

THE CABINET
15th September, 2025

Present:- Councillor Read (in the Chair); Councillors Alam, Baker-Rogers, Beresford, Cusworth, Marshall and Williams.

Also in attendance:- Councillor Steele (Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board).

36. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following declarations of interest were made:

Member	Agenda Item	Interest Type	Nature of Interest
Councillor Beresford	Bassingthorpe Farm Supplementary Planning Document	Personal	Involved Councillor Beresford's Ward and her property bordered the site.

37. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were 3 questions:

1. Mr. Hussain thanked all those involved in working together to fix the problems at East Herringthorpe Cemetery. A solution, albeit short term, had been reached. However, Mr. Hussain raised some new concerns regarding water getting into graves on the Christian side of the graveyard. He stated that Yorkshire Water were not acting or providing Dignity with any solutions. He asked if the Council could help resolve the issue. Mr. Hussain also asked what the next phase of the process would be so that the previous delays in trying to rectify issues did not have to be repeated.

The Leader also thanked those involved for the progress that had been made. He was not aware of the issues with water getting into the graves in the Christian section but would raise the matter with officers.

The Assistant Director of Legal confirmed that the Council would continue to work with Dignity to evolve the next stages of the plan.

2. Mr. Azam asked if a response could be provided in writing which clarified what the webcasting footage was used for and where on the website it said what the purpose of the recording was. He also asked about the East Herringthorpe Cemetery expansion and stated that there had been some confusion over what was due to happen. He asked if a strategic, long term plan could be produced for the entire Borough.

The Leader agreed to provide a written response in terms of the webcast. He also agreed to provide a written response in terms of what Dignity was commissioned to do in terms of their role and responsibilities. This would also be published on the Council's website. This information would also include clarity on the development of the next stage of the programme and where responsibilities laid for that.

In his supplementary question, Mr. Azam stated that there had been a site in East Herringthorpe Cemetery that had been reserved for burial. However, since the reservation, the site had been paved over. Mr. Azam had had to communicate with Dignity about making the site available for burial following a bereavement. Following this confusion, he asked for an update on when the contract negotiations would conclude.

The Leader clarified that the Council were not in the process of negotiating a new contract. It was in the process of holding the current contractors, Dignity, to account for the things they were contracted to do. If they were no longer able to deliver the contract, the contract would be terminated. This was an ongoing process and did not have an end date.

The Assistant Director of Legal confirmed that a report would be presented to the Improving Places Select Commission along with the service plan for that particular area.

3. Mr. Ashraf asked on what date did South Yorkshire Pensions Authority start engaging with Border to Coast in order to assert PIMCO's rationale for the purchase of their Israeli government bond holdings in the middle of a live streamed genocide and what response had been received, if any, to the severe environmental, social and governance risk in addition to the extreme political and media risk. The question had been directed at either of the Council representative's on South Yorkshire Pensions Authority, Councillor Sutton or Councillor Beresford.

The Leader confirmed that Councillor Sutton was not a Member of Cabinet and was, therefore, not in attendance at the meeting. He did, however, agree to pass on the question to South Yorkshire Pensions Authority.

Councillor Beresford, responding as a representative on South Yorkshire Pensions Board, explained that she served as part of the Governance Board which was responsible for ensuring all operational responsibilities were carried out. She had no input in investment proposals but agreed to take the question back to the Pensions Authority.

In his supplementary, Mr. Ashraf referenced the petition he had delivered to South Yorkshire Pensions Authority in June 2025 and asked what Rotherham Council could do, what the Pensions Authority could do and when an answer would be provided.

Councillor Beresford could not commit to an exact timeline but estimated a written response would take around 3 to 4 weeks.

38. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Resolved:

That the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 7th July, 2025, be approved as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

39. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

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

40. ROTHERHAM HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY 2025-2030

Consideration was given to the report which presented Rotherham's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2025-2030 for endorsement. The 2020-2025 Rotherham Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy was due to expire and work had been undertaken to develop a new Strategy for 2025-2030. The Strategy, attached as Appendix 1 to the report, had been considered and approved by the Health and Wellbeing Board, and was presented for endorsement along with an overview of the methods and evidence used to develop it.

Since September 2024, a cross-organisational working group had met to oversee a programme of consultation and evidence review to support the development of the 2025-2030 Strategy. This work had included interviews with Board members; a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) evidence review; a review of health and care related consultations undertaken during the past 5 years; a stakeholder survey; and direct engagement with the public.

Following the consultation and evidence review, the vision of the Strategy had been agreed as follows: to enable the people of Rotherham to live happy, healthy, independent lives within thriving communities, regardless of background and personal circumstance. The aims focussed on children and young people; physical health for all people; mental health for all people; and the wider determinants of health. Paragraph 2.2 of the report set out the 7 ways of working that would deliver the aims of the Strategy.

The Health and Wellbeing Board had agreed that there should be a small number of high-priority areas for the Strategy to focus on. It had therefore been suggested that a process be put in place to identify priorities which:

- a) required intervention from multiple organisations working together;
- b) would have a significant impact on the general population or on one of Rotherham's key vulnerable groups;
- c) were amenable to substantial, measurable progress being made within 5 years.

A stakeholder prioritisation event would be held in September 2025 to identify, consider and decide on a small number of key priorities for the Board to focus on over the next 5 years. While the priorities would be separate from the Strategy and could be refreshed or reviewed during the 5 year period, the mechanisms for selecting and identifying priority areas of work were a part of the Strategy.

Resolved:

That the Rotherham's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2025-2030 be endorsed.

41. HOW DID WE DO? ADULT SOCIAL CARE LOCAL ACCOUNT 2024-2025

Consideration was given to the report which presented the 'How Did We Do?' Local Account for Adult Social Care for 2024-2025 for publication. The Account summarised the achievements for the last 12 months and set out the priorities for the coming year. The priorities were aligned to the Council Year Ahead Delivery Plan (YADP) and the Adult Social Care Strategy (2024 – 2027). The Account also celebrated the hard work and dedication of the workforce and provided case studies to reflect the work of Adult Social Care and outcomes for residents.

Paragraph 2.1 of the report outlined the Council's achievements within Adult Social Care which included reviews of public information for young people preparing for adulthood, vulnerable adults and unpaid carers along with the Adult Social Care web pages. The Out of Hours support offer for people in crisis had been expanded and building work had started on the Castle View day centre at Canklow. A new Learning Disabilities Strategy had been launched along with a new All Age Autism Strategy.

Paragraph 2.2 of the report outlined the Council's priorities for the year ahead which included implementing an online Adult Care Social portal, investing in new assistive technologies and seeking further opportunities to deliver services collaboratively.

The Local Account provided a view of the real and tangible impact Adult Social Care had on residents' lives through several case studies, as well as highlighting the voice of residents through the complaints and

compliments process. It also included the improvements being implemented within Services to address issues raised by residents to ensure there was a process of continual service improvement to achieve the expected standards.

It was confirmed during the meeting that the Council had been inspected by the Care Quality Commission and an announcement due in November 2025 with the results of that inspection.

Resolved:

1. That the 'How Did We Do?' Local Account for Adult Social Care for 2024 – 2025 be approved for publication.

42. ROTHERHAM'S ALL AGE AUTISM STRATEGY 2024-2027 UPDATE

Consideration was given to the report which provided an update on the delivery of Rotherham's All Age Autism Strategy 2024-2027 which had been adopted by Cabinet in February 2024.

The report set out the progress by Rotherham Place partners to deliver the ambition set out in the All-Age Autism Strategy 2024-2027, which was focused on ensuring services in Rotherham were accessible and inclusive. It also set out the changes since 2024 in data and prevalence of Autism in Rotherham along with the co-produced priorities for the Strategy and how these had been progressed. Additionally, the report set out the plans to embed the voice and experience of autistic people by refreshing the structure of the Rotherham Autism Partnership Board, which would support the delivery of the Strategy and plan for the next iteration of the Strategy.

Cabinet had agreed that the All Age Autism Strategy action plan should be co-produced with autistic people, families and stakeholders. In response, Rotherham Parent Carers Forum led a series of engagement activities, including voice sessions and surveys, to ensure that the priorities reflected lived experience and local need. The co-production activities had helped shape the development of the action plan, ensuring it was grounded in what mattered most to autistic individuals and their families. The outcomes of the engagement were detailed in Appendix 2, which summarised the key priorities identified through the process. Autistic people in Rotherham had consistently highlighted the importance of having their voices heard and meaningfully included in shaping how the Borough supported and included autistic individuals.

To further strengthen voice and co-production, Rotherham Parent Carers Forum was leading work to re-design the structure of the Autism Partnership Board. This would ensure greater accessibility and inclusion. From September 2025, the Partnership Board would meet 3 times a year, and the ambition was that these meetings will be held at the new SEND Hub (Eric Manns Building), which was scheduled to open in September

2025. This venue would support a more inclusive environment for engagement and collaboration.

The Leader thanked Councillor Baker-Rogers for her dedication to this area of work, particularly the drive to improve standards.

Resolved:

That Cabinet:

1. Note the progress being made by Place partners to improve the lives of autistic people living and working in Rotherham.
2. Support the recommended proposal for the transformation of Rotherham's Autism Partnership Board, led by Rotherham Parent Carers Forum.
3. Approve the commencement of co-producing the next Rotherham All Age Autism Strategy.

43. JULY 2025-26 FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT

Consideration was given to the report which set out the financial position as at the end of July 2025 and forecast for the remainder of the financial year, based on actual costs and income for the first 4 months of 2025/26. As of July 2025, the Council's financial position for 2025/26 remained positive, although there was a forecast overspend of £2.4m. This position was made up of a Directorate overspend of £7.7m, offset by a projected Central Service underspend of £5.3m. Whilst this was an overspend, the Council expected to be able to manage this pressure during the year and return to a balanced position following mitigating actions.

The Directorate overspend of £7.7m was largely due to demand led pressures in relation to Children's residential placements and placement types. Increased costs were also being felt across the wider Children's Social Care market, and this was leading to market prices increasing at above inflation levels, placing further pressures on the Council's Budget. These pressures were anticipated, and a corporate provision was maintained within Central Services as part of the Budget and Council Tax Report 2025/26.

The Local Government Pay Award had been agreed at 3.2% at all pay bands up to senior officer. The impact of this was a cost of £2.3m above the budget that was allocated when setting the Council's Budget. The Council had no control over the level of pay award agreed. Central Services was forecasting an underspend of £5.3m, reflecting use of the £5.4m Social Care Contingency approved within the Council's Budget and Council Tax Report 2025/26, the impact of the Local Government Pay Award and savings generated within the Council's Treasury Management Strategy.

The Council's Treasury Management Strategy continued to perform well, with the Council's approach to borrowing adapted to minimise the level of borrowing and borrow short term to ultimately minimise interest costs. The position had also improved following the outturn for 2024/25 because of re-profiling of the Capital Programme delivery, which pushed back the need to borrow. It was estimated that this approach should see the Council generate savings to support Council-wide pressures. However, it was noted that the Council's Budget and Council Tax Report 2025/26 approved a requirement for the Treasury Management Strategy to save at least £3m in 2025/26. This was on track, however, economic and market conditions were out of the Council's control.

An update on the Council's Capital Programme was set out in paragraph 2.16 of the report. The revised Capital Programme was £209.479m, split between the General Fund (£144.733m) and the Housing Revenue Account (£64.746m.) This was a decrease of £1.545m from the position reported to Cabinet on 7th July, 2025, the majority of which related to the reprofiling of schemes.

The report was considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB), who advised that the recommendations be supported.

Resolved:

That Cabinet:

1. Note the current General Fund Revenue Budget forecast overspend of £2.4m.
2. Note whilst there is a projected overspend, the Council expects to be able to manage this pressure during the year and return to a balanced position following mitigating actions. Should that not be possible the Council will need to draw on its reserves to balance the 2025/26 financial position.
3. Note the updated position of the Capital Programme.

44. NEW APPLICATIONS FOR BUSINESS RATES RELIEF FOR GRIMM AND CO LIMITED, FOOD AWARE CIC AND CITY OF SHEFFIELD GYMNASTICS CLUB CIC

Consideration was given to the report which set out the applications for the award of Discretionary Business Rates Relief for Grimm And Co. Limited, Food Aware CIC and City of Sheffield Gymnastics Club CIC. This was in accordance with the Council's Business Rates Discretionary Relief Policy (approved by Officer Executive Decision on 01/07/2025.)

Grimm And Co. Limited was a registered charity based in Rotherham Town Centre that delivered free literacy education projects to children, young people and families. The Charity targeted those who needed it the most to improve their reading and writing, motivating children and young people to write, and build confidence, self-esteem and aspirations.

The Charity recruited, supported and trained volunteers from across the community including adults with learning disabilities, mental health issues and additional needs who were nurtured, supported and learnt new skills. The current number of volunteers stood at 153 who worked in the shop environment and with young people and families where appropriate.

The Charity was applying for discretionary relief with regards to their 2024/25 and 2025/26 rates liability. The cost to Rotherham Council would be £1,830.88 for 2024/25 and £1,846.05 for 2025/26.

The application for the award of discretionary relief was considered to be in line with the Council's qualifying criteria as set out in the Policy. The Charity provided access to facilities which were open to all sections of the community. It provided education and welfare support that complemented the statutory services provided by the Council and was focused on work that was in line with the Council's priorities for children and young people.

Food Aware CIC was a not-for-profit social enterprise which redistributed surplus/donated food and other items e.g. cleaning materials, clothes, toys, and furniture to local community groups across the Yorkshire and Humberside regions with predominant support given in the Rotherham and Doncaster areas. Around 50% of service users were from the Rotherham Borough.

The organisation liaised with commercial outlets to receive surplus food and supplies which were distributed via approved community partner organisations. Support was currently provided to over 130 community organisations across Yorkshire & Humberside, supporting over 4,000 people each week including Maltby Foodbank, FA Rotherham Community Kitchen, Sunnyside Supplies, Maltby Town Council and Crossroads Care Rotherham.

The Cabinet had previously approved discretionary relief on the organisation's existing business rates liabilities for other smaller units at the same business address. Due to an increase in demand to support local communities through the current cost of living crisis, an additional storage unit was required to store donated ambient food and other household essentials which enabled the organisation to accept even more surplus essential supplies, support more communities and avoided refusal of these much needed donations.

The organisation was applying for discretionary relief with regards to their 2024/25 and 2025/26 rates liability. The cost to Rotherham Council would be £2,882.88 for 2024/25 (starting from November 2024) and £6,968.54 for 2025/26.

The application for the award of discretionary relief was considered to be in line with the Council's qualifying criteria as set out in the Policy. The services provided were open to all not-for-profit community groups which were run by volunteers with vital support being delivered to the residents of Rotherham.

The City of Sheffield Gymnastics Club CIC was a not-for-profit gymnastic club who taught sports and fitness to children and some adults. The Club was affiliated to the British Gymnastics Association and the Yorkshire Gymnastics Association. It had 250 members with between 60-70% of members from the Rotherham Borough. Members paid a nominal membership fee each year and a small monthly fee to gain access to 22 classes each week and the opportunity to compete in local, regional and national gymnastics competitions. Coaching and mentoring were provided to teenagers to enable them to participate in coaching classes. Any surplus made was reinvested into new and maintenance of equipment, staff training and general operational running costs.

The Club was applying for discretionary relief from when they became a Community Interest Company in 2024/25 and for their 2025/26 rates liability. The cost to Rotherham Council would be £4,187.49 for 2024/25 and £5,745.99 for 2025/26.

The application for the award of discretionary relief was considered to be in line with the Council's qualifying criteria as set out in the Policy. The Club provided access to facilities which were open to all sections of the community and provided training and fitness to children and adults.

Resolved:

1. That Cabinet approve the applications for Discretionary Business Rates Relief for Grimm And Co. Limited, Food Aware CIC and City of Sheffield Gymnastics Club CIC in accordance with the details set out in Section 6 to this report for the 2024/25 and 2025/26 financial years.

45. INVESTING IN OUR COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Consideration was given to the report which set out the Council's commitment to invest in several community buildings, initially over the next 2 years, through the investment of £600,000, already approved as part of the Budget and Council Tax report at Council in March 2025. The £600,000 investment would be targeted at buildings with the greatest need, with a focus on health, safety, compliance, and structural integrity. Officers from Property and Facilities Services, in collaboration with the Council's Neighbourhood Teams and community groups, would define the

scope of works and ensure that any investment was aligned with sustainable occupancy and governance arrangements. Where possible, other forms of funding, whether internal or external, would be sought to complement the already allocated £600,000.

Section 2.4 of the report detailed the community facilities that had been identified jointly by the Property & Facilities Service and the Neighbourhood Teams. These were:

- The Black Hut: A cost of £200,000 was estimated to carry out structural repairs and compliance upgrades, accessibility improvements and energy efficiency measures. Work was being assessed for the best route to market with a view of starting prior to the end of Autumn 2025 with a completion date of March 2026. The aim was to re-open the facility under a sustainable management model, ensuring it continued to serve the Kimberworth Park community safely and effectively.
- Oaklea Retreat: Costs identified for the works would be determined once surveys had been completed. Initial works that had been identified included structural repairs, accessibility improvements, energy efficiency measures and establishing a formal lease and governance structure. It was envisaged that work would be procured and commissioned over the winter months and completed through spring, no later than the end of March 2026.
- Clifton Learning Partnership: Work would be undertaken to provide replacement windows, signage and decorations, repairs paths and car parking areas, and carry out improvements to access to ensure DDA (Equality Act) compliance. The works to Clifton were currently programmed for the next phase from March 2026 onwards. Detailed surveys would be carried out over winter and into early spring. Once completed this would determine a more accurate timescale to carry out the works identified. Costs of the works would be determined once surveys were complete and would fall within the budget allocation for the overall project.
- The Meeting Place: Aligned with the Clifton Learning Partnership, the buildings and surrounding assets would need a full survey to determine costs and timescales. Works would align with the surveys being carried out beyond March 2026 and works completed no later than March 2027. The work would include, as a minimum, painting and decoration, signage upgrades, energy efficiency measures and establishing a formal lease and governance structure.
- Artworks, Brook Hill: The proposed investment at the Brook Hill site would include essential external improvements, including rainwater goods, soundproofing, and energy efficiency upgrades such as insulation and lighting. A more detailed survey would take place in Spring 2026, developing the scope and a final list of works required.

All works would then be completed no later than the end of March 2027.

The report was considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB), who advised that the recommendations be supported. During the debate at OSMB, it had been agreed that an asset register of all Council buildings, including the Wards they were located in be produced immediately and that an update report be provided in 12 months to OSMB to include the updated condition survey results, where available. An additional recommendation was put to Cabinet that the Assistant Director for Property and Facilities Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member, ensure that Ward Members were informed of the condition survey findings within their Ward and were consulted regarding investment planning in community facilities within their Ward. This recommendation was accepted by Cabinet.

Resolved:

That Cabinet:

1. Approve the works set out in section 2.4 in relation to:
 1. The Black Hut;
 2. Oaklea Retreat;
 3. Clifton Learning Centre;
 4. The Meeting Place (Wingfield); and
 5. Artworks, Brook Hill
2. Delegate authority to the Assistant Director for Property and Facilities Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Community Safety to amend the works as required within budget.
3. Accept the proposal from the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board and agree that the Assistant Director for Property and Facilities Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member, will ensure that Ward Members are informed of the condition survey findings within their Ward and are consulted regarding investment planning in community facilities within their Ward.

46. COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGY 2025-2028

Consideration was given to the report which presented the Safer Rotherham Partnership Strategy, which was the Council's Community Safety Strategy, for endorsement and referral to Council for approval.

The Safer Rotherham Partnership (SRP), of which the Council was a key statutory partner, had agreed a new Safer Rotherham Partnership Strategy, setting out priorities and commitments for the period 1st April 2025 to 31st March, 2028. The previous Safer Rotherham Partnership Strategy 2022-25 guided the Partnership in delivering significant work to

protect vulnerable children and adults, build safer, stronger communities and tackle domestic abuse, serious violence and organised crime.

The Safer Rotherham Partnership had used an evidence-based approach to agree the new priorities, drawing on analysis of partnership crime and community safety data and the outcomes of a comprehensive programme of consultation to capture the views of key stakeholders, including people who lived, visited or worked in Rotherham. This process identified 3 main priorities that shaped the new Strategy: Safer Neighbourhoods; Tackling violence, abuse and exploitation; and preventing offending and building resilience. The objective areas and commitments that sat under the priorities were detailed in paragraph 2.4 of the report.

Paragraph 2.5 of the report outlined the Cross Cutting Themes which impacted all community safety priorities. These were Online Crime; Service User Voice; and Equality.

Section 4 of the report and Appendix 2 to the report detailed the consultation outcomes. SRP partner agency consultation and data gathering took place from September 2024 and continued until the final draft strategy was circulated to SRP Board members prior to their meeting on 15th April, 2025, and the Strategy was finalised. The wider stakeholder, Elected Member and public consultation on the proposed priorities ran from September 2024 to December 2024.

The outcome of the consultation was broadly supportive of the priority areas identified. In relation to the areas of focus, there were some variances but generally people thought the partnership should focus on raising awareness and delivering prevention and early intervention activities. The full outcome of the consultation has been provided to each SRP priority lead to inform development of their action plans.

During the meeting, the dangers of online crime and the difficulties in dealing with that were discussed.

The report was considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB), who advised that the recommendations be supported. During the debate at OSMB, perception of anti-social behaviour was discussed. During the Cabinet meeting it was confirmed that actions to address the perception of anti-social behaviour were only a very small part of the Strategy. The key element was addressing anti-social behaviour in its entirety.

Resolved:

That Cabinet:

1. Endorse the Safer Rotherham Partnership Strategy and recommend it to Council for approval.

2. Note the requirement for scrutiny of the Safer Rotherham Partnership Annual Report, which was discharged by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.
3. Approve the ongoing informal consultation to capture service user voices throughout the duration of the plan.

47. NO FAMILY LEFT BEHIND STRATEGY

Consideration was given to the report which presented the No Family Left Behind Strategy, addressing child poverty, for approval. A Notice of Motion was passed in September 2024 calling for Cabinet to co-ordinate the development of a new strategy to reduce the impact of child poverty in Rotherham. Rotherham Council was committed to putting families at the heart of decision making and the Council's family friendly budget demonstrated this commitment. The Strategy represented Rotherham's commitment to addressing the causes of poverty and reducing its impact, bringing together the activity across the Borough to ensure no family was left behind.

The development of the Strategy had involved collaborative working across all Rotherham Council Directorates and a survey of the Children and Young People's Partnership Board to create a shared understanding of poverty. All Directorates had reviewed the activity that they delivered to address the causes of poverty and reduce the impact of child poverty.

Investments in baby packs, youth work and Early Help Services, and children's play areas were included in the family friendly budgets approved by Council for 2024/25 and 2025/26. Further, children and young people achieving their potential was a key priority at the heart of the refreshed Council Plan that was agreed in May 2025.

Based on research from End Child Poverty, 31% of Rotherham children were living in poverty in 2023/24. This was the same as the national average, and a slight increase on the 2022/23 figure of 30.3%. On the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019 (IMD 2019) Rotherham ranked as the 35th most deprived upper tier local authority in England out of a total of 151 authorities. 35% of Rotherham's neighbourhoods were in the 20% most deprived in England, and 22% lived in the 10% most deprived. No neighbourhoods in Rotherham were in the least deprived 10%. In 2024, 26% of children lived in absolute low-income families (England 19%). Rotherham's free school meals entitlement rate was above the English national average (27.2% compared to 24.7% at Primary, 30.2% compared to 25.9% at Secondary – DfE 2024/25). 25.9% of Rotherham's school age population was from an ethnic minority background (England 36%) (DfE 2024/25).

The Rotherham Together Partnership wanted Rotherham to be a great place to grow up, where children and young people had the best chance to reach their full potential. This would mean that children grow up happily, safe, in good health and develop the skills and qualifications they need to be successful. The Strategy articulated the ambition to address the poverty-related barriers to achieving Rotherham's vision for children, young people, and families. These included: Best Start - Children get the best start in life; Safe - Children and young people are safe from harm; Achieve - Young people feel empowered to succeed and achieve their aspirations; and Have fun - Children and young people have fun things to do and safe places to go.

The report was considered by the Improving Lives Select Commission (ILSC). They requested that consideration be given by Cabinet regarding the inclusion of cultural education and associated available schemes within the Strategy. Cabinet accepted the recommendation.

Resolved:

That Cabinet:

1. Accept the proposal from the Improving Lives Select Commission regarding the inclusion of cultural education and associated schemes and approves the amended strategy No Family Left Behind, addressing child poverty.
2. Note the ongoing work to reduce the impact of poverty and improve family prosperity across the Borough.

48. HOUSING STRATEGY 2025-2030

Consideration was given to the report which presented the Housing Strategy 2025-2030 for approval. The Strategy had been developed following a 12 week consultation period with tenants and residents, officers and key stakeholders, and in the context of Government Policy, data and housing intelligence. Its purpose was to set out the Council's strategic priorities for housing over the next 5 years. The Strategy also recognised the key issues affecting housing in Rotherham and the impact those issues had on residents. It set out how the Council would work in partnership to address the issues identified and demonstrated alignment with other key Council strategies and plans.

Rotherham's 30-year Housing Strategy was published in December 2012. It set out the Council's long-term vision for housing in the Borough until 2043. Since 2012, the Housing Strategy had been refreshed regularly to ensure it remained up-to-date and addressed the current challenges and opportunities and referenced the latest statistical evidence. This Strategy would be the fifth chapter of the 30 year Housing Strategy. The Strategy period would be increased from 3 years to 5 to allow sufficient time for

progress to be made against each of the priorities and to allow for alignment with the Council Plan.

A summary of the achievements covering the period between April 2022 and March 2025 was set out in paragraphs 1.5 to 1.9 of the report. As part of the Council's Housing Delivery Programme, 304 homes had been delivered for Council rent and 37 for Shared Ownership across the Borough during the last 3 years, which was over a third of the Council's 1,000 new homes target. This included the completion of 3 housing sites in the Town Centre; the acquisition of 64 homes by March 2025; and the launch of the Small Site Homebuilding Initiative.

Between 19th August, 2024 and 11th November, 2024, consultation was carried out with Rotherham residents, officers and a wide range of partners and key stakeholders to inform the priorities for the Strategy. The proposed aims and priorities of the draft Strategy were shared with a range of groups, including:

- An online survey – shared with key groups, including Rother Fed
- Social media coverage / press release of online survey
- Housing Involvement Panel with Council tenants
- Tenant Open Day with Council tenants
- Strategic Housing Forum with housing associations and other key partners
- Staff sessions
- Rotherham Show
- Employment Solutions recruitment event
- Improving Places Select Committee members

The Strategy 2025-30, attached at Appendix 1, had 4 priorities that would remain important and relevant over the next 5 years. These were:

- Building high quality, sustainable and affordable new homes.
- Improving the safety, quality and energy efficiency of Council homes.
- Supporting residents to live independently, including through the prevention of homelessness.
- Ensuring that neighbourhoods are safe, happy and thriving.

The Strategy reflected the key challenges that had continued or arisen since the Strategy was last refreshed and represented a continuation from the previous Strategy 2022-25 (chapter 4) of the need to support residents, improve the quality of existing homes and build more affordable housing.

An action plan was being developed to monitor progress and delivery against the Strategy across the 5 year period. Cabinet was asked to delegate this to the relevant Strategic Director to approve. The Improving Places Select Commission would receive updates on delivery against the Action Plan annually to provide scrutiny on the progress being made.

During the meeting, the need for further housing was reiterated. Councillor Cusworth noted the impact more quality housing would have on the lives on young people. The Leader referenced the homelessness statistics and stated that whilst difficult decisions would need to be made in terms of the New Local Plan and further housing developments, something needed to be done to address the housing problems. Councillor Baker-Rogers welcomed the impressive progress that had already been made.

The report was considered by the Improving Places Select Commission (IPSC). In recommendation 1 they asked for a paragraph to be inserted into the Strategy which referenced the problems and impact of anti-social behaviour along with details on the training of the Housing/Tenancy Officers. In recommendation 2, they requested that the word “happy” be removed from Priority 4 of the Strategy and replaced.

The Cabinet accepted recommendation 1 and the paragraph would be added to the Strategy. Cabinet rejected recommendation 2 on the basis that the word “happy” had been used to reflect the wording an ensure consistency with the Council Plan.

Resolved:

That Cabinet:

1. Approve the Housing Strategy 2025-2030.
2. Delegate authority to the Strategic Director of Adult Care, Housing and Public Health to approve the action plan and minor data amendments to the Strategy prior to publication.
3. Accept the proposal from the Improving Places Select Commission and agree that reference is made within the Housing Strategy to compulsory training being delivered to all Housing/Tenancy Officers regarding anti-social behaviour, using the following suggested wording:

“Our housing officers undergo comprehensive training to effectively deal with Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB). This training ensures that they:

- Identify and understand ASB issues
- Know when and how to report incidents
- Are aware of the powers available to the council to address ASB.

Equipped with this knowledge, our officers can take prompt and effective action to tackle ASB, providing a safer and more supportive environment for our community.”

49. HOUSING ALLOCATIONS POLICY

Consideration was given to the report which presented the Housing Allocation Policy and Strategic Tenancy Policy for approval. In June 2024, Cabinet approved the review of the current Housing Allocation Policy to include a 12 week public consultation. The review and consultation had concluded, and the report recommended the adoption of a new Housing Allocation Policy, that was attached to the report at Appendix 2, incorporating 22 amendments. The review and consultation also incorporated proposed revisions to the Strategic Tenancy Policy which were also recommended for adoption, attached to the report at Appendix 3.

If approved, the new Housing Allocation Policy and Strategic Tenancy Policy would be effective from 1st December, 2025, to allow for a 3 month implementation period. This would include changes to IT systems, staff training, communication with stakeholders and applicants, and necessary changes to existing housing applications.

The Council's current Housing Allocation Policy was adopted in 2014. Since then, it had undergone periodic revisions and additions. The most recent update was in November 2023, which strengthened the Council's commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant. Prior to this, the last partial review was in April 2021, which focused on the impact of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. The intention was to continue to rank priorities considering the Housing Act 1996, which required that Allocation Policies must give reasonable preference to specified groups as set out in paragraph 2.2 of the report.

The review identified 22 proposed amendments to the existing Housing Allocation Policy. A revised draft Allocation Policy incorporating the amendments was published alongside a summary table of changes. As proposal 22 related to the use of fixed term tenancies, a revised draft Strategic Tenancy Policy was also published. During the 12 week consultation period, 220 formal responses were received. Council officers also engaged widely with the public, partners, and staff during the consultation period.

The table of 22 changes was included in Appendix 4 and the table at paragraph 2.5 of the report provided the response rate to all 22 proposals. Overall, there was strong support for all proposals. Following consultation, 5 amendments to the original 22 changes had been proposed and were detailed in sections 2.7 to 2.19 of the report.

One of the key changes highlighted in the meeting was proposal one which was a change from a 3 year local connections criterion to a 2 year residency test. The Leader stated that this was to ensure that the housing delivered was for Rotherham residents. Proposal 15 related to awarding Band One to Rotherham Care Leavers and Band Three to out of Borough

Care Leavers including Care Leavers who had been placed in Rotherham by other local authorities.

A 12 week public consultation, including telephone and online surveys, had been undertaken. To supplement this, engagement with cross-party Elected Members had been completed. The Council had liaised with a number of partner organisations including Housing Associations, Housing Improvement Panel, and the Armed Forces Covenant Group.

Resolved:

That Cabinet:

1. Note the outcome of the consultation and the Council's response to the broad themes identified (Appendix 1).
2. Approve the adoption of a revised Housing Allocation Policy (Appendix 2).
3. Approve the adoption of a revised Strategic Tenancy Policy (Appendix 3).
4. Delegate authority to the Strategic Director responsible for Housing in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing to make minor amendments to the Housing Allocation Policy including local lettings policies to meet the needs of a local area.
5. Delegate authority to the Strategic Director responsible for Housing in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing to agree reciprocal arrangements with other placing Local Authorities in respect of Care Leavers.

50. BASSINGTHORPE FARM SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

Consideration was given to the report which presented the Bassingthorpe Farm Supplementary Planning Document for approval. Bassingthorpe Farm was identified as a Strategic Allocation in the Rotherham Local Plan for around 2,400 new homes, 11 hectares of employment land, a local centre and a primary school. The Bassingthorpe Farm Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) provided more detail on existing planning policies to help bring forward the site for development. The purpose of the SPD was to guide the submission of planning applications and ensure the timely delivery of strategic infrastructure on and off site; ensure the provision of appropriate social and community facilities; and support any future funding bids for national grant opportunities. The Bassingthorpe Farm Strategic Allocation was pivotal to the delivery of Rotherham's Local Plan and Housing Strategy, particularly given the changes to the National Planning Policy Framework that sought to deliver more new homes.

The previous report to Cabinet in January 2025 (20th January 2025 Minute No. 109 referred) sought approval to undertake consultation on the draft SPD. This report sought adoption of the Bassingthorpe Farm SPD following extensive consultation and assessment of the representations and comments received during February and March 2025. A Consultation Statement was attached at Appendix 2 and Appendix 3 setting out the key issues raised, and the changes made to the draft SPD. All representations were available to view on the Council's Planning consultation website. Subject to Cabinet approval, the Consultation Statement would be published alongside the adopted SPD setting out the Council's response to the comments received.

The vision for Bassingthorpe Farm was set out at Paragraph 1.6 of the report and the 5 placemaking principles were set out in Paragraph 1.7. These had not changed substantially following public consultation.

Consultation on the draft SPD was undertaken in line with The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement. In response to the consultation the Council received 59 representations. All representations received had been considered and the Consultation Statement at Appendix 2 and Appendix 3 provided details of the issues raised, the Council's response and how the SPD has been amended as a result. The main issues raised were summarised in paragraph 2.3 to 2.11.

During the meeting it was confirmed that the site would provide for approximately 2000 homes and that the homes were very much needed in Rotherham.

Resolved:

1. That Cabinet approves the adoption of the Bassingthorpe Farm Supplementary Planning Document.

(Councillor Beresford declared an interest in Minute 50 – Bassingthorpe Farm Supplementary Planning Document on the basis that it involved her Ward and her property bordered the site)

51. LOCAL VALIDATION LIST CONSULTATION - PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Consideration was given to the report which sought Cabinet approval to undertake public consultation on the draft Local Validation List. Rotherham's Local Validation List provided a framework of requirements for the supporting documents that were required to accompany planning applications. The Local Validation List provided additional detail and guidance to support applicants on what level of supporting information was required for all application types. Once adopted, it would be used to determine whether planning applications were valid. It was key to ensuring that sufficient information was submitted to enable applications

to be determined effectively and efficiently in line with Statutory deadlines on which Local Planning Authorities were measured.

The current List now out of date, as it was last reviewed in 2019 and the National Planning Policy Framework required Local Validation Lists to be kept up-to-date through a review every 2 years. The shift of focus during Covid to enable continuation of work through digital platforms both during and immediately after that period resulted in delays in updating the Local Validation List due to the level of work required to overhaul the document. There had also been a significant number of amendments to Regulations in the Planning forum which had led to uncertainty about the direction in relation to requirements for validation of planning applications which had also contributed to the delay in updating the Council's Local List.

The Council was required to undertake public consultation on the local list and to take account of any comments received in preparing the final document. Once adopted by the Council the requirements set out in the Validation List could be required to validate a planning application. Subject to approval by Cabinet, it was proposed to undertake public consultation over a 4 week period during October 2025. Following consultation, any comments received would be considered in producing a final version of the Local Validation List and a consultation feedback report produced detailing the main issues raised and how these had been addressed. Approval of the updated Local Validation List would then be delegated to the Strategic Director for Regeneration and Environment in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transport, Jobs and the Local Economy.

Resolved:

That Cabinet:

1. Approve a public consultation on the draft Local Validation List at Appendix One.
2. Delegate approval of the updated Local Validation List for planning applications, following consultation, to the Strategic Director for Regeneration and Environment in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transport, Jobs and the Local Economy unless there are substantive changes required.
3. Delegate the approval of all future iterations of the policy including the necessity for public consultation to the Strategic Director for Regeneration and Environment in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transport, Jobs and the Local Economy.

52. LICENSING ACT 2003 - STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY

Consideration was given to the report which outlined the findings of the consultation on the Statement of Licensing Policy and recommended that Cabinet endorse the Policy and recommended to Council that it be approved.

Licensing Officers presented a draft Policy to Cabinet in April 2025 and this Policy had been developed following a period of informal consultation with partner agencies, licence holders and members of the public, along with a review of other policies from across the UK to identify best practice that could be adopted in Rotherham. Following Cabinet approval, the draft policy was then subjected to a 6 week period of consultation.

All responses to the consultation had been consolidated and reviewed. The significant majority of the responses indicated a general support for the proposals within the Policy, and therefore it was recommended that the draft Policy agreed by Cabinet in April was accepted as the final version of the 2025–2030 Statement of Policy.

The Policy promoted environmental best practice as set out in paragraph 2.15 of the report. It also provided advice and guidance on the practical steps licensed venues could take to keep women safe as detailed in paragraph 2.17. The Policy recognised that premises operating hours could have a significant impact on local residents, the economy and the local area, therefore, it set out a number of core hours that were applicable to each type of licensed premises. Specific areas relevant to each class of premises were also set out. Further detail was included regarding large events as detailed in paragraph 2.23.

Resolved:

1. That the proposed Licensing Act 2003 Statement of Policy be recommended to Council for adoption.

53. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

Consideration was given to the report which outlined an updated Local Development Scheme to reflect the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in December 2024 and the significantly increased housing target for Rotherham, which necessitated a new Local Plan. The housing target for Rotherham had more than doubled from 544 to 1,111 new homes a year.

Officers had an advisory visit from the Planning Inspectorate in January 2025 to explore options for continuing the Core Strategy Partial Update. However, given the significant uplift to Rotherham's housing target and the likely changes to the distribution of growth around the Borough this implied, the Inspector's clear advice was to prepare a complete new Local Plan under the new plan-making system. Continuing with the Core

Strategy Partial Update would result in a significant risk of the Local Plan not being found sound during the Examination in Public by a Planning Inspector and would, therefore, not be fit to be adopted by the Council, resulting in abortive work, wasted time and considerable expense. The updated LDS therefore replaced the Core Strategy Partial Update and set out a timetable to produce a new Local Plan. This course of action was unavoidable, given the Government's changes to the NPPF and the imposition of a much higher housing target on Rotherham.

The Planning and Infrastructure Bill published in March 2025 introduced Spatial Development Strategies (SDS), to be prepared by combined authorities. The South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) would be responsible for preparing the SDS for South Yorkshire, in conjunction with the constituent local authorities. Local plans had to be in general conformity with the SDS. The Council was working with the other South Yorkshire authorities of Barnsley, Doncaster and Sheffield to prepare a new Joint Waste Plan, to replace the Plan adopted in 2012. Work was ongoing to reconsider the scope and content of the Joint Waste Plan and its relationship with the emerging South Yorkshire SDS, given the strategic nature of waste planning. Due to this new requirement, it was not possible for the LDS to give a timetable to prepare a Joint Waste Plan at present.

The LDS did not cover the detailed content of the new Local Plan or other Local Plan documents nor the process for preparing and consulting on them. Any future draft documents would be subject to separate reports requiring Cabinet or Council approval prior to public consultation, submission and adoption. The milestones for the new Local Plan were summarised at paragraph 2.5 of the report with Adoption of the Plan by Council being in July 2029.

The cost of producing the LDS had been managed within existing budgets. The adoption of the LDS set out a timeline for completion of the Local Plan and South Yorkshire Waste Plan. There was no provision for these costs, which were estimated to be £1.1m and as such, would need to be considered as part of the 2026/27 budget setting process and Medium Term Financial Strategy update. These plans, and future plans, would need to be incorporated into the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

During the meeting the Leader reiterated the Council's belief that the housing targets imposed by the Government were wrong. He also confirmed that there would be no immediate changes following the approval of the Local Development Scheme .

Resolved:

1. That the Local Development Scheme be recommended to Council for adoption.

54. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

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

55. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Cabinet would be held on 13th October, 2025, commencing at 10.00 a.m.