

IMPROVING LIVES SELECT COMMISSION

Date and Time:- Tuesday 18 June 2024 at 10.00 a.m.

Venue:- Rotherham Town Hall, The Crofts, Moorgate Street, Rotherham. S60 2TH

Membership:- Councillors Pitchley (Chair), Knight (Vice-Chair), Hughes, Monk, Baggaley, Brent, Foster, N Harper, Blackham, Sutton, T. Collingham, Fisher, Reynolds, Bower, Elliott and Ryalls.

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

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

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

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

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting (Pages 5 - 19)

To consider and approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on 5 March 2024 as a true and correct record of the proceedings and to be signed by the Chair.

3. Declarations of Interest

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

4. 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.

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. Communications

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

7. Introduction to Performance of Children's and Young People's Services

To receive a high-level presentation on Children's and Young People's Services (CYPS) performance.

8. Introduction to the Early Help Strategy (Pages 21 - 37)

To receive a high-level presentation on the Early Help Strategy.

9. Introduction to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and SEND Sufficiency (Pages 39 - 59)

To receive a high-level presentation on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), including SEND Sufficiency.

10. Nomination for Health, Welfare and Safety Panel (Pages 61 - 67)

To seek a representative from the Improving Lives Select Commission (ILSC) to sit as a member on the Health, Welfare and Safety Panel.

Meeting dates for 2024-2025:

- Thursday 11 July 2024
- Thursday 17 October 2024
- Thursday 30 January 2025
- Thursday 24 April 2025

11. Work Programme

To consider and approve the Commission's Work Programme for the next meeting in July.

30 July 2024	• CYPS Performance Report
	• Local Government Association (LGA) Peer Review Recommendations, in relation to Care Leavers.

12. Improving Lives Select Commission - Sub and Project Group Updates


For the Chair/Project Group Leads to provide an update on the activity regarding sub and project groups of the Improving Lives Select Commission.

13. Urgent Business

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

14. Date and Time of the next Meeting

The next meeting of the Improving Lives Select Commission take place on 30th July 2024 commencing at 10:00 am in Rotherham Town Hall.



SHARON KEMP,
Chief Executive.

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IMPROVING LIVES SELECT COMMISSION
Tuesday 5 March 2024

Present:- Councillor Pitchley (in the Chair); Councillors Bacon, Baker-Rogers, Griffin, Haleem, Khan, Monk and Bennett-Sylvester.

Apologies for absence:- Apologies were received from Councillors Cooksey, Atkin, Z. Collingham, Hughes and McNeely.

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

156. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON

Resolved: - That the Minutes of the meeting of the Improving Lives Select Commission, held on 30 January 2024 be approved as a correct record of proceedings.

157. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

158. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

There were no items of business on the agenda that required the exclusion of the press and public from the meeting.

159. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

There were no questions from members of the public or press.

160. COMMUNICATIONS

The Chair advised that all the items regarding communication were covered on the agenda.

161. CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL - UPDATE

The Chair advised that there had not been a meeting of Corporate Parenting Panel since the last update was provided to the Commission. The next meeting of Corporate Parenting Panel would be held on the 19 March 2024 and a further update would be provided to the Commission in the new municipal year.

162. ROTHERHAM SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION PEER REVIEW

In July 2023, the Rotherham Safeguarding Adults Board (RSAB) commissioned the Local Government Association (LGA) to carry out a

Peer Review, which identified several areas to further strengthen the safeguarding offer for Rotherham. This agenda item followed a previous presentation of the initial findings to the Improving Lives Select Commission in October 2023, as part of the Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report. This agenda item presented the formal action plan developed in response to the Peer Review for Safeguarding Adults, to members of the Commission.

The Chair welcomed to the meeting Kirsty Littlewood, Assistant Director for Adult Care and Integration, Moira Wilson, Independent Chair of the Rotherham Safeguarding Adults Board, Andrew Wells, Head of Service for Safeguarding and Mental Health and Jackie Scantlebury, Safeguarding Adult Board Manager.

The Chair invited Moira to introduce the report and lead on the presentation, during which the following was noted:

The LGA was invited to complete a Peer Review on the Rotherham Safeguarding Adults Board between the 11th- 13th July 2023. Peer challenges were an important part of ensuring continuous improvement.

The Two Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE)-

- The Peer Review also looked across the board at all aspects of safeguarding, however the RSAB asked the Peer Review Team to focus on two specific KLOE's which were:
 - Outcomes for and the experiences of people who used the services. This theme looked at what differences there had been to the outcomes of people experiences in relation to adult safeguarding and the quality of the experience of people who used the services provided.
 - Leadership, strategy and working together. This theme looked at the leadership of the RSAB and how statutory duties were delivered. There was a recognised and active leadership to safeguard adults in each of the statutory partner organisations.

The Key Messages from the Peer Review-

- All reviewers were positive in relation to the commitment in Rotherham.
- Voices were listened to in Rotherham, but not yet heard at the RSAB.
- The RSAB could go further on collaboration and constructive challenge.
- To be an outstanding RSAB, sufficient resources were required to provide support and robust processes were required to plan and deliver the strategy.
- Mainstreaming the pockets of excellent practice was advised and celebrating the good work to show residents what was working well.

Recommendations-

To support RSAB on its improvement journey the Peer Team advised RSAB to act on the following recommendations:

- To use the groups and mechanisms which already existed in partner organisations, to increase voice in the work of the Board. They also advised that the RSAB should ensure time would be set aside, to think what questions the RSAB would want to ask these groups.
- To set aside time for a development session, to better understand the relevance of the various meetings, such as who attends them and why. The review team recommended reconsideration of the best way to include representation of the independent care provider market.
- To review how agendas were set to encourage oversight of broader safeguarding related matters, arising from partnership working.
- To ensure robust SMART plans were in place which could track and monitor, using best practice from other Boards for good practice and templates in this area.
- To explore how data and information could be used to identify areas for improvement, celebrate successes and answer the 'so what' questions.
- To consider whether the understanding of partners regarding the safeguarding pathways and expectations around these were sufficiently clear and shared, and whether there were strategic or operational changes which could ensure better alignment.

Action taken since the review-

- A Safeguarding Adults Board Development Day was held in November 2023. The final Peer Review Report and Development Day actions were presented to the Board on 18th December 2023.
- The following three themes were developed to monitor actions and progress:
 - Theme One, strengthening the user voice.
 - Theme Two, governance and strengthening board arrangements.
 - Theme Three, making the best use of data and information.
- There were action plans for each of the themes.
- Theme One, Strengthening the user voice, with a focus on the following:
 - Raising the profile and extending the reach of the RSAB through a communication campaign, ensuring an improved digital presence and engagement with the public.
 - Developing a user voice subgroup or mechanism, that would feed directly into the RSAB.
 - Mapping across all partner agencies how service users were engaged and ensure voices would be captured.
 - Building on how making safeguarding personal outcomes were recorded to capture user voice.

- Theme Two, governance and strengthening the board arrangement, with a focus on the following:
 - Reviewing how the executive functions, this was required to be a very small group who could collectively agree Board agendas and oversee delivery against the Board Strategy and Delivery Plan.
 - Reviewing the Terms of Reference and attendees at the Executive Board and subgroups, which would ensure an appropriate representation and considering a 'contract' for board members.
 - Strengthening governance across other strategic partnerships.
 - Raising the profile of the RSAB, considering a 'Who's who' which would be publicised internally to front line employees.
- Theme Three, making the best use of the data and information:
 - Ensuring the data set would be partnership data rather than only local authority data.
 - Ensuring data would be qualitative not just quantitative, with an accompanying narrative that would provide context.
 - Performance and Quality Subgroup would review data and information first and undertake any further work required (e.g., a single and/or multi agency audit) to identify 'what's working well', 'what we are worried about' and would provide recommendations to the Board about 'what needs to happen'.

Key Milestones-

- Creating a customer voice task and finish group to deliver actions to improve the user voice, this would be completed by July 2024.
- Improvement of the RSAB Website, which would be completed by May 2024.
- Refresh of the Terms of Reference for the Board and the Executive Groups, which would be completed by April 2024.
- Improvement of the performance dashboard, including data from across the partnership, which would be completed by July 2024.
- Completion of the action plan, which would be completed by October 2024.

The Chair thanked the relevant officer for the presentation and invited questions, this led to the following points being raised during discussions:

- Within the overall improvement tool used for safeguarding adults, all theme's overlapped therefore it all needed to be looked at together in context.
- User voice was particularly important and critical in relation to safeguarding adults. It was recognised that the voice of service users was not always central to the Adult Social Care Service. It was important for the service to support people to have as much choice and control in their lives as possible. Alongside the development of a voice sub-group within the RSAB, there was also a co-production board for Adult Social Care being established. This

would ensure any strategies developed within Adult Social Care would be done in partnership with people who had lived experience.

- Assurance was provided that there was a strong commitment and good representation from all partner agencies, the Peer Review identified the strength of the partnership's approach to safeguarding.
- The Safeguarding Adults Board drove operational practises around safeguarding in front line delivery, there was strong strategic and operational working.
- Safeguarding was part of the outcome of the commissioning process of contracts, to ensure safeguarding compliance. The Quality and Performance Group monitored safeguarding activity, compliance with the CQC and addressed specific incidents where required.
- There were four subgroups established which were, the Safeguarding Adult Review Sub-group, the Workforce Development Sub-group, the Policy and Practise Sub-group and the Performance and Quality Sub-group.
- The Complex Lives Team worked outside of eligibility, the team expanded the criteria to ensure that support was provided to more people. The team recognised the complexities of individuals in Rotherham and had dedicated resources to support this.
- The RSAB had a focus on improving digital communications by ensuring the website was more accessible, creating a training and professional page on the website and implementing the RSAB Communication Strategy, developed closely with the Communications Team. There was a focus on raising awareness with voluntary groups and a six-monthly newsletter for all employees of the local authority and partner organisations.
- The Peer Review identified that there was further focus required to strengthen the line of sight, between the RSAB and the safeguarding taking place in partner agencies. This would be achieved by the RSAB working closer with partner organisations, to gain a clearer understanding of what safeguarding activities happened within organisations. Partner agencies were required to present to the RSAB on a regular basis.
- There would be CQC assessments of all local authorities, one theme of the assessment would be safety. It was advised that when the local authority would be assessed, the CQC would focus on how the RSAB responded to the LGA Peer Challenge recommendations.
- The National Safeguarding Board Manager Group met every six weeks, the Yorkshire and Humber Safeguarding Board Manager Group and the South Yorkshire Board Manager Group met every two months.

Resolved:-

- 1) That the Improving Lives Select Commission considered the report

and action plan.

- 2) That the Rotherham Safeguarding Adults Board would include a progress update on the peer review recommendations, in the next RSAB Annual Report Update to the Commission.
- 3) Potential opportunities for engagement with members and residents that could be built into ward plans would be assessed.

163. FAMILY HUBS UPDATE

This agenda item provided an update on the progress of the transformation project, associated with the Family Hubs and Start for Life Grant. The update followed a previous update to the Improving Lives Select Commission, in March 2023.

The Chair welcomed to the meeting Councillor Cusworth, the Cabinet Member for Childrens and Young Peoples Services (CYPS), Robert Savage, Business Service Manager, Kelly White, Head of Service for First Response, Acting Assistant Director for Early Help, Kirsty Woodhead, and Alex Hawley, Public Health Consultant.

The Chair invited Councillor Cusworth to introduce the report and Alex Hawley to lead on the presentation, during which the following was noted:

Rotherham was one of seventy-five local authorities that was chosen for the family hubs funding, this was due to high levels of deprivation in the Borough. The funding was provided by the Department of Education and the Department of Health and Social Care. The funding was provided for transformation work, with only 5% that was available for capital works.

Changes to management oversight-

- The newly appointed Acting Assistant Director for Early Help and Business Support would lead the design of the refreshed Early Help Strategy, in the coming months.
- To provide related support in the short term, the Interim Service Manager for Early Help and the Family Engagement Service had accepted additional responsibilities for the operational Early Help Service. The Consultant in Public Health was responsible for the Best Start and Beyond portfolio and would lead the continuing family hubs transformation. The Departmental Business Service Manager (CYPS) would support on the Family Hubs programme management.

Location of Family Hubs in Children's Centres-

- The Family Hubs programme was delivered across the Borough, using existing buildings which were familiar to children and families.
- Sites were connected by the digital offer to provide face to face or virtual information, advice, and support for families.

Funded Strands-

- Family Hubs transformation which included the branding and digital

offer

- Perinatal mental health and parent-infant relationships
- Parenting support
- Infant feeding support
- Home learning environment and speech, language, and communication
- Publishing the Start for Life offer
- Parent and Carer Panel.

Co-location in Sites Delivering the Family Hubs Programme-

- Infant Feeding Specialist
- Three Nursery Nurses based in the Family Hubs
- Substance Misuse workers
- Health, including antenatal and 0-19 Services
- MESMAC
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Rotherham Ethnic Minority Alliance (REMA)
- Employment Support Advisers
- Department of Work and Pensions (DWP)
- Digital Inclusion Team
- Rotherham Rise
- Voluntary Sector
- Birth registration
- Perinatal Mental Health

Locality Meetings-

- Monthly, multi-disciplinary meetings would bring together colleagues delivering or co-locating from buildings, delivering the Family Hubs programme.
- This would support strong communication between agencies and allow a structured opportunity to share information about service delivery within the community.
- It would support strong integration between agencies and practitioners and provide a forum to discuss joint working and shared delivery opportunities.
- It would provide an opportunity to raise, discuss and resolve issues arising from co-locations.
- It would provide a forum to discuss the local community and arising themes or issues and agree a joint approach to address those.
- It would allow opportunities to connect with other organisations not directly part of the Family Hubs programme, but working in the community, such as neighbourhood services.
- It would provide practitioners with an understanding of the performance targets relating to the Family Hubs programme and their shared responsibility in progress towards these.
- It would provide practitioners with updates from the Family Hubs Programme Parent and Carer Panel.

Family Hubs Website-

- The digital offer for children and families was a key element of the Family Hubs transformation.
- Parents and carers could access the information, advice and support they needed to give their child the best start in life and beyond.
- The website had launched and content was being added regularly.

Parent and Infant Mental Wellbeing and Relationships-

- Perinatal meant the period of time from pregnancy up to a year after giving birth.
- The local Perinatal Mental Health service offered confidential and non-judgemental care and treatment for women with moderate to severe mental health problems, who were planning to have a baby, were already pregnant, or had given birth in the last twelve months.
- Programmes that helped parents, carers and babies to form a secure bond and healthy attachment and where needed, provided mental health and relationship support (e.g. Solihull and One Plus One).
- Work with partners across the Family Hub system was being undertaken to consolidate the support available and develop a mild to moderate pathway, to ensure women could get the right support at the earliest opportunity.
- The introduction of VIG (Video Interaction Guidance). Video Interaction Guidance (VIG) was a strength-based, brief intervention that promoted attainment, sensitivity, and mentalisation in relationships. The principles and practice were used to work within any relationship. VIG was effective with parents and carers of children across all ages (including babies and unborn babies). The first three practitioners were trained through Government funding. Rotherham had agreed an investment for a further 25 multi-disciplinary practitioners to be trained.
- The Peep Learning Together Programme helped parents, carers and practitioners to make the most of learning opportunities in everyday life. There were two Home Learning Officers and delivery of the programme launched in January.

Infant Feeding Support-

- There was an Infant Feeding Coordinator funded by the Family Hubs programme, who led on infant feeding support across the Borough.
- Rotherham was a Breastfeeding Friendly Borough following a launch in August of the Breastfeeding Friendly Borough Declaration.
- Rotherham also had a UNICEF Baby Friendly Accreditation.
- Recruitment was taking place for more volunteers and breastfeeding peer supporters, who would be available to support families on their breastfeeding journey.

Start for Life Offer-

- From conception to the age of two, children developed rapidly, and experiences laid the foundations for lifelong emotional and physical health.
- The Start for Life Offer was a publication that described all the support mechanisms for infants and families and included the following:
 - Midwives provided personalised support to families throughout pregnancy and labour.
 - Infant Feeding and Oral Health services supported parents with feeding their babies, breastfeeding support, and advice on nutrition.
 - Health Visitors worked with other Start for Life professionals after childbirth in supporting families. They were responsible for the mandated child development reviews. Health Visitors did a pre-birth visit so they could see families before birth.
 - Special Educational Needs and Disability services supported disabled or seriously ill babies and their families.
 - Parent-Infant Mental Health Services ensured that parents, carers and babies were forming a secure bond and attachment and where needed, provided mental health and relationship support.
 - Safeguarding Services sought to protect children from abuse and maltreatment.

Parent and Carer Panel-

- The Panel consisted of parents and carers from pregnancy and with children aged 0-2, who wanted to shape the way services were delivered by the Family Hubs. The Panel was led by Voluntary Action Rotherham.
- There was no specific time commitment, and the Panel would be involved in a range of activities such as the following:
 - Focus groups
 - Meetings
 - 'Mystery Shopper' activities
 - Online surveys and questionnaires.

Upcoming Priorities-

- To launch the Family Hubs registration form.
- To complete further co-location of partner agencies.
- To increase volunteering opportunities in a range of roles within the programme.
- To continue delivery of evidence-based training for employees.
- To increase uptake of evidence-based programmes.
- To establish other sites around the Borough, making it easier for families to access services.

The Chair thanked the relevant officer for the presentation and invited questions, this led to the following points being raised during discussions:

- The Programme had introduced an additional health visit at the period between 3-4 months. This was not one of the five mandated visits and in order to introduce this, the 0-19 Service had recruited three additional Nursery Nurse positions. After the funding cases the plan is to evaluate and either re-design the delivery model or seek additional funding for the service. Two Home Learning Environment Officers had also been recruited within Early Help to roll out the programme, using a 'train the trainer' model which would ensure continuity across the service once the posts would end.
- A key priority of the service was monitoring and encouraging the uptake of the programme within the most deprived communities. The service measured and monitored the percentage of children aged 0-5 living in the thirty most deprived areas in Rotherham, registered with a children's centre and analysing how many of those children were accessing the centre. 88% of children aged 0-5 living in the 30% most deprived areas in Rotherham were registered at a children's centre and 67% of those were accessing the centre.
- The digital offer was intended to connect all the Family Hubs to ensure there would be no barriers to people accessing the service. The digital offer was available twenty-four-seven and had a variety of information, support and e-learning opportunities. It also provided work with partners to encourage professionals to access further learning, which had added value to the voluntary community sector.
- The statistics of people who attended the training detailed on page 57 of the report, would be provided to members in percentages, via a written response.
- A written response would be provided to all members in relation to the Family Hubs activities that were available in each ward.

Resolved:-

- That Members of the Improving Lives Select Committee noted the progress made to date in the use of the grant, to transform family help and support services.

164. YOUNG CARERS UPDATE

This agenda item provided a presentation to the Commission on Young Carers following the Carers Strategy Update in July 2022. Two actions were identified relating to Young Carers which were:

- That future reports in respect of Young Carers would include strong evidence of co-production and assurances that the perspectives of Young Carers are being heard.
- That the service would prioritise provision of leisure and culture activities for respite for Young Carers.

The Chair welcomed to the meeting Helen Sweatton, Joint Assistant

Director for Commissioning and Performance and Paul Stinson, Commissioning Manager.

The Chair invited Councillor Cusworth to introduce the report and Paul Stinson to lead on the presentation, during which the following was noted:

It was advised that the voices of children and young people were very important to the service. Young carers attended the Children and Young People's Partnership Board meetings on a regular basis.

Local Challenges and Opportunities-

- Since January 2023, there was a statutory duty for all schools to identify young carers and record who identified them, in the Department for Education (DfE) school census data return. This was collected annually during the spring census and sent to the Council's Performance and Quality Team.
- The first year of School Census data relating to young carers was released in June 2023. The data showed significant under-reporting of the number of young carers in school and of the 45,627 pupils, only 20 young carers were identified. The next return would be in May 2024.
- Transition support for younger carers moving to secondary school and for young adult carers to transition to college and/or university, was an opportunity to be considered in the future due to increasing demands.
- Bereavement support for carers as losing loved ones was an emerging issue.
- Members of the Young Carers Council advised in November 2023, that they would like more links with leisure facilities to be held outside of buildings, as young carers were often in their home, caring for long periods of time.
- Partnership group work with health colleagues could be developed further to address mental health.
- Barnardo's supported the young carers that they were working with in schools if needed, around absenteeism for appointments.

Young Carer's Perspectives Were Being Heard-

- Future reports in respect of young carers would include strong evidence of co-production and assurances that the perspectives of young carers were being heard.
- Specific questions in the lifestyle survey collated evidence of the perspective of young carers.
- The young carers specification was being reviewed to ensure the perspective of young carers was included in all reports.
- The young carers service would be co-produced.

Rotherham LifeStyle Survey Data Extract from Young Carers in Secondary School-

- 79% of Year Seven respondents (450) said caring for someone did

not affect their school day.

- 81% of Year Ten respondents (329) said caring for someone did not affect their school day.
- 82% of Year Seven respondents (446) said it was very or sometimes important for them to have someone in school who fully understood their caring role and how it affected them.
- 68% of Year Ten respondents (328) said it was very or sometimes important to them to have someone in school who fully understood their caring role and how it affected them.

Respite Activities for Young Carers-

- The service was to prioritise provision of leisure and culture activities, for respite for young carers.
- The young carers specification was being reviewed to ensure leisure and culture activities were offered to young carers.
- Barnardo's would continue to be flexible, innovative and responsive to the needs of the young carers in future, issue-based group work would be offered, and young carers would signpost when appropriate to other leisure and culture services.
- Young carers were invited to participate in Rotherham's Capital of Culture programme.

Support for Young Carers and Young Adult Carers-

- Young carers and young adult carers undertook a range of tasks to support family members and/or friends. This included shopping, cooking, cleaning, managing medicines or money, providing personal care, helping people to get out of the house, keeping an eye on someone and providing emotional support.
- Barnardo's aimed to promote and improve the health and wellbeing of young carers (and their families where appropriate); by protecting them from undertaking excessive and inappropriate caring roles and responsibilities and preventing the continuation of inappropriate caring.

Barnardo's Agreement With Young Carers-

- Under the current funding agreement there were two dedicated project workers within Barnardo's and a Team Manager. They provided:
 - Time limited, one-to-one support where an assessed need of a negative impact was identified.
 - Support to gain a better understanding of the person they care for in terms of illness and/or difficulty.
 - Weekly issue-based group work for up to six weeks, focused around confidence, self-esteem, anger management, stress relaxation, keeping safe, bullying, health, hygiene and first aid training.
 - Access to activities during half term, whilst with the service.
 - Support to aid social inclusion.
 - Support in school to help with attendance and any other difficulty,

which may be identified in the assessment process, to ensure young carers received the appropriate support, to enable them to have the same opportunities as their peers.

- Support was boroughwide and referrals were taken by telephone. Referrals were made through schools, social care, voluntary organisations, and self-referrals.
- Barnardo's were commissioned to work with a select cohort of young carers since 2007.
- It was a small element of the young carers and the young adult carers landscape which they contributed to.
- This agreement was commissioned to support and protect young carers, from the negative impact of undertaking excessive and inappropriate caring roles and responsibilities, preventing the continuation of inappropriate caring.
- The service had an inclusive approach, supporting the family as a whole and working in partnership with other agencies. The aim was to reduce any negative impact of the caring role on children and young people and build on the positive strengths within families, increasing resilience and making a long-term difference.
- They were working with 49 young carers and 2 young adult carers who were individually assessed that their caring role was having a negative impact on them on them physically or emotionally. The assessment criteria used social and emotional drivers, developed by Barnardo's with existing young carers.

How Young Carers Were Supported Into Adulthood-

- Under the young carers Barnardo's agreement, support was provided to young adult carers, the service was working with via the following:
 - Attendance at meetings.
 - Supported via attendance and transportation at enrolment days at schools, colleges, and universities.
 - Information stalls at colleges, presentations in schools to staff and students and other services.
 - Referred young people to Crossroads Care which offered support to carers, respite, access to grants and also to Beacon Carers support services, which provided one to one support, counselling, relaxation therapy and group support.
 - Young person's grants were provided through Barnardo's to access equipment and essentials such as school uniform, and to access activities.
 - Cost of living grants.
 - Work with the Higher Education Progression Partnership (HEPP) helped young carers to explore university.
 - There was a gap in service provision for Young Adult Carers in Rotherham between the ages of 18-25 years old, as they transitioned to adulthood and did not feel ready to be part of Adult Services.
 - "No Wrong Doors" was an initiative launched in March 2015 and

there was a template for a local memorandum of understanding between statutory Directors of Children's and Adult Social Services, which was being updated by the Carers Trust UK, to re-invigorate this area of work.

What Needed to Change Nationally-

- Carers Trust was a major UK Charity which was for, with and about carers. They worked to improve support, services and recognition for anyone living with the challenges of caring, unpaid, for a family member or friend who was ill, frail, disabled or had mental health or addiction problems.
- In March 2022 571 young carers and young adult carers were surveyed between the age of 12-15 years old. The young carers and young adult carers who shared their thoughts and experiences were clear about the changes required nationally so that they would have the following:
 - Breaks and respite from their caring role and help from services that understood them.
 - Support for their emotional wellbeing and mental health.
 - Help from their place of education and/or employment, so that they could succeed.
 - Connections to friends and communities.
 - Better support for those they cared for.
- As a result, the following was recommended by the UK Charity Carers Trust:
 - More commissioned breaks and time outside of caring.
 - The UK Government, Scottish Government, Welsh Government and the Northern Ireland Executive should monitor how local authorities are meeting their statutory duties to identify and support young carers and young adult carers.
 - Education providers needed to take an integrated approach to support.
 - Prioritised access to mental health support for young carers and young adult carers.
 - Free or discounted leisure and transport.
 - More financial support for young adult carers, the carers allowance should be extended to young adult carers in full-time or higher education.
 - Sustainably fund the wider social care system, by increasing the availability of support provided by statutory sources for the person they cared for.

The Chair thanked the relevant officer for the presentation and invited questions, this led to the following points being raised during discussions:

- The recording of young carers was based on the statutory duty to record young carers, this was newly introduced. The service acknowledged that there was a lot of young carers who were not identified by the statutory reporting that were in place at the time. The Lifestyle Survey helped to identify young carers and the local

authority was holding regular conversations with schools to encourage further identification and referrals of young carers.

- A written response would be provided to members of the Commission, to confirm whether Adult Services prioritised adults who were being cared for by young carers.

Resolved:-

- 1) That Members of the Improving Lives Select Commission note the presentation and progress to date.
- 2) That the closed session in relation to this item be rearranged.

165. WORK PROGRAMME

The Chair advised that the Commissions Work Programme for 2023-2024 had been completed.

The Work Programme for 2024-2025 would be determined by the new Commission, in the new municipal year.

166. IMPROVING LIVES SELECT COMMISSION - SUB AND PROJECT GROUP UPDATES

The Chair advised that the Preparation for Adulthood Spotlight Review was held on the 15 February 2024 and the following was noted:

- The review very productive and identified that there was a robust partnership element and an imbedded strengths-based approach in place.
- There would be a further meeting on 12 March for members present at the review, to discuss and agree the recommendations and next steps.
- The Chair thanked all attendee's and officers for the attending the Review.

167. URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

168. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

The Chair advised that the next meeting of the Improving Lives Select Commission would take place on 18 June 2024 commencing at 10am in Rotherham Town Hall.

Resolved:- That the next meeting of the Improving Lives Select Commission take place on 18 June 2024 commencing at 10am in Rotherham Town Hall.

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EARLY HELP STRATEGY: FAMILY HELP IN ROTHERHAM 2024-2029



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Agenda Item 8

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FOREWORD

COUNCILLOR VICTORIA CUSWORTH, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE



As Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services, I have a specific remit for leading targeted and coordinated action across the early years and childcare system to improve outcomes for children.

I am delighted to introduce the new Early Help Strategy: Family Help in Rotherham which is central to delivering our collective vision of 'all agencies working together to ensure that children, young people, and families have their needs identified early so that they can receive swift access to targeted help and support'. We are coming from a position of real strength, with strong partnerships and robust early help and support provided to our children and families and are ready to build on the national Stable Homes, Built on Love' Strategy.

This sets out a vision for children's social care, Early Help and partners to provide the help families need to overcome challenges at the earliest possible stage, to keep children safe, and to make sure children in care have stable loving homes, long-term loving relationships, and opportunities for a good life. The Government's strategy presents a positive vision for a 'family-first' approach, prioritising early Family Help and valuing the support wider family and friends can offer including as kinship carers.

In Rotherham, we want all families to be able to access advice and support, as well as providing them with the tools they need to care for and interact positively with their children, whilst at the same time looking after their own wellbeing. We have made significant strides as a partnership towards these goals over the last five years and look forward to embedding these and being ever more ambitious for children and young people with the plans outlined in this strategy involving Universal and Community Help; Focused Help; and Specialist Help.

I am committed to championing this strategy, and working with partners and children, young people and families. I am excited to see the progress we can make together.



INTRODUCTION AND APPROACH



In 2023, the Government published a new vision to transform children's social care: 'Stable Homes, Built on Love: Implementation Strategy' in response to the Independent Review of Children's Social Care. This proposes significant changes to children's social care and Early Help, setting out a number of key ambitions including the need to provide 'Family Help' to help ensure all children and families can get the right help, at the right time, and in an easy way.

Further to this, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 focuses on strengthening multi-agency working across the whole system of support and protection for children and their families keeping a child-centred approach while bringing a whole-family focus embedding strong, effective and consistent multi-agency child protection practice.

The Early Help Systems Guide provides a framework, which helps to focus Early Help systems on common goals and progress towards these. In addition, the National Supporting Families programme is about building resilience by providing effective, whole family support at the earliest opportunity.

In Rotherham we are committed to ensuring that all children, young people, and families are resilient, successful, and safe, building on our key ambitions.

We recognise that all families benefit from and need help from time to time to enable their babies, children, and young people to thrive. We also know that moving forward most families want the resilience to be able to support themselves in the longer term, with their wider network.

For most children, young people and families in Rotherham, they flourish with support from services which are available to all families, for example GPs and Schools (universal services). Some families may need to access additional short-term support to address a specific issue, or may require more intensive, longer-term support, when experiencing more complex issues. This is common to all local authority areas, and within this document we will detail the different levels of support available for families.

We know that the needs of children, young people and families change over time and our partnership approach to Early Help ensures that families can access the right level of support at the time they need it. Central to a healthy Early Help system is agencies working together, to meet the needs of both the child and the family in order to achieve long term, sustainable outcomes.

Rotherham already benefits from co-location arrangements between a range of agencies working with children and their families as part of the development of our Family Hubs in Children's Centres. Family Hubs help improve whole family support from 0 to 19, including Start for Life services, through a physical network of hubs including a digital and virtual offer, as well as outreach and engagement support.

This same partnership approach needs to be applied when considering contextualised safeguarding and harm outside the home. This encourages collaborative working across the partnership to help children and their families understand their environments and associations outside of the family home, and to engage with community partners in order to minimise risk within a certain area.

THE VISION AND KEY PRINCIPLES



We want Rotherham to be a great place to grow up, where children and young people are supported when needed to reach their full potential. This will mean that children grow up happily, safe, in good health and develop the skills and qualifications they need to be successful.

This is not only important for our children and young people, but for the future of our Borough. Research shows that experiences in childhood have a major influence on outcomes across an individual's life. By supporting children and young people to have the best possible start in life and to develop, flourish and thrive we can prevent future challenges and address inequalities.

We aim to give Children the best start in life – This is identified in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Rotherham Health and Care Place Plan, the Council Plan and the Family Hubs and Best Start in Life programme.

All partners are committed to working together in a coordinated way with organisations, communities, children and their families to eliminate neglect and reduce child exploitation and keep children safe from harm – This is identified in the Rotherham Safeguarding Children's Partnership Neglect Strategy, child exploitation priorities, Council Plan and Police and Crime Plan.

We are ambitious for our young people, we want them to feel empowered to succeed and achieve their aspirations – This is identified in the Council Plan and SEND Strategy.

It is also important to us that children and young people have fun with things to do and safe places to go – This is identified in the Council Plan and SEND Strategy.

Our Early Help Vision

All agencies working together to ensure that children, young people, and families have their needs identified early so that they can receive swift access to targeted help and support – This has been co-produced and agreed by partners, stakeholders, children, young people, and families.

Key principles:

We have agreed the following principles to underpin and inform our work with children, young people, and families.

- Children, young people and families are at the heart of everything we do.
- Prevention and Early Help support is better than late intervention.
- Early Help is a shared responsibility, across the partnership, and is everyone's business.
- We will ensure that children and young people thrive in their families by receiving the right help, at the right time, and in an easy way, recognising the importance of relationship-based intervention.
- We are committed to promoting fairness; respect; equality; dignity; and supporting autonomy.
- We will listen to families, have purposeful conversations and provide support to improve outcomes.
- We will work restoratively with children, young people and families.
- Public, voluntary and community sector organisations are all part of the Early Help system and work together to meet the needs of children and their families.

WHAT IS EARLY HELP?



Whilst Working Together 2023 defines Early Help (above), it also talks about 'Family Help'. This is a new term that is inclusive of all ages and incorporates a number of services across the partnership. Family Help in Rotherham is not a single service, but a collaborative, whole system approach, that works across the partnership. This means children, young people and their families receive support at the earliest opportunity from a range of different services, dependent on their needs.

Family Help is made up of public, voluntary and community sector organisations working together to meet the needs of children and their families so that they receive the right support at the right time. These organisations include public health nursing, midwifery, mental health services, the Police, schools, nurseries, substance misuse providers, educational psychologists, domestic abuse services, childminders, housing providers, and other services working with children, young people, and families.

We know that prevention is better than late intervention to improve outcomes for families. For this reason, we focus on meeting needs early, as problems arise to help prevent them from getting worse.

- ✳ Identify needs early
- ✳ Right Support at the right time to stop things getting worse
- ✳ Best possible start through early education
- ✳ Whole family approach
- ✳ System of support
- ✳ Supporting families
- ✳ Partnership working

“Early Help is support for children of all ages that improves a family’s resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse. It is not an individual service, but a system of support delivered by local authorities and their partners working together and taking collective responsibility to provide the right provision in their area”

(Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023)

WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT FAMILIES IN ROTHERHAM



- **The population of Rotherham is 265,800** (Census data, 2021).
- Number of **children and young people 0 to 19 years is 62,646**.
- Number of **households in Rotherham is 113,926**.
- **Rotherham ranks as the 35th most deprived upper tier local authority in England** out of a total of 151 upper-tier local authorities (Index of multiple deprivation 2019 by LSOA).
- **21.9% of children aged 0 to 15 years live in absolute low-income families.** 25.7 % of children live in relative low-income families, for comparison, the percentage rate for England is 15.1 % and 18.7 % respectively. The number of Children aged under 16, living in relative low-income families, financial year ending 2021 was 13,193 (Index of multiple deprivation 2019 by LSOA).
- **There are 125 schools in Rotherham.**
- Of the 41,332 pupils school years Reception to Year 11 a total of 12,034 **(29.1%) are eligible for free school meals** (October 2023).
- **505 children in care**, this includes 382 in-family based placements (December 2023).
- **73.6% of children in reception class who are at a healthy weight** (2,275 children in total), in comparison to the national figure of 76.5 % (National Child Measurement Programme).
- **20.4% of pupils in Rotherham (9,325) have identified SEND needs** compared to 17.1 % nationally (Spring School Census, 2023).
- **3,192 Children and young people aged 0 to 25 years have a EHCP**, a 44 % increase in EHCP over the last 3 years. (EHCP data, July 2023).
- **89% of children aged 0 to 5 years old registered with a Children's Centre** and of those living in the 30 % most deprived areas of Rotherham, 92 % were registered (March 2023).
- **73% of children aged 0 to 5 years access Children's Centre activities.** 78 % of children living in the 30 % most deprived communities access Children's Centre activities.
- **323 care leavers in Rotherham** (November 2023).



3 STAGES OF SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES

I. UNIVERSAL AND COMMUNITY FAMILY HELP

Universal and community services are available to everyone - all children, young people, and families in Rotherham. They ensure families can access **the right support at the right time**, and prevent concerns escalating, helping families to help themselves, and preventing a reliance on statutory services. In Rotherham, these services are provided by lots of different agencies such as nurseries, schools, and colleges; GPs, midwives, other NHS services and 0 to 19 public health nursing services, including health visitors and school nurses; family hubs in Children's Centres and Early Help sites, libraries, youth services, and community organisations. These services may be the starting point for any family in Rotherham requiring information, advice, and support.

Rotherham has a strong voluntary and community sector who provide support to children, young people, and families. There are a total of 750 registered third-sector organisations in Rotherham, with a workforce of 3,778 employees, 4,218 volunteers, and 1,759 trustees, providing a range of support to improve health and wellbeing, increase community participation, cohesion and belonging, build resilience and independence, and address individual needs.

What we will do:

- Develop the **self-service and digital offer** to allow families to access information they need at a time convenient to them, including online parenting courses, signposting, guidance and advice.
- Continue to deliver **the Family Hubs and Start for Life Programme** to ensure that families have access to the information and tools they need to care for and interact positively with their babies and children, and to look after their own wellbeing.
- Provide **Baby Packs** to all new parents living in Rotherham, to help give their children the best start in life.
- Continue to **enhance the Local Offer** for children with disabilities and their families.
- Develop a **SEND hub** centrally based improving our offer of recreational activities for children and young people with SEND, providing a safe disability friendly space to support families accessing the Town Centre and the opportunity for peer support and access to calm/sensory spaces.
- Ensure children and young people with SEND and their families **have their voices heard** and this makes a difference to their experiences and outcomes.
- **Work with families** to help them understand their own wider network of support through family and friends.
- Increase the **Universal Youth Work offer** across the borough ensuring young people have places to go and things to do.



- Deliver the **Children's Centre offer** to children and families 0 to 5 years, increasing engagement with this universal offer.
- Further work with our **Voluntary and Community Sector to deliver services** to more children and young people across the Borough.
- Promote the **early identification of children and young people's needs** to ensure timely intervention to support them.
- Continue to deliver **Operation Keepsafe** – a multi-agency initiative that enables a proactive response to children and young people that are at risk due to being unsupervised and vulnerable due to the time of night that they are out, or the risky situations that they place themselves in.
- Ensure that all children and young people get the best possible start by working with families to **increase the number of children accessing early education**.

- Work in partnership to **expand wraparound care options** (before and after school) for primary school children by increasing the number of places available, to support working families.
- Continue to work with public and private sector partners to deliver **improvements in the choice of housing** available in Rotherham.
- Aim to **improve the health and wellbeing** of Rotherham residents, reduce health inequalities and protect the population from health harms.
- Continue to deliver the '**Rotherham Backs Breastfeeding**' campaign (as part of the Breastfeeding Friendly Borough Declaration).
- Aim to make **maternity and neonatal services more personalised** and equitable.
- Continue to support children and young people's mental health and wellbeing and as part of this we will aim to **improve timely access to mental health assessments and intervention**.
- Work in partnership with organisations, communities, children and their families to **increase their understanding of vulnerabilities to exploitation**, and keep children safe.
- We will encourage and support professionals and members of our community to **spot the signs of neglect** by increasing engagement, awareness and understanding of neglect.
- Continue to work with our local community to **recruit, retain and grow the best in-house foster carers** so that the needs of children and young people can be met in Rotherham.
- Partners will work together to increase the number of **young people accessing supported internships** and other opportunities for employment.

2. FOCUSED FAMILY HELP

Focused Family Help is available where families have not been able to effect positive change with the support of universal services and they need additional support. This may be an enhanced, more intensive and/or specialist support. It can be delivered in the home, in health settings, through schools, Children's Centres, and the voluntary and community sector. It might include parenting intervention, mental health and emotional wellbeing support, targeted youth services, youth justice services, and housing and employment services. Focused Family Help can support children and families who have several needs, or whose circumstances might make them more vulnerable.

What we will do:

- Ensure **community-based, multi-disciplinary focused family help services** are available to provide seamless support for families, spanning Early Help and child in need (Section 17 Children Act 1989) provision. This is inclusive of children with additional needs and disabilities.
- Avoid multiple assessments of children and their families **working seamlessly with partners** to build on existing information and assessments, ensuring that those best placed undertake or are supported to undertake assessment work where appropriate.
- Ensure that when children and their family have an identified need, **access to support is simple, avoiding delay and duplication** for children and families.
- Collaborate with education, health and social care where appropriate to **provide support for children with additional needs**.
- Work collectively with the Police, schools and colleges to continue to **deliver Operation Encompass** raising awareness of the impact of domestic abuse on the next school day for children.
- Work to ensure **all children and young people in Rotherham with SEND enjoy good physical and mental health**.
- We will work closely with schools within the Rotherham and the Department for Education (DfE) as they **develop mainstream SEND resource provisions** supporting children to continue to receive their education locally.
- Ensure **appropriate support for children will longer term health needs**.
- Work with colleagues across the partnership to **determine who is best placed to support the family, ensuring support is specific and based on need** such as housing; domestic abuse support services; education; community safety.
- Work with families to **help them share their circumstances with trusted family and friends**, with a view to extending their support network, improving resilience and providing a safe exit strategy.
- Work with partners to **review the current Early Help Assessment template to ensure it is streamlined and family-friendly**, as well as being a tool that be used by a range of partners.
- Ensure that across the wider family help system that school attendance is viewed as 'everybody's business' and **that barriers to attending school are understood and supported** through Early Help Assessments and the Rotherham School Attendance Matters Pathway.

- Work with health colleagues to **provide better access to mental health and wellbeing support programmes** for young people.
- Work with our schools to **reduce the number of children who are excluded.**
- Deliver targeted work with Rotherham's Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) and not known young people, supporting young people in **Years 12 and 13 to access employment, education, and training.**
- Deliver **street-based work with young people** within their communities.
- Continue work with partners, community safety and Police to support **early identification of vulnerability to prevent child exploitation and deliver support through Evolve outreach in schools.**
- **Support successful preparation for adulthood**, including independent living and employment.



3. SPECIALIST FAMILY HELP

Statutory services to children and their families are provided where children and young people need a high level of support or may be experiencing or likely to suffer significant harm. This can include services for disabled children, special school arrangements or specialist physical or mental health provision, for example. It may also include child protection services, working with those experiencing harms outside the home, care arrangements or youth justice services, including custody. Specialist Family Help is provided to families where the concerns are high and in circumstances where improvements have not been achieved through universal and community family help, or focused family help.

What we will do:

- Provide **a timely response to escalating concerns** for children wherever those concerns arise.
- **Utilise existing relationships with families**, across the partnership with those who best know our children.
- **Use family group conferencing or network meetings at the earliest opportunity** to support children to remain within their family network where it is safe to do so.
- Advocate for children and engage with schools to ensure children receive and engage in an **appropriate education offer**.
- Work with health colleagues to best **understand any unmet needs** (including mental health) for children, and ensure plans are in place to meet these needs.
- Ensure our Short Breaks offer is **flexible and meets need**.



- Where level of risks indicates, **work collectively** with Police and Health colleagues to investigate concerns and best support children and their families.
- Work jointly with partners and **utilise partnership information** to best understand children's situations **to inform joint decision making**.
- Engage **specialist teams** within social care to respond to crisis and support children and young people to remain within their networks where it is safe to do so.
- **Work with Health colleagues** to ensure our Children in Care benefit from timely health assessments and dental appointments and that any identified needs are met.
- **Work with families and partners to support planning** at all levels for children.

DELIVERY PLAN

Phase 1 (2024/25) Design



- Consult with children, young people and families on new ways of working
- Identify and consult with stakeholders (wider Local Authority, Police, Health etc)
- Consider the new 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' Framework 2023 and incorporate any required changes for Rotherham (P2)
- Develop a roadmap - child's journey across the Early Help system
- Review and update Early Help Systems Guide (July 2024)
- Budget and HR integration for relevant agencies

Phase 2 (2025/26) Implement and Deliver



- Clear governance arrangements
- Operational Group(s)
- Implement key outcome measures
- Implement the re- designed system
- HR support
- Budget monitoring
- Continued engagement with children, young people, families, staff and stakeholders

Phases 3 and 4 (2026/28) Maintain and Operate



- Ongoing delivery of services
- Implement Government changes/legislation
- Monitor service quality and adjust
- Measure success/outcomes
- Responding to learning - continuous improvement
- Budget pressures
- External evaluation

Phase 5 (2028/29) Evaluate



- Seek feedback from children, young people and their families
- Assess and identify areas of development
- Review and refresh strategy

HOW WE WILL MEASURE SUCCESS

The Early Help Partnership Group will be accountable for strategic oversight of performance across the Early Help system in Rotherham. They will provide robust governance and accountability arrangements with scheduled analysis and reporting to understand the impact of delivery for children and families and embed a partnership approach.

A multi-agency performance management framework will be developed which will monitor success via a set of outcome measures and key performance indicators from across the partnership. There will be direct links with other strategies and plans and may also be cross-cutting across partner agencies.

There are some examples of outcomes below, however, these could change during the co-production and implementation phases of the strategy delivery plan.

Local authority outcomes

- Reduce the number of children with speech, language and communication needs.
- Reduce contacts which progress to Children's Social Care assessment.
- Increase in the number of Early Help Assessments completed by partners.
- Reduce the number of children and young people where neglect is a primary concern.
- Increase the number of children and families ceasing Early Help support, achieving positive and sustainable outcomes.
- Increase the number of young people accessing Universal Youth Work sessions.

- Maximise the number of children aged 0 to 5 being registered with and accessing a Children's Centre.
- Reduce first time entrants into the Youth Justice Service.
- Continue to reduce young people re-offending in Rotherham.

Education outcomes

- Increased preparedness for children starting school in nursery or Key Stage 1.
- Increase school attendance.
- Reduce the number of permanent exclusions.
- Improve attainment outcomes for our Children in Need (CIN).



Health outcomes

- Increase breastfeeding continuation status at 6 to 8 weeks.
- Improve parent/infant mental health relationship.
- Increase in the number of families attending weaning sessions across Rotherham.
- Reduce the number of 5 year-olds with visual tooth decay (or other similar oral health outcomes.)
- Increased engagement in the Weight Health and Attitude Management service.

Safer Rotherham Partnership outcomes

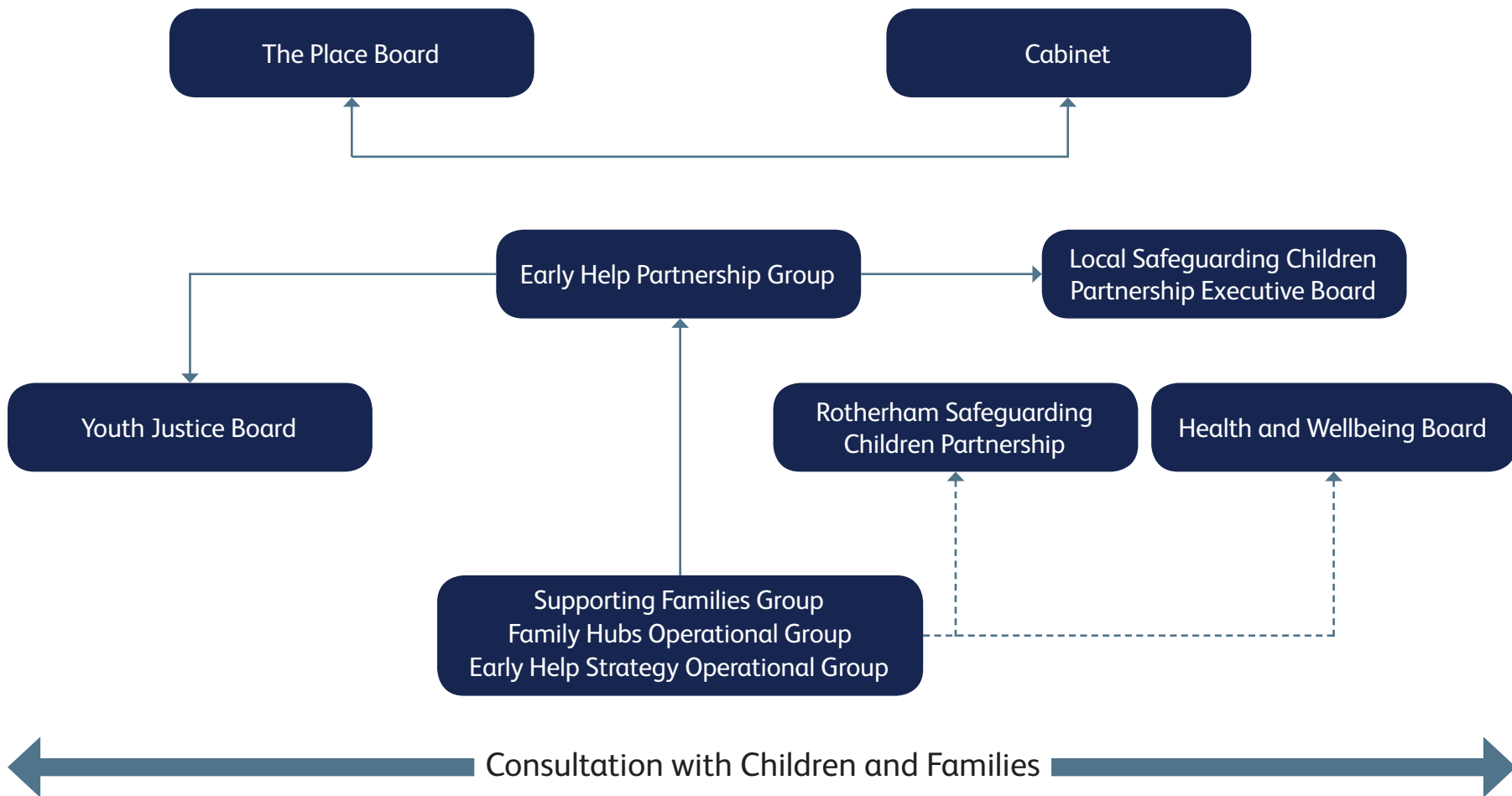
- Reduce the number and seriousness of children and young people missing.
- Reduce the number and severity of domestic abuse incidents.
- Reduce the number of children at risk of and experiencing exploitation.

Year 1 – Overall Outcome of success

By the end of March 2025, all actions identified in the design phase of the delivery plan will be completed and project management controls will be in place to begin implementation and delivery.



GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY



Consultation with children and families is well established as part of our day-to-day practice to gather and act on feedback from families and engage people with their lived experience (evidence-based tools). We believe that people who have experienced services should have a say on how services are developed and delivered.

OUR VISION OUR CHILDREN - RESILIENT, SUCCESSFUL AND SAFE



Thank you to all of the organisations and individuals
who will be supporting and delivering the Early Help Strategy

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Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Cabinet – 18 March 2024

Report Title

SEND Sufficiency Phase 4 Update

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

Yes

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Nicola Curley, Strategic Director of Children & Young Peoples Service

Report Author(s)

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Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

The report provides a further update in respect of SEND Sufficiency following the SEND Sufficiency update received by Cabinet in June 2023.

The report details the key activities undertaken in implementing Phase 4 of the SEND Sufficiency programme focusing on resource provision development and roll out of the Schools' Accessibility Funding Programme across both mainstream and special schools.

The report also identified key activities and outcomes that are currently in the process of development as part of a further Phase 5 of SEND Sufficiency linked to our Safety Valve Agreement.

Recommendations

That Cabinet:

1. Note the activity undertaken and progress to date on SEND Sufficiency Phase 4.
2. Note the key outcomes for SEND Sufficiency Phase 5 as included in the Safety Valve Agreement and agree for an additional paper to return to Cabinet once an initial feasibility has been completed.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 Part A - Initial Equality screening Assessment form
Appendix 2 Part B - Equality Analysis Form final
Appendix 3 Carbon impact FINAL Template

Background Papers

SEND Sufficiency Phase 4 update report – 19th June 2023 - [REPORT TEMPLATE FOR CABINET & COMMISSIONER \(rotherham.gov.uk\)](#)
Safety Valve Cabinet annual update report - 24th April 2023 - [REPORT TEMPLATE FOR CABINET & COMMISSIONER \(rotherham.gov.uk\)](#)
SEND Sufficiency Phase 4 Cabinet paper - October 2022 - [REPORT TEMPLATE FOR CABINET & COMMISSIONER \(rotherham.gov.uk\)](#)
SEND Sufficiency Phase 3 Cabinet Report - November 2020 - [REPORT TEMPLATE FOR CABINET & COMMISSIONER \(rotherham.gov.uk\)](#)
SEND Sufficiency Phase 2 Cabinet Report May 2019 - [REPORT TEMPLATE FOR CABINET & COMMISSIONER \(rotherham.gov.uk\)](#)
SEND Sufficiency Phase 1 Cabinet Report – February 2018 - [REPORT TEMPLATE FOR CABINET & COMMISSIONER \(rotherham.gov.uk\)](#)

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

None

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

SEND Sufficiency Phase 4 Update

1. Background

- 1.1 In Rotherham 20.4% of pupils have either a statutory plan for Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND), known as an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP), or are receiving SEND support (previously known as school action and school action plus). This compares to an average of 17.1% across all England Authorities. In order that the educational needs of children and young people in the borough with SEND can continue to be met, the Council has a responsibility to create a sufficiency of education provision to meet the needs of all pupils.
- 1.2 As part of Rotherham's involvement with the Government's Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) High Needs Deficit Safety Valve programme, the Council has worked closely with the Department for Education (DfE) to share and develop its strategic planning to ensure that the sufficiency of SEND places in the Borough is aligned to a sustainable financial plan to support the DSG High Needs budget moving to a balanced position across the lifespan of the Safety Valve Agreement.
- 1.3 In March 2022, following Cabinet approval, Rotherham entered into a formal Safety Valve Agreement with the DfE. As part of this agreement, additional SEND capital of £4.32m was provided to Rotherham to support the development of SEND provision in the Borough and enact its strategic plans as set out in the Safety Valve Agreement. This funding is in addition to the £3.16m High Needs Provision 2022-2023 and £3.04m 2023/24 capital allocations that are proportionally awarded to all local authorities.
- 1.4 The key strategic aim set out within the Safety Valve Agreement is to enhance mainstream SEND capacity to meet a wider level of need across all schools and mitigate the need for children, young people, and young adults to be educated in settings outside the Borough and promote inclusive practice. Specialist SEND education provision placement for children and young people in Independent Special Schools outside Rotherham has a higher cost base and consistently does not provide stronger educational outcomes.
- 1.5 From 2018 onwards, Cabinet has approved four previous Phases of SEND Sufficiency, each targeted at addressing incremental rises in SEND cohorts and creating or improving specialist education provision. The first three Phases of the SEND Sufficiency programme have created 401 additional school places in Rotherham.
 - In 2018, Phase one of the Sufficiency Programme focused on increasing special school places in the Borough as indicated by the rapid growth in demand for all specialist provision. These plans led to increases in places at The Willows School (including post-16 provision), Kelford School and Abbey School. Initial development of resource provision places at Wales and Waverley were also included within Phase 1. This created an additional 125 new places within special schools and inclusion units.

- The second Phase of SEND Sufficiency focused on the need for more targeted provision for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and children with profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD). 111 places across 10 schools were created including the development of new units at Wath Victoria Primary School and Brinsworth Academy, and increased places at Milton School. There was also investment identified for post-16 provision at Thomas Rotherham College. As a consequence of this investment, Rotherham has been better able to meet the needs of local children with autism and to place them in local schools.
- Phase three created specialist provision for children and young people with Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) needs who were previously placed in Pupil Referral Units. Through the DfE Free School Presumption Process, Elements Academy opened in September 2022. This Phase also looked at redeveloping an existing special school in the Borough through significant investment in rebuilding the upper part of Newman Special School which is no longer fit for the purpose of education delivery. 165 additional school places were created in this Phase.
- Phase 4 of the programme was approved for implementation in June 2023 with the main aim of SEND Sufficiency Phase 4 to support mainstream schools to meet a wider level of need and improve accessibility within both mainstream and special schools. Phase 4 includes the development of a minimum of 10 resource provisions across mainstream settings creating 100 new SEND places. A second main aim of SEND Sufficiency Phase 4 was the implementation of the Schools' Accessibility Funding Framework across both mainstream and special schools. An update on the implementation of both main areas of SEND Sufficiency Phase 4 is included in the main body of this report.

2. Key Issues

2.1 Resource Provision Update:

- 2.1.1 A resource provision is attached to a mainstream school providing specialist therapeutic input and support for pupils with a specific SEND need type. Pupils access support from the resource provision based on their individual need whilst also accessing mainstream classes and curriculum.
- 2.1.2 Following the expression of interest process and due diligence, the first Phase of resource provision implementation took place in Spring Term 2023. This included the approval of new resource provision at Thrybergh Academy and Dalton Foljambe and additional places at Wales High School resource provision. It is anticipated the building works will be completed so that the first places for children are available in September 2024.
- 2.1.3 There are currently 5 schools working through approvals to support the opening of their resource provision. The schools, breakdown of accommodation and projected places for academic year 24/25 are given below:

School/Academy	Phase	Primary Need	Places from September 24
Maltby Manor Academy	Primary	Social Emotional Mental Health	5
Thurcroft Junior Academy	Primary	Communication and Interaction	5
Brinsworth Whitehill	Primary	Communication and Interaction	5
Winterhill School	Secondary	Social Emotional Mental Health	5
Brinsworth Academy	Secondary	Moderate Learning Difficulty	5

2.1.4 Subject to completion of building works and necessary DfE approvals, 8 provisions for Phase 4 are scheduled to be completed by September 2024 with the additional 100 places being delivered in a staged way over the remaining two academic years.

2.1.5 The additional resource provisions and places will be developed during academic year 24/25 with a review of current capacity, provision mapping and analysis informing the remaining provision roll-out.

2.2 **Accessibility Funding Framework:**

2.2.1 In June 2023 Cabinet approved the School's Accessibility Strategy and Accessibility Capital Funding Framework. The intention of Schools' Accessibility Funding is to support schools to meet a wider level of SEND need through adaptations to existing buildings. This supports the Council's sufficiency strategy by moving the SEND continuum towards the mainstream.

2.2.2 The Accessibility Funding Strategy proposes three distinct areas including:

- Targeted work across mainstream and special schools linked to accessibility requirements for individual pupils and cohorts.
- Individual requests and contributions for individual pupils linked to established equipment panel.
- A small capital grant programme for schools open through application and assessment in line with schools' own accessibility planning.

2.2.3 In Spring 2023 capacity assessment work was completed by an external consultant across all special schools in Rotherham. This identified any current capacity gaps across the SEND estate which could be mitigated through Accessibility Funding. Where sufficient capacity does not exist, it is Accessibility Funding that has been utilised to develop additional provision for specific pupil cohorts who are struggling to access the existing curriculum offer within our special schools.

2.2.4 Since launch, Accessibility Funding has been awarded to the following special schools:

- **Nexus (Forest View) £370k** – the development of Forest View as a purpose built 14-19 provision for young people with SEND focusing on preparation for adulthood. The provision was developed in Summer 2023 after the decision to close Rowan School following the transfer of pupils to Elements Academy in September 2022. Forest View has created 50 additional SEND places.
- **Newman School £15k** – Newman was supported to develop a therapeutic space so young people can receive therapy on site as part of the core offer of the school.
- **Elements Academy £67k** – Through adaptations to unused (blank) capacity within the school, Elements Academy have adapted space to improve access to the curriculum for young people with SEMH. This has supported the school to provide an additional 45 places to help meet demand for places.

2.2.5 June saw the launch of the accessibility capital funding small grants' programme for mainstream schools. Grants were capped at a maximum of £50k in an initial funding round. Interest from schools was strong with 16 applications received initially. A multi-agency short-listing panel was formulated including colleagues in Education, Inclusion, Health, CYPS Commissioning, Asset Management and Rotherham Parent Carer Forum. Of the bids received, the following were approved in the initial funding round:

- **Brinsworth Academy** – £9.3k. The project will develop blank teaching capacity in the school to create a breakout area and Sensory space. This will support students who require additional support including those who access the Moderate Learning Difficulty resource provision within the school.
- **Wath Church of England School** – £1.2k. Funding will be used to develop a changing area for Foundation Stage pupils.
- **Wingfield Academy** - £50k. The development of a vocational teaching space to support an identified cohort of pupils with SEMH needs. The project will support the school to widen their curriculum offer with a planned reduction in use of alternative provision and school suspensions/exclusions.
- **Oakwood High School** - £50k. The project will support the school to broaden its support offer for young people with SEMH needs through adapting an existing building on site to create a break-out area and bespoke learning environment. The project is being jointly funded with the school.

- **Brinsworth Manor Infants** – £31k. The project will develop a nurture area and Sensory space for pupils who require additional support within the Foundation Stage.
- **Rockingham Junior and Infants** – £20k. The project will support the development of a Forest School and outdoor sensory area for young people with SEMH needs. The provision will also be accessed by young people who attend the LEAF SEMH alternative provision.
- **Waverly Junior Academy** – £50k. The project will improve accessibility to outdoor spaces at the school including the development of an outdoor learning area. This will support pupils across the school including those attending the established communication and interaction resource provision.

2.2.6 The small grants' programme has now been fully implemented with grant agreements agreed with each of the schools. Work is currently underway with all projects due for completion this academic year, subject to building works.

2.2.7 In addition to the small grants and special school applications, accessibility funding has been utilised to support individual pupils who require specific adaptations to support physical access to buildings and the curriculum. This has supported young people to remain within current education settings with support from the EHCP Team to identify pupils, working alongside both mainstream and special schools.

2.2.8 The Safety Valve Agreement recognises a Phase 5 of SEND Sufficiency. The main focus of Phase 5 is to provide increased sufficiency of places and condition improvements within our specialist provision. Phase 5 will cover three core elements which are detailed below:

- **SEMH growth** - the current trajectory of growth for SEMH provision identifies a need to increase specialist provision to create a minimum of 40 additional places during the period of the Safety Valve Agreement
- **Newman School** - continued investment on the Newman Special school site to update and enhance provision against current SEND sufficiency planning. Continued investment will enhance capacity and support placement of higher threshold SEND need in the school, avoiding placement in high-cost Independent Specialist or Out of Authority provision.
- **Pupil Referral Unit Development** - continuing to develop high quality mainstream focused Pupil Referral Unit/Alternative Provision is an essential triage for our SEND system. It supports the implementation of our Inclusion Review (carried out by independent experts ISOS) through ongoing capital investment and we can guide our provisions to focus on intervention-based approaches helping students to return to mainstream education and be successful.

2.2.9 SEND Sufficiency Phase 5 projects are currently forming part of a feasibility study which will be completed during Spring Term 2024. The study will identify

appropriate options for development including identifying appropriate school assets which could be developed, capital investment required and timescales for delivery. On completion of the feasibility study a further Cabinet report will seek appropriate approval to implement Phase 5.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 Cabinet is asked to note the progress of the SEND Sufficiency Programme, and that a formal feasibility study will now be undertaken to inform the detail of the next Phase of the programme.

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 As part of work that the Council undertakes as part of the wider SEND place-based partnership, a series of listening events are held with Parent and Carers across key areas of development across SEND. Previous listening events have included development of the Social Emotional Mental Health Free School, SEND Local Area Inspection, and Newman School development. Plans are in place for a listening event for SEND Sufficiency Phase 5, in order that parents and carers are fully involved in appropriate consultation and are able to support co-producing this Phase of SEND Sufficiency in the Borough.
- 4.2 All appropriate updates have been provided by RMBC ahead of this Phase of SEND Sufficiency via key discussions with the DfE. Key updates have also been provided to Schools' Forum, School Leaders' forums and associated partners, including the SEND Partnership Board.
- 4.3 Further formal consultation would be undertaken with key stakeholders for all new resource bases that open at individual schools as part of DfE significant change applications and would lead to adaptations to academy funding agreements. This would be overseen by individual schools as part of their application to the DfE to host a SEND resource base provision.
- 4.4 Ongoing updates linked to SEND Sufficiency and performance data are provided to Improving Lives Select Committee. This Phase of SEND Sufficiency will also have oversight from Improving Lives Select Committee.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1
- SEND Sufficiency Phase 4 Cabinet Report – October 2022
 - SEND Sufficiency Phase 4 EOI process – November – December 2022
 - Due Diligence and Selection Process – January – June 2023
 - First new resource provision places – September 2023
 - 5 additional resource provisions – September 2024
 - Remaining resource provision places – September 2025

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 6.1 The creation of 10 Resource Units as outlined in the report forms part of Rotherham's DSG Management Plan and Safety Valve agreement to enable Rotherham to operate within its annual DSG funding allocations by the end of 2025/26.
- 6.2 A Resource Unit provides a VFM solution and avoids a pupil from having to leave a Resource Centre on a mainstream site which costs circa £14k compared to being placed in a Special School which averages £22k or an ISP which averages £65k.
- 6.3 There have been no procurement implications in the work undertaken to date. In the next Phase of activity, if there is a need for the Council to directly engage third party contractors to deliver the works, this must be undertaken in compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (as amended) and the Council's own Finance and Procurement Procedure Rules. However, if the school(s) is(are) to directly contract for the works, there are no procurement implications for the Council.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

- 7.1 Section 14 of the Education Act 1996 places a general duty upon a local authority to secure sufficient schools to provide primary and secondary education in their area and they should have particular regard to securing special education provision.
- 7.2 Following the enactment of The Children and Families Act 2014, the Local Authority retains responsibility for commissioning services for children and young people with SEN or a disability. The Local Authority is required to keep the provision for children and young people with SEN or disabilities under review, including its sufficiency (Section 315 of the Education Act 1996), and to promote wellbeing and improve quality, working in conjunction with parents, young people, and providers. This Act and its associated guidance are clear that, when considering any re-organisation of provision, decision makers must be clear how they are satisfied that the proposed alternative arrangements will lead to improvements in the standard, quality and/or range of educational provision for children with SEN or a disability.
- 7.3 In order to minimise the risk of legal challenge, the Local Authority should ensure that it is fully compliant with all relevant legislation in this area and that it continues to satisfy its statutory duties through its decision making. Furthermore, the Council should also ensure that it continues make decisions that satisfy the terms of the Safety Vale Agreement

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

- 8.1 There is no direct HR implication within this report.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 9.1 Additional Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) places created within the borough give more children and young people the opportunity to access high quality provision to meet their educational needs and in line with parental wishes.
- 9.2 Key considerations are referenced within the report.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

- 10.1 Children and Young People with SEND are disproportionately represented across a range of education and inclusion measures. The SEND sufficiency Phase 4 aims to provide specialist education provision that supports identified cohorts with SEND needs to have enhanced education opportunities and provide support in order that all children and young people have the strongest possible preparation for Adulthood.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

- 11.1 All areas of SEND Sufficiency, student placed planning (inclusive of circa at least 100+ additional SEND places), and educational placements have a direct environmental impact, consideration of this element is informed in provision development and provision enhancement in the Borough due to the direct impact this will have to limiting students travelling outside the Borough. This would support reduced emissions of CO₂.
- 11.2 Wider consideration of indirect implications or unintended consequence of work in this area has on CO₂ Emissions and Climate Change is considered across all partners as the Council are committed to long term targets to mitigate these areas of concern in the Borough. An environmental impact assessment has been completed and is an appendix to this report.

12. Implications for Partners

- 12.1 Ongoing updates are provided to key stakeholders including Parent/carers forum, health leaders, school leaders, Schools Forum, and other associated stakeholders.
- 12.2 Development of specialist SEND provision in the Borough will enhance SEND practice for all SEND need types in the Borough and will support areas of focus to enhance SEND capacity across education system in Rotherham enhancing SEND provision in Rotherham schools.

13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 Across all areas of this Phase of SEND Sufficiency the council will adhere to guidance and advisory outline provided to Local Authorities by DfE in relation to significant changes or changes of designation for schools. Regular update meetings are held with DfE, and this will support forward planning across this Phase of SEND Sufficiency.

- 13.2 Across all key decisions and internal processes, decision making has had oversight of SEND Sufficiency Board which involves all key internal parties including legal, assets, HR, procurement, transport, finance, commissioning, and education specialists.
- 13.3 There is a risk that changes to schools' OFSTED rating, inclusive practice, national SEND guidance or required capital allocation results in schools listed being unable to successfully complete due diligence or receive DfE approval to host a resource provision.

14. Accountable Officers

Helen Sweaton – Joint Assistant Director, Commissioning, Performance and Quality

Julien Kramer – Assistant Director Education and Inclusion

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	04/03/24
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	23/02/24
Assistant Director, Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phil Horsfield	23/02/24

Report Author: Helen Sweaton Joint Assistant Director, Commissioning, Performance and Quality helen.sweaton@rotherham.gov.uk
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Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Cabinet – 10 June 2024

Report Title

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Strategy

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

Yes

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Nicola Curley – Strategic Director, Children & Young Peoples Service

Report Author(s)

Error! Reference source not found. Sykes – Head of SEND, Children and Young People's Services

Ward(s) Affected.

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

To support the future delivery of SEND services in Rotherham the report proposes to refresh the Rotherham SEND Strategy, vision and future priorities.

The report describes the changing regulatory expectations and current service position since the implementation of the previous SEND Strategy in 2019 and the conclusion of the Written Statement of Action following SEND Local Area Inspection in 2021. The report articulates a clear rationale for developing a new strategy.

Recommendations

That Cabinet:

1. Approve consultation on the refreshed Rotherham SEND Strategy that has been co-produced with partners across the Borough.
2. Agree to the refreshed SEND Strategy being presented back to Cabinet in late 2024 for formal approval prior to implementation.

List of Appendices Included

- Appendix 1 Draft Rotherham SEND Strategy 2024 to 2028
- Appendix 2 Part A - Equality Analysis Screening
- Appendix 3 Part B – Equality Analysis Form
- Appendix 4 Carbon Impact Assessment

Background Papers

1. Rotherham SEND Strategy [Rotherham-send-strategy](#)
2. Rotherham SEND Joint Commissioning Strategy 2020-2022
[Rotherham Joint Commissioning Strategy 202022.pdf](#)
[\(rotherhamsendlocaloffer.org.uk\)](#)
3. Rotherham All Age Autism Strategy.
4. Rotherham Early Help Strategy

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

Council Approval Required
No

Exempt from the Press and Public
No

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Strategy

1. Background

- 1.1 Following the joint local area SEND inspection in July 2021 partners in Rotherham have worked to deliver the Written Statement of Action (WSOA) to address significant areas of weakness in the local area's practice. The Written Statement identified four key areas of development for the Borough:
 - Quality of Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)
 - Communication of Local Offer
 - Preparation for Adulthood
 - Graduated Response
- 1.2 In September 2023 the Improving Lives Select Commission noted the feedback from advisors (DfE & NHSE) and successful achievement of the required improvements in the WSOA & successful discharge of priority actions.
- 1.3 The Department For Education White Paper on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Alternative Provision (AP) Improvement Plan published in March 2023 outlines the government's determination to level up opportunities for all children and young people – without exception. Rotherham is just as ambitious for children and young people with SEND as for every other child.
- 1.4 The National SEND review sets out government proposals for a system that offers children and young people the opportunity to thrive, with access to the right support, in the right place, and at the right time, so they can fulfil their potential and lead happy, healthy, and productive adult lives.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 The White Paper on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Alternative Provision (AP) Improvement Plan published in March 2023 has identified the key pressures on the SEND System nationally. The system is dealing with a level of volume for which it was not designed. The volume challenge is compounded by a lack of mechanisms in the system that would enable need to be met and demand to be managed more effectively. Local government has the responsibility to commission and shape local provision yet lack the powers to develop and change systems, this has led to an increasing reactive use of the independent sector. The independent market is poorly regulated and is a "seller's market", with increasing placement and provision costs.
- 2.2 Rising costs and cumulative deficit continue to place pressure on Council budgets with a risk of increasing numbers of councils becoming insolvent. Some families' experiences of the system are negative and some young people's needs are not being met with life opportunities being damaged.

- 2.3 It is important that a refreshed vision and co- produced strategy for SEND services in the Borough is developed to reflect the changing environment and the current priorities for children, young people, parent/ carers and families in Rotherham. A period of consultation and further engagement will support this.
- 2.4 Co-production workshops and engagement with young people has highlighted the need for the new Rotherham SEND Strategy to be written in a format that enables the children and young people to see how it will impact their lives. The outcome of the co-produced development is reflected in the language used to in the 7 outcome statements:
1. I have a voice, and this is listened to and respected.
 2. I am as healthy as possible.
 3. I feel safe.
 4. I have help and support in a way that suits me.
 5. I have adults in my life who are supported to help me.
 6. I am supported to be as independent as possible and have a purposeful life.
 7. I belong and feel valued.
- 2.5 Measuring the impact of the Outcomes and the subsequent action plan will rely on services from health, social care, education and children, young people, and their families. The key performance indicators have been developed to ensure all key partners are active participants in the delivery of the SEND Strategy. The Strategy key performance indicators ensure the participation and engagement of the key partners are measured and evaluated and used to develop Service and practise across the Rotherham Borough.
- 2.6 Evidence from Rotherham Borough data has identified three areas that continue to have a significant impact on the health, well-being and educational access for Rotherham children and young people. It is proposed they will become the focus of priorities within the SEND Strategy and will be referred to as **commitments**.

The following 3 commitments have been identified as priority areas of practice development and monitoring:

1. Reducing the number of permanent exclusions and part time timetables for children and young people with special educational needs.
2. Reducing the number of disabled children and young people and those with special educational needs missing school due to health concerns, including mental health.
3. Having a clear process for engagement with children and young people, by promoting the engagement through Young Peoples Voice and participation Groups. Development of an engagement process with mainstream and special schools is currently underway, this will include the use multimedia platforms as well as in person sessions.

- 2.7 The refreshed vision and Strategy (appendix 1) will also complement and support delivery of both Council and partner strategic priorities including the Council Plan, Year Ahead Delivery Plan, and the Rotherham Place Plan.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal.

3.1 Option One – Retain the existing SEND Strategy:

Extending the current strategy is not perceived to be viable as the current Strategy does not reflect the current regulatory and legislative landscape, nor the transformed Place partnership arrangements as part of the Integrated Care System.

Furthermore, this option does not reflect the current voice of children, young people, parents/ carers, and families.

3.2.1 Option Two - Develop a Rotherham SEND Strategy (2024-2028)

Option 2 is the preferred option as it would seek to develop a refreshed vision and strategy for SEND services. The Strategy would cover a 4-year term from late 2024. The Strategy would provide clarity about the co-produced vision and future priorities for SEND services, including the 'commitments' for practice development. The co-produced outcomes framework will enable children, young people, and families to understand the proposed impact of our actions and how this will be measured.

- 3.2.2 The Council develops its strategies and delivery plans in partnership with local people and ensures that they reflect the voices of our residents. This is integral to the expectations set by the regulatory framework.

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 The SEND Strategy has been co-produced with key stakeholders including children and young people and parents/ carers. Plans are in place to start a conversation with the wider population, this will include further conversation with parents, carers, children, and young people about how best they can be supported to achieve the co-produced vision and outcomes.

Consultation Events delivered with the Young Voices Group and Rotherham, Parent Carer Forum will enable young people, parent carers, leaders and front-line practitioners from health, education and care services including the private and voluntary sector, schools, and settings, to come together. The events will provide an opportunity to identify areas of strength when it comes to experience of SEND and co-production, as well as suggestions for further development of the Strategy.

- 4.2 The consultation process will use a combination of;

1. Electronic and Online Consultation
2. Paper Consultation made available in Schools, RMBC Buildings

3. Engagement Events, online and in person
 4. Consideration needs to be given to accessibility versions of the consultation documents, this will include language translation, Braille, and audio description.
- 4.3 Improving Lives Select Commission (ILSC) will be invited to scrutinise the summary of the consultation and any amendments proposed to the final draft strategy prior to Cabinet approval in December.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1
- Development of consultation and events – June 2024
 - Consultation Activity June 2024 – September 2024
 - Consultation Events September 2024
 - September 2024 Strategy Workstream develop Priority Action Plans
 - October 2024 work stream action plans shared with SEND Partnership Board
 - November 2024 Summary of Consultation to SEND Partnership Board
 - November 2024 Summary of Consultation and proposed Strategy with consultation amendments presented to ILSC
 - December 2024 Return to Cabinet with consultation amendments

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 6.1 There are no direct procurement implications arising from the recommendations detailed in this report.
- 6.2 There are no direct financial implications arising from approving the link headings, outcomes, and indicators (as outlined in appendix 1) to enable the development of the SEND Strategy 2024 to 2028 that would be subject to an 8-week consultation.
- 6.3 A financial assessment of the priorities for supporting children and young people with SEND and expected outcomes within the SEND Strategy would be undertaken once the Strategy is developed. However, it is envisaged that any financial implications would be contained within available SEND resources across health, social care, and education (in the Council and ICB). It should be noted that the development of the SEND Strategy is against a backdrop of key financial and demand pressures facing the SEND system both locally and nationally such as: rising number of children and young people with SEND; increasing number requiring specialist support and provision; insufficient local provision to meet needs; cost of living and inflationary pressures; rising number of permanent exclusions in schools; etc.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

- 7.1 The provisions of the Children and Families Act 2014 together with the guidelines set out in the SEN Code of Practice issued alongside the 2014 Act include the duty on the Council to keep under review the educational provision and the social care provision made in its area for children and young people who have special educational needs or a disability; and outside

its area for such children and young people for which the Council has responsibility; and to consider the sufficiency of such provision. (Section 27 Children and Families Act 2014).

- 7.2 The Council is under a duty to set out a “Local Offer” indicating the range of educational health and care provision available in its area for children and young people with special educational needs or a disability and outside its area for such children and young people for whom the Council has responsibility where this may be needed. (Section 30 Children and Families Act 2014).
- 7.3 The 2014 Act requires the Council to make special educational provision for children and young people whose needs cannot be reasonably met from the resources normally available to schools and post-16 institutions.
- 7.4 Section 19 of the Education Act 1996 places a duty on the Council to arrange suitable (normally) full-time education for children of compulsory school age who because of exclusion, illness or other reasons would not receive suitable education without such arrangements being made. Section 19 protected children often have special educational needs and disabilities, but the protection extends to any child of compulsory school age who is unable to attend school for any reason. Section 19 provision ends when a young person reaches school leaving age, but special educational provision and associated health and social care may continue until the young person reaches the age of 25 where the young person has special educational needs or a disability, under the 2014 Act, as detailed in the young person’s Educational Health and Care Plan maintained by the Council.
- 7.5 The adoption of a revised SEND Strategy is a fundamental contribution to the achievement by the Council of its complex shared duties to children and young people with special education needs and disabilities up to the age of 25 years, as well as other educationally vulnerable children of compulsory school age. Approval in accordance with option 1 will ensure that the development of the SEND Strategy is reviewed and maintained in accordance with statute and will ensure that the Council is able to remain compliant with the legal duties imposed upon it.
- 7.6 Maintaining the current SEND strategy will leave the Council open to legal challenger, in particular judicial review.
- 7.7 The proposed consultation of 8 weeks is sufficient. Section 27 Children and Families Act 2014 sets out full details as to who must be consulted when exercising the duty to keep education and care provision under review. The Council must comply with this to ensure that consultation has been properly carried out, a failure to do so will leave the Council open to legal challenge in terms of the consultation process.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

- 8.1 There are no direct HR implications.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 9.1 It is important that a refreshed vision and co- produced strategy for SEND services in the Borough is developed to ensure that services reflect the changing environment and the current priorities for children, young people, parent/ carers and families in Rotherham. Implications are considered throughout the report.
- 9.2 The strategy sets our ambition for services to ensure that more children and young people have the opportunity to access high quality provision and support from Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) provision within the Borough.
- 9.3 Approval of the consultation will provide children, young people and young adults with an opportunity to share their experience of SEND and co-production, giving them a key role in the further development of the Strategy.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

- 10.1 Children and Young People with SEND are disproportionately represented across a range of education and inclusion measures. The SEND Strategy aims to ensure we have Ambition, Inclusion and Equity for the children, young people, and their families.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

- 11.1 Implications have been outlined in Appendix 4.

12. Implications for Partners

- 12.1. The SEND Strategy development has been co-produced with all the relevant partners and voluntary sectors;
- Rotherham Parent Carer Forum
 - SENDIAS
 - Genuine partnerships
 - Special School representatives
 - Designated Medical Officer.
 - Social care and early help representatives
 - Mainstream School representatives.
 - Commissioners

13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 Lack on response to the engagement and consultation activity.
- 13.2 Relevant stakeholders do not support or engage in the action plan development and implementation.

14. Accountable Officers

Cary-Anne Sykes – Head of Inclusion

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	24/05/24
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	16/05/24
Assistant Director, Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phil Horsfield	16/05/24

Report Author: Cary-Anne Sykes, Head of Service, SEND

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**CONSTITUTION OF THE
OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SAFETY
AND
WELFARE PANEL**

2.

1. Name of the Panel

- 1.1 The Panel (a joint committee) shall be called the “Health Welfare and Safety Panel” hereafter called “the Panel”

2. Introduction

- 2.1 The Panel provides a regular forum for the Council and its employees to consider matters relating to health and safety and provide advice, guidance and recommendations to appropriate Committees or other Council bodies. The Panel has a remit to oversee the management of health welfare and safety across the Council. The Council's health, welfare and safety performance is reported to this Panel and to the Emergency and Safety Management Team. The Panel is not a part of the Council's executive decision-making structure.

3. Objectives

- 3.1. To promote a healthy and safe working environment for all members of staff employed by the Council and to protect the public from any risk of danger that may arise as a result of the Council's activities.
- 3.2. To monitor the welfare arrangements (facilities for eating, drinking, first aid, and toilets etc) provided for employees.
- 3.3. To provide a forum for consultation and as necessary, negotiation on proposals put forward by management and the trade unions.
- 3.4. To change the way in which work is performed by the introduction of safe systems of work, procedures and arrangements, including those for the training of staff.
- 3.5 To monitor statistics on accidents, incidents and illness and to recommend action to address key issues which may arise from that information.
- 3.6 To promote greater awareness of health, welfare and safety policies to assist in facilitating improvement in Council performance.

4. The Panel will make recommendations to the Council on:

- 3.1 Policies, procedures and correcting non-conformances of the above and statutory requirements in relation to the Council's operations, service delivery and assets.

5. Representation

- 4.1 The Panel will cover all employees in the employment of the Council of Rotherham MBC (“the Employers”). Trade Unions will represent its membership and non-trades union employees for the purpose of consultation as specified by the Safety Representatives and Safety Committee Regulations 1997 and the Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996.

6. Administration of the Panel

- 6.1** The Panel will be chaired by the Cabinet Member responsible for health, welfare and safety; the Vice-Chair will be nominated by the Trades Unions.
- 6.2** RMBC Democratic Services shall provide a Clerk to the Panel. The Clerk will be responsible for securing the agreement of agenda items between the Panel members and the distribution of agenda and drafting of minutes.

7. Delegated Powers

- 7.1** The Chair of the Panel (as a member of the Council's Cabinet) and Corporate Health and Safety Team have the delegated powers, by virtue of their office, to act on behalf of the Council to ensure compliances with statutory requirements (authority exercised through the Council's Standing Orders, scheme of delegation and obligations arising from the Health and Safety at Work Act).

8. Membership

- 8.1** The Panel shall comprise of the following appointed at the Annual Meeting of the Panel:

8.2 Employees

The representation of the Trade Unions shall be drawn from those Health, Welfare and Safety Representatives who are appointed by recognised Trades Unions. Trades Union Safety Representatives are entitled to time off for trade union duties under the terms of the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977 (as amended), Health, and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996 (as amended) and relevant approved codes of practice and guidance.

- 8.3** To obtain the involvement of the whole workforce, other employee representatives may attend the Panel. Full time officials of appropriate trades unions may attend on an ex officio basis.
- 8.4** The composition of the Trades Union Side shall be notified to the Clerk to the Panel at the beginning of each Municipal Year.
- 8.5** The number of representatives of the Trade Union Side of the Panel shall be a maximum ten at any one meeting.
- 8.6** The representatives who may be available to serve at any time during the year shall be appointed by the appropriate trade union branches.
- 8.7** The normal distribution of seats will as closely as possible be proportionate to the number of Safety Representatives.
- 8.8** Employee Side representatives of the Local Authority are to be appointed annually, but in any event to include:
- At least three teacher representatives, NUT, NASUWT and ATL.
 - A maximum of seven representatives from all other areas of Council work e.g. UNISON, UNITE the Union, GMB.
 - No individual Trade Union shall have more than three seats.

8.8 The Clerk to the Panel shall maintain an up to date record of recognised Safety Representatives and unions eligible for participation of the Committee. The Trade Unions will be responsible for updating Panel's records as necessary.

8.9 Employers

8.10 The Panel shall comprise six Elected Members of the Council to be appointed annually, including Member(s) from:

- Cabinet Member with responsibility for Health Welfare and Safety
- Members from Select Commissions (scrutiny)
- Members Training and Development Panel

8.11 Council Officers shall also be represented by Strategic Director with responsibility for Health Welfare and Safety or their nominated Operational Assistant Director. The Council's Health Welfare and Safety Officers shall also attend meetings of the Panel.

8.12 The Strategic Director or their representative shall attend meetings when a report appertaining to that Directorate (or Service Area) is before the Panel.

8.13 In addition to the members appointed to each side of the Panel, substitute members for the Employer's Side and the Employees' Side shall be appointed. In the event of any member of the Panel being unable to attend a meeting, they shall notify the Clerk to the Panel before the meeting begins and the substitute member shall then be entitled to attend the meeting. Trades Unions' substitute members will be current Safety Representatives or officers of the Trade Union.

9. Cessation of Membership:

9.1 If a member of the Panel ceases to be an Elected Member or ceases to be a Member of a recognised trade union, or is no longer the nominated person from the Trade Union, they shall cease to be a member of the Panel. Otherwise, members of the Panel shall remain in office until their successors are appointed and shall, if qualified, be eligible for reappointment.

10. Vacancies

10.1 Any vacancy on the Panel shall be filled by a representative nominated by the relevant group within a reasonable period and the appointment notified in writing to Committee Services.

11. Advisors:

11.1 Any member shall have the right to be accompanied by a person, or persons, in an advisory capacity subject to the agreement of the Chair or Vice-Chair. The attendance of the person or persons shall be only for the period during which the particular matter is before the Panel.

12. Attendees:

12.1 The members of the Panel may require the attendance of any Officer of the Council. Requests for attendance of an Officer shall be made no later than five working days before the meeting. Officers unable to attend should send a substitute.

13. Meetings:

- 13.1** The Panel shall normally meet four times per year. Additional meetings may be held if the business to be discussed is sufficiently urgent.

14. Quorum:

- 14.1** The Quorum of the Panel shall be three members. There must be present at least one Elected Member representing the Council and one Safety Representative from at least two of the Trades Unions. Either the Chair or the Vice-Chair must be present.
- 14.2** If when a meeting is due to begin and is not quorate, the start of the meeting may be delayed by up to 15 (fifteen) minutes. If the meeting is still not quorate at the end of this period, and those present have not received information otherwise, the members present may, at their discretion, discuss the matters on the agenda informally and notes of their discussions and their recommendations will be submitted to the next meeting of the Panel for verification.

15. Record of Attendance:

- 15.1** The names of members of the Panel attending meetings shall be recorded in the minutes and every member of the Panel attending shall sign an attendance sheet.

16. Submission of Meeting Agenda Items:

- 16.1** All potential items for consideration by the Panel shall be submitted to the Corporate Health and Safety Team no later than five days before the publication of the agenda for the meeting.

17. Distribution of Agenda:

- 17.1** The agenda and supporting documents for each Panel meeting shall be circulated to all members of the Panel at least five working days before the meeting.

18. Urgent Business Brought Forward at the Discretion of the Chair:

- 18.1** An item of "Any Other Business" shall not be included on the agenda. Members of the Panel may raise items of an urgent nature at meetings (which are not included on the agenda) provided that the prior agreement of the Chair has been obtained.

19. Approval of the Minutes:

- 19.1** The draft minutes of a Panel meeting shall be circulated to the Chair and Vice-Chair before being reported to the next following Panel meeting for comment. All members of the Panel shall be provided with copies of the minutes of a meeting as part of the agenda for the next following meeting.

20. Procedure

Meetings of the Panel shall be held at least quarterly, provided that the Chair and the Vice-Chair may authorise the postponement and re-arrangement of any meeting.

- 20.1.** An extraordinary meeting of the Panel shall be held within ten working days of a written request being received by the Clerk to the Panel from the Chair or the Vice-Chair.

Such written request shall indicate the precise nature of the business to be discussed and the reason for urgency.

- 20.2.** Items for consideration at any meeting of the Panel may be submitted by either side and should be received by the Clerk to the Panel at least ten working days before the meeting, except in the case of an extraordinary meeting.
- 20.3.** The agenda of business shall be circulated by the Clerk to the Panel to each member of the Committee at least five working days before a meeting. Extraordinary meetings may be called at shorter than five working days' notice, provided that the Chair of the Panel is satisfied with the reasons for urgency.
- 20.4.** No business other than that appearing on the agenda shall be transacted at any meeting unless the Chair to its introduction. Reasonable facilities shall be provided for individual (separate) meetings of both sides.
- 20.5.** The administrative expenses of the Panel shall be paid by Council. Minutes of meetings of the Panel and the preparation of official agendas shall be the responsibility of the Clerk.
- 20.6.** Copies of the minutes of the Panel shall be circulated to the Cabinet of the Council, the Corporate Emergency and Safety Management Team meeting and to the appropriate Directorate Senior Leadership Team meeting.
- 20.7.** Decisions shall be arrived at by agreement between the two sides of the Panel (ie: the Employer's and the Employees' Side), by members being present and voting at Panel meetings. Proxy voting is not permitted. In the event of the Panel being unable to reach agreement on a matter before it, then any such matter may be referred to the Chair of the Panel, who may make such recommendation to the Council as she/he considers to be appropriate. The Chair shall refer the matter back to a subsequent Panel meeting and shall report the views or recommendations of the Council. The minutes of that subsequent Panel meeting will record any decision reached. In the event that the two sides of the Panel remain unable to reach agreement on any individual matter before it and after consideration of the views of the Council, the minutes of the Panel meeting shall record that failure to reach agreement.

Appendix 1

Terms of Reference

Health Welfare and Safety Panel

This is a broad outline of the terms of reference of this group but is not intended to be exhaustive.

The Panel should operate in a positive way - reinforcing safety culture and employee participation in solving health and safety problems. The Panel should actively invite feedback, listen to employee views, and consider these views.

The Panel shall consider the following and make appropriate recommendations:

- (a). Assist in the development of and procurement of compliance with the Councils health and safety policy and guidance.
- (b). Assist in ensuring that policies / guidance give due consideration to the health safety and welfare of employees, young people and others affected by the activities of the Council so far as is reasonably practicable.
- (c). Assist in the monitoring and review of policy and guidance and consider/evaluate its effectiveness.
- (d). Consider / evaluate the effectiveness of health and safety training, communications, and publicity in the workplace.
- (e). Assist with, contribute to, and monitor the Councils Annual Health & Safety Action Plan.
- (f). Consider reports and statistics relating to significant accidents / incidents and dangerous occurrences.
- (g). Consider reports and information (incl. new legislation) provided by inspectors of the enforcing authority appointed under the Health & Safety at Work Act.
- (h). Consider reports (including inspections and audits) submitted by Trade Union appointed representatives, other Council officers and workplace health and safety representatives.
- (i). Make representations about resource and policy implications for consideration by the Council as appropriate.
- (j). Where appropriate, establish working groups to investigate problems or aspects of health welfare and safety and report their findings to the Panel.

Where practicable **ALL** issues raised should have been brought to the attention of managers of operational units prior to the Panel meeting.

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