

The scheme is designed to promote a healthier and more active Rotherham town centre, with improved public realm, landscaping and leisure spaces. By reusing the existing indoor market building and improving its environmental performance, the waste and emissions related to demolition and rebuild have been prevented for this part of the development. The new buildings will ensure much improved energy efficiency in the operation of the library, gallery/event space and café. The gas fuelled heating and cooling system in the existing indoor market building will be replaced with air source heat pumps which are powered by electricity, and all new buildings will be heated and cooled by renewable fuel sources.

We will ensure emission reducing measures are implemented wherever feasible in the design, construction, operation and maintenance of the building and public realm.

When appointed, the main contractor will be responsible for compliance with relevant building regs and other relevant legislation, which RMBC will monitor carefully.

Supporting information:	
Completed by: (Name, title, and service area/directorate).	Eleanor Bainbridge, Project Manager, Regeneration and Environment
Please outline any research, data, or information used to complete this [form].	Stage 3 design information, Building Regs Part L compliance

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 220 Arthur King Principal Climate Change Officer Strategic Asset Management Finance and Customer Services

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Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Improving Places Select Commission – 06 February 2024

Report Title

Social Housing Regulation Update

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

No

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

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

Report Author(s)

Wendy Foster, Acting Business Development Manager

Sue Shelley, Business Development Manager

Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

The regulatory framework for social housing is changing. Legislation has been introduced following the Grenfell Fire, and the coroner's findings that excessive mould in the family home contributed to the death of two-year-old Awaab Ishak, in Rochdale.

The Government aims to improve the standard of social housing stock and amplify tenant voices through the introduction of proactive consumer regulation. The new framework applies from 1st April 2024 and will include inspections by the Regulator of Social Housing.

This report summarises the changes and provides an update on Housing Services' preparedness activities.

Recommendations

The content of this report is noted by Members of Improving Places Select Commission.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 Regulator of Social Housing, Tenant Satisfaction Measures

Background Papers

Social Housing Regulatory Standards (www.gov.uk/guidance/regulatory-standards)

Consumer Regulation Review 2022-23 (www.gov.uk/government/publications/consumer-regulation-review-2022-to-2023)

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel
Improving Places Select Commission – 06 February 2024

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Social Housing Regulation Act: Update on Housing Services Preparedness

1. Background

- 1.1 The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 became law on 20 July 2023. The Act aims to give tenants greater powers, improve transparency and access to redress, and provide a robust mechanism to drive improved standards across social housing.
- 1.2 The Act introduces a suite of revised standards against which social housing landlords, including stock retaining Councils such as Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council, will be regulated. These include:
 - Tenant Satisfaction Measures (including an annual Tenant Perception Survey)
 - A revised set of social housing Consumer Standards, supported by a Code of Practice.
- 1.3 The Regulator of Social Housing (the Regulator) will gather evidence and assess providers’ ability to deliver a housing service which meets the standards through:
 - In person inspections – either as part of a planned programme or in response to information that standards are not being met
 - Desk-top reviews – reviewing performance data (results of Tenant Satisfaction Measures, including Tenant Perception Survey results, complaints information from the Housing Ombudsman etc.).
- 1.4 The proposed revised Consumer Standards and the Code of Practice were subject to a consultation process which closed on October 17th 2023. The finalised standards will be published by the Regulator in early 2024 and will come into force in April 2024. From this point, the Regulator will proactively drive compliance with the standards, including through the new inspection regime.
- 1.5 The new proactive consumer regulation framework replaces the existing framework which is often described as ‘reactive’.
- 1.6 The Regulations and this report apply only to the ‘landlord services’ aspects of the Council’s housing functions. It does not encompass strategic housing, development, homelessness, private sector housing, Right to Buy or Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs).

2. Key Issues

2.1 Regulatory changes

2.1.1 SUMMARY OF MAIN CHANGES

Change	Detail
Tenant Satisfaction Measures introduced (including annual Tenant Perception Survey)	Please see paragraphs 2.1.2 to 2.1.5

Introduction of new consumer standards	Please see paragraphs 2.1.7 and 2.1.8
Inspections will be introduced	Social housing landlords with more than 1000 properties will be inspected by the Regulator on a four-year cycle. See paragraph 2.1.10 and 2.1.11
Serious detriment test will be scrapped	Currently the serious detriment test prevents the Regulator from intervening in cases unless it has reasonable grounds to believe tenants are at risk of 'serious detriment'. This will be removed.
Cap on fines will be lifted	Currently the maximum fine which can be imposed upon social housing landlords for regulatory non-compliance is £5k. This limit will be scrapped, and fines for non-compliance will become unlimited.
The 'democratic filter' has been removed from the complaints process.	The Building Safety Act 2022 removed the 'democratic filter' previously contained in the Housing Act 1996 enabling tenants to raise a complaint with the Housing Ombudsman immediately after they have exhausted their landlord's complaints process. This means that residents will no longer have to contact a designated person or wait eight weeks before referring their complaint to the Housing Ombudsman.
Professionalisation of the housing sector	Social housing landlords are awaiting further detail on the Government's proposal to improve the sector by introducing a requirement for housing managers to hold a professional qualification. Information is expected before March 2024.
Review of the Decent Homes standard which was last reviewed over 20 years ago.	In the Social Housing White paper, published in November 2020, the Government committed to review the Decent Homes Standard. A recent announcement stated that 'the current standard remains broadly suitable and effective, but updates may be beneficial'. Further announcements are expected before March 2024.
Regulatory fees	The Regulator will start to charge fees to councils owning over 1,000 homes for the first time, at £7 to £8 per unit.

- 2.1.2 In addition, the Government recently published a consultation on 'Awaab's Law', a proposal to create statutory timeframes for social landlords to respond to repairs issues that constitute health hazards.

Taken together, these changes amount to a radical overhaul of the regulatory framework for social housing.

- 2.1.3 **Tenant Satisfaction Measures** (TSMs) are a series of 22 performance measures, which require responses from all social housing landlords with more than 1000 properties. Data regarding 10 of the performance measures will be submitted directly by the Council and 12 will be captured through a Tenant Perception Survey. The survey questions are prescribed by the Regulator and cannot be deviated from, although the Council can add additional questions at the end of the survey.

- 2.1.4 The survey seeks to capture tenants' views about their satisfaction with aspects of landlord services. These include:

- Overall satisfaction with the Housing Service
- Satisfaction with the repairs service, general maintenance, and the condition of the property
- The cleanliness and maintenance of communal areas
- Communication and listening to customers
- Complaint handling
- Dealing with anti-social behaviour.

- 2.1.5 The 22 TSMs sit under the following six themes:

- Keeping properties in good repair
- Maintaining building safety
- Safety checks
- Respectful and helpful engagement
- Effective handling of complaint; and
- Responsible neighbourhood management.

See Appendix 1 for a full list of TSMs.

- 2.1.6 KWest Research Limited have been procured to complete the Tenant Perception Survey on behalf of the Council in accordance with the Regulator's requirements. KWest will survey 1014 of Rotherham's tenants (5% of tenants, being the prescribed sample size) by telephone or email between October 2023 and March 2024. It is anticipated that 70%-75% of survey responses will be telephone surveys. KWest will seek to undertake around 200 surveys per month. The Council will receive a report detailing the findings of the survey and will be required to submit the survey data to the Regulator of Social Housing by June 2024.

- 2.1.7 In addition to the Council undertaking the TSM survey, the Regulator has also recently announced that it will undertake its own TSM survey of tenants. It is anticipated that the results will be compared, and the

Regulator is likely to challenge any landlords where there are disparities in the results of the two surveys.

2.1.8 **Consumer Standards** have been subject to a consultation which ended on 17 October 2023. As of 12 January 2024, the Regulator is still considering the consultation responses. It is anticipated that a decision statement and the final form of the consumer standards will be issued in early 2024, with the new standards coming into force on 1 April 2024.

2.1.9 The TSM themes align with the four proposed consumer standards. These are set out below.

- The Safety and Quality Standard – this standard requires landlords to provide safe and good quality homes and effective landlord services to tenants.
- The Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard – this standard requires landlords to be open with tenants and treat them with fairness and respect so that tenants can access services, raise complaints, influence decision making and hold their landlord to account.
- The Neighbourhood and Community Standard – this standard requires landlords to engage with other relevant organisations so that tenants can live in safe and well-maintained neighbourhoods and feel safe in their homes.
- The Tenancy Standard – this standard sets out requirements for the fair allocation and letting of homes and for how tenancies are managed and ended by landlords.

2.1.10 **Inspections** will take place on a four yearly-cycle. It is anticipated that social housing landlords will be given approximately six weeks' notice of an inspection. Prior to inspection, the Regulator will request a list of documents which they will review before arriving. A library of key documents is being created within the Council with the aim of having the documents that are likely to be requested in one place, and ensuring those documents are current and accessible.

2.1.11 It is not known when an inspection will take place in Rotherham and as such, the Council should remain in an ongoing state of preparedness.

2.2 How the Council is preparing for new regulation

2.2.1 Much of the content of the proposed standards is already part of the regulatory framework for social housing, or indeed a legal requirement, and for these areas the key difference will be the requirement to evidence compliance to a proactive Regulator and to strengthen further the Council's communication with tenants and Elected Members. In other

areas, such as Awaab's Law, new regulatory requirements will be placed on the Council that will require service changes.

- 2.2.2 Work is underway to assemble a strong evidence base to demonstrate how the Council complies with the Standards. The Regulator's approach will be outcome and assurance based, i.e., it will expect the Council to demonstrate how it provides assurance to Elected Members and tenants on how the standards are met. The Council is exploring how it can share more information on performance, how its existing tenant engagement service can be strengthened further, and how Cabinet, Council and scrutiny committees are briefed on compliance. Policies are being updated and, in some cases, new policies are being developed. Investments are being made in quality assurance, IT systems, business improvement and reporting functionality in order to support these activities.
- 2.2.3 Given the absolute priority attached to the health and safety of Council homes, the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan earmarks investment in staffing and systems to support the Council's compliance responsibilities which continue to grow under the new regulatory framework and the proposed 'Awaab's Law'.
- 2.2.4 The HRA Business Plan also makes provision for significant investment in stock condition surveys. Much of the Council's survey data is relatively old. The aim is to conduct a 100% stock conditions survey over the next few years, which will inform the HRA capital programme and the Council's energy efficiency plans. A review will be undertaken of the housing asset management function to ensure sufficient internal resources to sustain a rolling surveying programme. This will be supplemented by a commissioned programme of surveys.
- 2.2.5 The Council is improving its approach to tenant data, accounting for tenants' diverse needs, accessibility, and vulnerabilities. "Knowing who is behind the door" is a consistent theme espoused by the Regulator. The Housing Service is developing the Housing Management IT System to hold protected characteristic data for tenants in a format to assist and improve service delivery.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

n/a

4. Consultation on proposal

n/a

5. Timetable

5.1	Outcome of Consumer Standards consultation to be published and final standards confirmed	Early 2024
	Consumer Standards to go live 1 April 2024	April 2024
	First year of Tenant Satisfaction Measures to be submitted to the Regulator	June 2024

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 6.1 The activity relating to preparation for inspection will be funded via existing staffing resource and within existing budgets. Additional resource has been included in budgets for 2024/25 to manage emerging pressures arising from new regulations.
- 6.2 The budget for tenant engagement has been increased in 2024/25 to fund the re-procured contract in this area and to manage anticipated activity to strengthen the tenant voice.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

- 7.1 The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 introduced following the tragic death of Awaab Ishak has been widely publicised, and the right to bring complaints to landlords, particularly in relation to the quality of social housing and disrepair issues in social housing stock, is increasingly at the forefront of the public consciousness.
- 7.2 The tone of the new legislation and associated Customer Standards indicate that the Regulator will be taking an increasingly serious approach to regulatory non-compliance.
- 7.3 The Building Safety Act 2022, which removes the 'democratic filter' that was previously contained in the Housing Act 1996, makes the process of raising a complaint with the Housing Ombudsman easier for tenants. The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 will also remove the serious detriment test, which previously acted as barrier to the Regulator becoming involved in cases unless there were reasonable grounds to suspect that a landlord's breach could cause serious detriment to a tenant
- 7.4 Section 5 of the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 added section 100H to the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008, introducing a requirement for the Regulator to cooperate with the Housing Ombudsman in the exercise of their respective functions.
- 7.5 Schedule 3 paragraph 6 of the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 will increase the penalty able to be imposed on landlords for non-compliance from the current cap of £5,000 to an unlimited fine. Whilst this particular

provision of the Act has not yet come into force, once introduced it will present a greater financial risk for non-compliance with the relevant legislation.

- 7.6 The combined effect of these pieces of legislation is a higher level of scrutiny for social housing providers with more serious penalties for non-compliance. This therefore presents an increased risk of challenge by the Regulator or by a tenant (for example by complaint to the Housing Ombudsman) to any aspect of non-compliance and more severe consequences flowing from any finding of non-compliance by the Regulator.
- 7.7 The increased public focus on social housing issues could also increase the risk of reputational damage to the Council if findings of non-compliance were published by the Regulator.
- 7.8 The Tenant Perception Surveys intend to collect protected characteristic data from Council tenants, as part of the push from the Regulator for landlords to listen to the tenant voice, which raises data protection implications.
- 7.9 The data collected by these surveys will likely include 'special category data' as defined by the UK General Data Protection Regulation, including data about racial or ethnic origin, religious belief and sexual orientation.
- 7.10 The Council will need to ensure that any data is collected in accordance with relevant data protection legislation (including the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018), including ensuring that there is a lawful basis for the processing of the data and consideration of whether a Data Protection Impact Assessment is required, if one is not already in place.
- 7.11 As indicated within the report, there are various pieces of additional information expected from the Regulator through the course of 2024 so it is crucial that the Council to keep up with developments as and when they occur. Updated legal advice may be required at the point that any new information is received.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

- 8.1 There are no HR implications arising from this report.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults n/a

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

- 10.1 Annex 7 – Draft Equality Impact Assessment (<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk>)
Annex 8 TSM – Equality Impact Assessment
(<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk>)

11. Implications for CO₂ Emissions and Climate Change

n/a

12. Implications for Partners

- 12.1 There is only one regulatory standard which stresses the need to work with partner organisations. Specific expectations under the Neighbourhood and Community Standard, state:
- 12.2 Maintenance of shared spaces - Registered providers must work co-operatively to assist in resolving issues affecting the upkeep and safety of the shared spaces associated with their homes. Locally, this includes other Council services and their procured contractors, in addition to the Housing Service and the Council's Repairs and Maintenance contract partners.
- 12.3 Local cooperation - Registered providers, having taken account of their strategic objectives, the views of tenants and their presence within the areas where they provide social housing, must:
- a) identify and communicate to tenants the roles registered providers play in promoting social, environmental and economic wellbeing and how they will achieve them; and
 - b) co-operate with local partnership arrangements and the strategic housing function of local authorities where they are able to assist them in achieving their objectives."
- 12.4 Safer neighbourhoods - Registered providers must have a policy on how they work with relevant organisations to deter and tackle anti-social behaviour in the neighbourhoods where they provide social housing.
- 12.5 Domestic abuse - Registered providers must co-operate with appropriate local authority departments to support the local authority in meeting its duty to develop a strategy and commission services for victims of domestic abuse and their children within safe accommodation."
- 12.6 This was discussed with registered providers who have stock across the borough at December 2023's Strategic Housing Forum. Contact details of key officers leading on regulation implementation will be shared to ensure joint working is strengthened and evidence of such can be made available to the Regulator.

13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 The key risk here would be a failure to prepare adequately for the new regulatory framework leading to a failure to meet the new regulations and as a consequence a poor inspection outcome. The measures set out in this report are the mitigation against this risk.

Accountable Officer(s)

Wendy Foster, Acting Business Development Manager
Sue Shelley, Business Development Manager

Report Authors:

Wendy Foster, Acting Business Development Manager
Sue Shelley, Business Development Manager

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

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Appendix 1

**REGULATOR OF SOCIAL HOUSING
TENANT SATISFACTION MEASURES**

Tenant Satisfaction Measure	How measured	Current performance data
TPS = Tenant Perception Survey		
LD = landlords directly		
TP01 Overall satisfaction	TPS	TPS commissioned.
Keeping Properties in Good Repair		
TP02: Satisfaction with repairs service	TPS	94.83%
TP03: Satisfaction with time taken to complete most recent repair	TPS	Not yet available
TP04: Satisfaction that the home is well maintained and safe to live in	TPS	Not yet available
RP01: Homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard	LD	0%
RP02: Repairs completed within target timescale	LD	99.88%
Maintaining Building Safety		
TP05: Satisfaction that the landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them	TPS	Not yet available
Safety Checks		
BS01: Gas safety checks	LD	99.96% completed
BS02: Fire safety checks	LD	Not yet available
BS03: Asbestos safety checks	LD	Not yet available
BS04: Water safety checks	LD	Not yet available

Tenant Satisfaction Measure TPS = Tenant Perception Survey LD = landlords directly	How measured	Current performance data
BS05: Lift safety checks	LD	Not yet available
Respectful and Helpful Engagement		
TP06 Satisfaction that the landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them	TPS	Not yet available
TP07: Satisfaction that the landlord keeps tenants informed about things that matter to them	TPS	Not yet available
TP08: Agreement that the landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect	TPS	Not yet available
Effective Handling of Complaints		
TP09: Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling complaints	TPS	Not yet available
CH01: Complaints relative to the size of the landlord	LD	Not yet available
CH02: Complaints responded to within Complaint Handling Code timescales	LD	Not yet available
Responsible neighbourhood management		
TP10: Satisfaction that the landlord keeps communal areas clean, and well maintained	TPS	Not yet available
TP11: Satisfaction that the landlord makes a positive contribution to neighbourhoods	TPS	Not yet available
TP12: Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling of anti-social behaviour	TPS	Not yet available
NM01: Anti-social behaviour cases relative to the size of the landlord	LD	Not yet available

Improving Places Select Commission – Work Programme 2023-24 – presented in February 2024

Chair: Cllr Ken Wyatt
Governance Manager: Barbel Gale

Vice-Chair: Cllr Adam Tinsley
Link Officer: Paul Woodcock

The following principles were endorsed by OSMB at its meeting of 5 July 2023 as criteria to long/short list each of the commission's respective priorities:

Establish as a starting point:

- What are the key issues?
- What is the desired outcome?

Agree principles for longlisting:

- Can scrutiny add value or influence?
- Is this being looked at elsewhere?
- Is this a priority for the council or community?

Developing a consistent shortlisting criteria, e.g.

- T: Time: is it the tight time, enough resources?
- O: Others: is this duplicating the work of another body?
- P: Performance: can scrutiny make a difference
- I: Interest: what is the interest to the public?
- C: Contribution to the corporate plan

Meeting Date	Agenda Item
06 June 2023	Environment Act 2021 Update
11 July 2023	Draft Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy Cost-of-Living and Rent Arrears Playground Equipment: Procurement and Installation
19 September 2023	Site Visit to Ickes Lock Flooding Alleviation Update Combined Storm Overflows
24 October 2023	Neighbourhood Working Annual Report Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Update
Winter 2023/24	Review: Household Waste Recycling - Reusable Items
12 December 2023	Bereavement Services Annual Report Road Safety and Cumwell Lane Update Social Frontiers
6 February 2024	Markets Redevelopment Update Social Housing Regulation Act: update on Housing Services preparedness
19 March 2024	Tenant Scrutiny Review and Action Plan - Voids Tenant Communications Update Allotments Annual Update

Items to be scheduled:

TBC	Nature Recovery Review Outcomes – Review being drafted
TBC	School Road Safety
TBC	Anti-social behaviour workshop