



Council

**Wednesday 14 January 2026
2.00 p.m.**

Rotherham
Metropolitan
Borough Council



WELCOME TO TODAY'S MEETING

GUIDANCE FOR THE PUBLIC

The Council is composed of 59 Councillors, who are democratically accountable to the residents of their ward.

The Council Meeting is chaired by the Mayor, who will ensure that its business can be carried out efficiently and with regard to respecting the rights and responsibilities of Councillors and the interests of the community. The Mayor is the Borough's first citizen and is treated with respect by the whole Council, as should visitors and member of the public.

All Councillors meet together as the Council. Here Councillors decide the Council's overall policies and set the budget each year. The Council appoints its Leader, Mayor and Deputy Mayor and at its Annual Meeting will appoint Councillors to serve on its committees.

Copies of the agenda and reports are available on the Council's website at www.rotherham.gov.uk. You may not be allowed to see some reports because they contain private information and these will be marked accordingly on the agenda.

Members of the public have the right to ask questions or submit petitions to Council meetings. A member of the public may ask one general question in person which must be received in writing to the Chief Executive by 10.00 a.m. on the Friday preceding a Council meeting on the following Wednesday and must not exceed sixty words in length. Questions can be emailed to governance@rotherham.gov.uk

Council meetings are recorded and streamed live or subsequently uploaded to the Council's website. At the start of the meeting the Mayor will confirm if the meeting is being filmed. You would need to confirm your wish not to be filmed to Democratic Services. Recording of the meeting by members of the public is also allowed.

Council meetings are open to the public, but occasionally the Council may have to discuss an item in private. If this occurs you will be asked to leave.

FACILITIES

There are public toilets, one of which is designated disabled with full wheelchair access, with full lift access to all floors. Induction loop facilities are also available in the Council Chamber, John Smith Room and Committee Rooms 1 and 2.

Access for people with mobility difficulties can be obtained via the ramp at the main entrance to the Town Hall.

If you have any queries on this agenda, please contact:-

Contact:- Emma Hill, Head of Democratic Services
governance@rotherham.gov.uk

Date of Publication:- 6 January 2026

COUNCIL

Wednesday 14 January 2026 at 2.00 p.m.

THE MAYOR (Councillor Rukhsana Ismail)
DEPUTY MAYOR (Councillor Haroon Rashid)

CHIEF EXECUTIVE (John Edwards)

MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

ANSTON AND WOODSETTS

BAUM-DIXON, Timothy J.
BLACKHAM, John M.
TARMEY, Drew S.

ASTON AND TODWICK

ALLEN, Sarah A.
BACON, Joshua

AUGHTON AND SWALLOWNEST

PITCHLEY, Lyndsay
TAYLOR, Robert P.

BOSTON CASTLE

ALAM, Saghir (OBE)
HUSSAIN, Ashiq
YASSEEN, Taiba K.

BRAMLEY AND RAVENFIELD

DUNCAN, Elizabeth J.
REYNOLDS, Gregory

BRINSWORTH

CARTER, Adam J.
CARTER, Charlotte R.

DALTON AND THRYBERGH

BENNETT-SYLVESTER, Michael D.P.
RYALLS, Jodie

DINNINGTON

CLARKE, Amanda M.
CASTLEDINE-DACK, Sophie
HALL, Julia

GREASBROUGH

BERESFORD, Linda J.
ELLIOTT, Robert W.

HELLABY AND MALTBY WEST

BALL, Simon A.
STABLES, Lynda J.

HOOBER

BRENT, Rajmund E.
LELLIOTT, Denise
WILLIAMS, John

KEPPEL

CURRIE, Simon
GARNETT, Gillian.S
HARRISON, Tony

KILNHURST AND SWINTON (EAST)

CUSWORTH, Victoria
HARPER, Nigel

MALTBY EAST

SUTTON, Donna E.
TINSLEY, Adam J. (BEM)

RAWMARSH EAST

HUGHES, Rachel E.M.
SHEPPARD, David

RAWMARSH WEST

BAKER-ROGERS, Joanna
STEELE, Brian

ROTHORPE

ADAIR, Terry
BAGGLEY, Jamie

ROTHERHAM EAST

AHMED, Angham S.T.
ISMAIL, Rukhsana B.
RASHID, Haroon

ROOTHERHAM WEST

JONES, Ian P.
KEENAN, Eve
MCKIERNAN, Cameron D.P.

SITWELL

BOWER, Michael A.
FISHER, David F.
THORP, Paul S.

SWINTON ROCKINGHAM

MONK, Gina
READ, Chris

THURCROFT & WICKERSLEY

COLLINGHAM, Zachary A.
COLLINGHAM, Thomas R.

WALES

BECK, Dominic E.
HAVARD, Marnie A.

WATH

COWEN, Sheila A.
JACKSON, David R.

WICKERSLEY NORTH

KNIGHT, Stuart
MARSHALL, Lynda
MAULT, James J.

Council Meeting Agenda

Time and Date:-

Wednesday 14 January 2026 at 2.00 p.m.

Venue:-

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

1. Announcements

To consider any announcements by the Mayor in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 3(2)(ii).

2. Apologies for Absence

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

3. Minutes of the previous Council Meeting (Pages 7 - 94)

To receive the record of proceedings of the ordinary meeting of the Council held on 5th November, 2025, and to approve the accuracy thereof.

4. Petitions (Pages 95 - 101)

To report on any petitions received by the Council and receive statements in support of petitions in accordance with Petitions Scheme and Council Procedure Rule 13.

5. Declarations of Interest

To invite Councillors to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests or personal interests they may have in any matter which is to be considered at this meeting, to confirm the nature of those interests and whether they intend to leave the meeting for the consideration of the item.

6. Public Questions

To receive questions from members of the public who may wish to ask a general question of the Mayor, Cabinet Member or the Chairman of a Committee in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12.

7. Exclusion of the Press and Public

Should it be necessary, in the opinion of the Mayor, to consider excluding the press and public from the meeting in relation to any items of urgent business on the grounds that private information is likely to be divulged.

8. Leader of the Council's Statement

To receive a statement from the Leader of the Council in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 9.

9. Recommendation from Cabinet - Housing Revenue Account (HRA) (Pages 103 - 167)

To consider and approve the Housing Revenue Account Rents and Service Charges 2026-27.

10. Overview and Scrutiny Update (Pages 169 - 196)

To receive an update on the activities of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny bodies in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 14.

11. Thriving Neighbourhoods - Updates from Ward Councillors for Dalton and Thrybergh (Pages 197 - 198)

To receive updates from ward councillors from Dalton and Thrybergh on the activities supporting Thriving Neighbourhoods across the Borough.

12. Thriving Neighbourhoods - Updates from Ward Councillors for Dinnington (Pages 199 - 200)

To receive updates from ward councillors from Dinnington on the activities supporting Thriving Neighbourhoods across the Borough.

13. Notice of Motion - Restoring Rail and Tram Train Services for Swinton, Rotherham, and Doncaster - Ensuring Reliable Public Transport for Our Communities (Pages 201 - 202)

To be moved by Councillor Cusworth and seconded by Councillor Monk.

14. Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting (Pages 203 - 236)

To note the minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on 17th November and 15th December, 2025.

15. Audit Committee (Pages 237 - 248)

To note receipt of the Audit Committee minutes.

16. Health and Wellbeing Board (Pages 249 - 267)

To note receipt of the Health and Wellbeing Board minutes.

17. Licensing Board and Licensing Committee (Pages 269 - 274)

To note receipt of the Licensing Board Sub-Committee and Licensing Sub-Committee minutes.

18. Planning Board (Pages 275 - 280)

To note receipt of the Planning Board minutes.

19. Staffing Committee (Pages 281 - 283)

To note receipt of the Staffing Committee minutes.

20. Members' Questions to Designated Spokespersons

To put questions, if any, to the designated Members on the discharge of functions of the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel, South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority, South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority and South Yorkshire Pensions Authority, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11(5).

21. Members' Questions to Cabinet Members and Chairpersons

To put questions, if any, to Cabinet Members and Committee Chairpersons (or their representatives) under Council Procedure Rules 11(1) and 11(3).

22. Urgent Items

Any other public items which the Mayor determines are urgent.



John Edwards

Chief Executive.

**The next meeting of the Council will be on
4 March 2025 at 2.00 p.m.**

**COUNCIL MEETING
5th November, 2025**

Present:- The Mayor of Rotherham (Councillor Rukhsana Ismail) (in the Chair); Councillors Rashid, Adair, Ahmed, Alam, Allen, Bacon, Baggaley, Baker-Rogers, Ball, Baum-Dixon, Beck, Bennett-Sylvester, Beresford, Blackham, Bower, Brent, A. Carter, C. Carter, Castledine-Dack, Clarke, T. Collingham, Z. Collingham, Cowen, Currie, Cusworth, Duncan, Elliott, Fisher, Garnett, Harper, Harrison, Hughes, Hussain, Jackson, Jones, Keenan, Lelliott, Mault, McKiernan, Monk, Read, Reynolds, Ryalls, Sheppard, Stables, Steele, Sutton, Tarmey, Taylor, Thorp, Tinsley, Williams and Yasseen.

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

72. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor congratulated Rotherham Hospice on winning the Charity of the Year 2025 award and the Change Project of the Year 2025, for their Living Life's Wishes Strategy, at the Charity Times Awards. It was also noted that the historic Walker Cannon had been restored and returned to the front of the Town Hall to coincide with the 220th anniversary of the Battle of Trafalgar.

The full list of Mayoral Engagements was set out in Appendix A of the Mayor's Letter.

73. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Knight, Hall, Havard, Marshall and Pitchley.

74. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING

Consideration was given to the minutes of the previous Council meeting held on 10th September 2025.

Councillor Currie asked why the written responses from the September meeting had not been included with the minutes of the September meeting. It was confirmed that this was an oversight and they would be included in the January 2026 Council agenda.

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting of Council held on 10th September, 2025, be approved for signature by the Mayor.

Mover: Councillor Read

Seconder: Councillor Cusworth

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75. PETITIONS

Consideration was given to the report which set out the petition that had been received since the last meeting. The petition asked the Council to allocate funds to install security measures along the length of Brook Hill, Thorp Hesley in order to prevent unauthorised vehicle access, including traveller encampments. It had 62 valid signatures. Mr. Wilson, the Lead Petitioner, did not attend the meeting. The petition would be responded to by the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment within 10 working days of the meeting.

Resolved:

1. That the report be received.
2. That the relevant Strategic Director be required to respond to the lead petitioners, as set out in the Petition Scheme, by Wednesday, 19th November 2025.

76. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest declared.

77. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were 4 public questions:

1. Prior to asking her question, T explained that she had been unable to attend Council meetings in person for a long time due to chronic back pain caused by repeated rapes from grooming gangs when she was 12. She explained that her questions related to what the Leader had said to Look North in June 2025 regarding the National Enquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (CSEA.) T felt that, despite asking questions since 2017, she had not received any answers. She had had meetings with the Leader about her concerns and needs in 2018.

T asked: In what ways does Chris Read, the Leader of the Council, believe that Rotherham Council should be used as a model for other towns and cities for how to deal with the rape of children (politely referred to by Baroness Casey as CSEA - Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse)?

The Leader explained that, in the interview, he had said that it was important that the events in Rotherham, including the suffering of people like T, were not lost in the National Enquiry. When Louise Casey published her report, what she described was a process very much like the one that Rotherham had been through over the course of the last 14 years. That was about a place based review of what happened, which in Rotherham's case was the Jay report. Subsequent

to that was a police criminal investigation into specific allegation of crimes and that was Operation Stovewood. The Leader thought it important that the Government heard the Rotherham experience to ensure that other places learnt from the things that it got right and learn from the things it got wrong.

In her review, Louise Casey singled out the kind of taxi licensing reform that was put in place in Rotherham. The Leader wanted that to be adopted across the rest of the Country. Other changes had been made but that was not to say that the Council thought it had done everything right at all. The Leader explained that if the Government, in their review, did not consider the learning of the things that Rotherham had been through, there was potential that those mistakes could be made elsewhere.

In her supplementary question, T quoted what first tier tribunal judge Ord wrote in the decision that was sent out in 24th June which said: "when the witness T gave oral evidence we questioned T on the value to her of the information. Her reply was that she wanted to get the truth, that truth was important to her." T stated that RMBC did not answer her questions, and she had many questions. She asked what the Council was doing to protect Muslim communities, what was the Council doing to protect other victims, survivors and members of the Muslim community from South Yorkshire Police. T explained that she had met with members of the Muslim community and told them that in no way did she hold them responsible for what had happened to her. Those vile criminals could not be called Muslim and the Muslim communities had suffered so much because of those vile criminals and were also victims.

T's supplementary question was: Why are you failing to answer questions on behalf of victims and survivors of child rape in Rotherham?

The Leader explained that the tribunal process referred to was about an Access to Information/Freedom of Information dispute that a member of the public had taken up against the Council and it was a long running ongoing dispute. The Council strongly believed that it had handed over all the information it was able. Whilst the person and people supporting him had every right to go through the full legal process, the Council genuinely believed it had handed everything over.

The Leader confirmed that he was happy to receive any further questions from T outside of the meeting and he would provide a written response. He stated that he had always been willing to have conversations and answer questions but he had not received any for some time.

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2. Mr. Ashraf: What is Rotherham Borough Council's current legal and financial opinions and risk assessments on all its investments, including in SYPA and Borders to Coast, in light of the recent PSC legal opinion and can Rotherham Council evidence that it has urgently, acted prudently, with those investments, vis-a-vis its prevention and non-assistance duties under international and domestic law?

The Leader explained that the Council did not invest in companies or in that kind of private investment. The investments held by South Yorkshire Pensions Authority were in fact held by the Border to Coast Pension Pool on behalf of the Pensions Authority. In law, the investments belonged to them, not the Council. The Council's view was that all investments did meet the necessary legal thresholds. The Leader committed to raising any specific concerns if there were any but confirmed that there were no ground for concerns at the moment.

In his supplementary question, Mr. Ashraf firstly thanked Members and officers for their willingness to work with him and have frank conversations about what could and could not be done. The supplementary question was: Could the legal and financial risk to Rotherham Council and the taxpayers of non-compliance of urgently acting prudently vis-à-vis prevention and non-assistance duties in those investments under international and domestic law be given a detailed legal liabilities and monetary figure on a Rotherham Borough and a per taxpayer basis? He also asked if the Palestinian Flag would be flown on 29th November to mark the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

The Leader explained that he would request that officers provide a written response in relation to the investments. He stated that they would not be able to breakdown the information in the way requested but they would provide what they could. In relation to the flag, there was a question later on the agenda on this matter and the Leader would respond then.

3. Mr. Horvath: Selective Licensing was rejected overwhelmingly by formal questionnaires, why did Cabinet approve it?

Mr. Horvath did not attend the meeting, and a written response would be provided.

4. Mr. Mabbott: Could you please confirm whether the Council intends to fly the Palestinian flag outside the Town Hall on 29th November to mark the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People and to reaffirm the Council's commitment to peace and human rights in the face of war crimes and genocide?

The Leader stated that yes, the Council did expect to fly the Palestinian flag on 29th November 2025. There was an internal decision making process to be undertaken in the next week but it was

expected that the decision to fly the Palestinian flag would be approved.

In his supplementary question, Mr. Mabbott asked that the continued suffering of the people in Gaza be taken into account during the decision making process.

The Leader confirmed that it would.

78. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

There were no items that required the exclusion of the press and public.

79. LEADER OF THE COUNCIL'S STATEMENT

The Leader was invited to present his statement. He noted the launch of a new campaign for Rotherham's new "Gateway" station which was part of a £300million regeneration plan that would put Rotherham back on the mainline for the first time in 40 years. The Leader and Councillor Williams had visited the site of the new tram stop at Magna. It was expected that trams should be stopping at the new station from early 2026. The Leader also reported that Davies Court Care Home in Dinnington had been rated good following a recent CQC inspection. He placed on record his congratulations and thanks to the team for their hard work. The Steel Minister, Chris McDonald MP, had visited the Liberty Steel sites in Stocksbridge and Parkgate along with the Leader, Chief Executive and colleagues from across South Yorkshire. The Leader believed that the conversations had been fruitful. The Leader confirmed that there was considerable commercial interest in taking on the sites and a real determination locally to protect jobs. The Leader had also written again to the Minister.

Members were asked to note the following upcoming events: Bonfire Night festivities in Clifton Park (on the evening of the Council meeting); Armistice Day and Remembrance Day on 9th November and the Christmas Lights Switch-on on Saturday, 15th November.

Finally, the Leader highlighted the Reclaim the Night walk taking place on Thursday, 27th November. This year the walk was being dedicated to the memory of Kimberley Fuller who was stabbed to death on 5th November 2005 on a night out in Rotherham town centre after she confronted a man for touching her. Her killer was later convicted for separate child abuse offences as part of Operation Stovewood. The Leader stated that he did not know how people kept going after their families were violated by such crimes. He could not begin to imagine the bravery that it took. Being a Councillor meant coming into contact with people in all sorts of difficult situations – homeless people, broken families, victims of violence – and as a Councillor, the task was to organise against the evil in our midst. Kimberley's family and friends had asked for her to be remembered as part of this year's Reclaim the Night to mark 20 years since her murder

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and they would be attending the event. The Leader paid tribute to their courage and determination today as they continued to make the case against misogyny and sexual violence and for a more humane society. He asked the Chamber to pay their respects to Kimberley and her memory.

The Leader of the Majority Opposition Group, Councillor Z. Collingham, was invited to respond. He echoed the comments made in relation to Davies Court Care Home and he hoped the comments made by the Leader to the Steel Minister would lead to the retention of jobs for people in Rotherham and the wider region. He made references to the number of items on the agenda and stated that he hoped no one would curtail or close down debate. Councillor Collingham made reference to the letter which he had prepared in relation to opposing Whitestone Solar Farm and thanked the 41 Councillors who had co-signed it. He asked the Leader to tell John Healey MP to tell Ed Miliband MP to stop ruining swathes of countryside. Councillor Collingham also referenced the national CSE enquiry and the failure to appoint a chair as well as the rumours of a tax-rising budget on the horizon. He stated that regional business had warned the Chancellor that putting up taxes would be bad for business, and he asked the Leader how he would avoid passing tax rises onto residents and employers across Rotherham.

The Leader was invited to respond to Councillor Z. Collingham. With regard to the agenda, the Leader stated that it was not his intention to curtail debate, but he did ask Members to be reasonable and show restraint to ensure all motions could be debated. In relation to the Whitestone comments, the Leader stated that John Healey MP had already clearly stated his opposition to it. He noted that when Labour Councillors had asked Conservative Councillors to raise issues with the former Conservative Government, not once did they agree to. Yet now, they were asking a Labour MP to do something that he had already done. In relation to the CSE enquiry, the Leader stated that he had always expressed caution and concern about the national enquiry as it had never been clear exactly what was going to be looked into. However, the Leader stated that he would not take criticism from the Conservatives on this as their Government had been in power for 14 years, had held a National Enquiry that Professor Alexis Jay had spent 7 years producing, and had not implemented any of the recommendations. Regarding the Chancellor's budget, the Leader stated that the Conservative Government had cut personal taxes just prior to the General Election in 2024, knowing that it was unsustainable. The current Government, therefore, had to make difficult decisions in relation to the budget. The Leader did not think it would be the right to choose to embark on another round of austerity, cutting public spending, because that hurt those who could least afford it.

Questions on the Leader's statement were invited from all other Members.

Councillor Currie thanked the Leader for mentioning Kimberley Fuller and Reclaim the Night. He noted that the Ward Councillors for Keppel were funding a memorial bench for her with the agreement of Kimberley's

family. Councillor Currie also thanked those involved for their work to try and keep the Steel plants operational. Finally, he noted that he, Councillor Bennett-Sylvester and Councillor Ryalls were putting on an event for Movember and welcomed all to buy tickets and attend.

The Leader thanked Councillor Currie for his comments.

Councillor Reynolds referenced the Whitestone development and the difficulties he had had trying to access information. In particular, he referenced the brownfield sites that had reportedly been rejected but he could find no evidence of them. He asked if the Council had received the rationale in the pre-planning process about not using the 41 brownfield sites.

The Leader confirmed that a written response would be provided by the Planning Service to Councillor Reynolds. He also agreed with the comments regarding the consultation and the inability to access simple information.

Councillor Ball referenced the death of South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority member Councillor Charlie Hogarth and asked to place on record his condolences.

The Leader stated that he had not been aware of this and thanked Councillor Ball for bringing it to his attention.

Councillor Bennett-Sylvester thanked the Leader for the work being done with Liberty Steel. He asked if anything was being looked at in terms of the brownfield sites around the Liberty Steel plants in order to support the steel industry and develop further communities and industries within Rotherham.

The Leader explained that the Government was aware of what the different options were, but it all depended on what commercial bids came forward and how the receiver was able to assess the value and sustainability of each of those bids.

80. PROPOSAL TO CREATE AN HONORARY FREEWOMAN OF THE METROPOLITAN BOROUGH OF ROTHERHAM

Consideration was given to a report which sought approval to create an Honorary Freewoman of the Metropolitan Borough of Rotherham.

The report noted that under the Local Government Act 1972, the Council had the power to grant the title of Honorary Freewoman and Honorary Freeman of the Borough to persons of distinction who have rendered eminent service to the Borough. It was proposed that, in accordance with the Authority's protocol in respect of awarding this honour, that Christine Lunn MBE be considered to be made an Honorary Freewoman of the Borough in recognition of her outstanding service to Children and Young

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People across the Borough as a Foster Carer with over 50 years' service and in recognition of fostering over 250 young people.

It was noted that the proposal had been endorsed by the Mayor, the Leader of the Council and the leaders of the Opposition Groups.

Resolved:

That, in pursuance of the provisions of Section 249(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 and in recognition of her outstanding service to Children and Young People across the Borough as a Foster Carer with over 50 years' service and in recognition of fostering over 250 young people, Christine Lunn MBE, be admitted Freedom of this Borough at an Extraordinary Council Meeting.

81. AMENDMENTS TO APPOINTMENTS OF MEMBERS TO COMMITTEES, BOARDS AND PANELS

Consideration was given to the report which sought approval for the appointment of Members to Committees, Boards and Panels, as detailed in the Mayor's Letter.

The Head of Democratic Services had received notification that it had become necessary to make amendments to the appointment of Members to serve on the Committees, Boards, and Panels of the Council.

Section 16 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 stated that where the Council had determined the allocation to different Groups of the seats to which the Act applies, it was the duty of the Authority to give effect to a Group's wishes about who was to be appointed to the seats that they had been allocated.

Those Members not in a political group could still at the discretion of the Council, be allocated a due share of seats, although the Council would decide how to allocate seats to non-aligned councillors.

Resolved:

That approval be given to the appointment of Members to Committees, Boards and Panels, as detailed in the Mayor's Letter and stated below:

Education Consultative Committee
Councillor Read (Remove)
Councillor Steele (Add)

Health Select Commission
Councillor Bennett-Sylvester (Remove)
Councillor Harrison (Add)

Standards and Ethics Committee

Parish Councillor Lisa Gibbins (Wales)
Parish Councillor Tony Griffin (Whiston)
Parish Councillor Mark Senior (Thrybergh)

Appointed in accordance with the elections cycle for Rotherham – May 2028

Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation Joint Committee

Councillor Baker-Rogers (Remove)
Councillor McKiernan (Add)
Councillor Brent - Substitute (Add)

Mover: Councillor Read

Seconder: Councillor Cusworth

82. RECOMMENDATION FROM CABINET - COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGY

Consideration was given to the report which presented the Community Safety Strategy, named the Safer Rotherham Partnership Strategy 2025-28, for approval. The Strategy had been recommended by Cabinet for approval at the 15th September 2025 meeting.

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

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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 had been provided to each SRP priority lead to inform development of their action plans.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 16, Councillor Bacon moved the following amendment during the meeting: That the Council recommends to the Community Safety Partnership that they embed into the Strategy a way of combating anti-social behaviour. Councillor Bacon stated that the Strategy only mentioned tackling perceptions of anti-social behaviour and he simply wanted to ask the Partnership to embed a way of combating antisocial behaviour to make residents feel safe.

Councillor Bennett-Sylvester seconded the amendment and asked if the idea could be explored, and proper structures put in place to deal with anti-social behaviour.

As the mover of the original motion, Councillor Alam addressed the amendment. He stated that, under legislation, the Safer Rotherham Partnership had a duty to tackle anti-social behaviour. Page 15 of the Strategy set out the Safer Rotherham Partnership Priorities for 2025-28 and that included Safer Neighbourhoods which involved all matters relating to anti-social behaviour.

On being put to the vote, the amendment fell.

The vote was then taken on the original recommendations.

Resolved:

That Council:

1. Adopt the Safer Rotherham Partnership Strategy.
2. Note the requirement for scrutiny of the Safer Rotherham Partnership Annual Report, which is discharged by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.

Mover: Councillor Alam

Seconder: Councillor Cusworth

83. RECOMMENDATION FROM CABINET - PROPOSED LICENSING ACT 2003 - STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY

Consideration was given to the report which presented the Licensing Act 2003 – Statement of Licensing Policy. The Policy had been recommended by Cabinet for approval at the 15th September 2025 meeting.

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. It therefore 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:

That Council adopt the proposed Licensing Act 2003 Statement of Policy.

Mover: Councillor Williams

Seconder: Councillor Hughes

84. RECOMMENDATION FROM CABINET - LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

Consideration was given to the report which presented the Local Development Scheme for adoption. An updated Local Development Scheme was required 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).

Councillor Williams, in moving the recommendations, stated that it was the belief of the Council that the housing targets set for Rotherham were wrong.

Councillor Currie asked if Planning Board Members could be provided with Legal Advice relating to their role on Planning Board and how the Local Development Scheme would impact this.

Resolved:

1. That Council adopts the Local Development Scheme.

Mover: Councillor Williams

Seconder: Councillor Mault

85. THRIVING NEIGHBOURHOODS - UPDATES FROM WARD COUNCILLORS FROM BRAMLEY AND RAVENFIELD

Further to Minute No. 55 of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 19th November, 2018, consideration was given to the Ward update for Bramley and Ravenfield as part of the Thriving Neighbourhood Strategy. An update report had been provided as part of the agenda and each Ward Member was invited to speak.

Councillor Duncan noted the 3 Ward priorities which related to improving road safety and addressing crime and anti-social behaviour; improving the environment and enhancing community facilities and bringing people together and improving mental and physical wellbeing. Work had been done with many local organisations and community groups, including the local parish councils. Work done included assisting with Parliament week and litter picks. Speeding and road safety was a particular concern outside Ravenfield Primary School and work was being done to address this. Fly tipping, particularly in rural areas, had been an issue and work was progressing to install CCTV to tackle this problem.

Councillor Reynolds made particular reference to the Whitestone Solar Farm and the negative impact it would have on Bramley and Ravenfield in particular. He implored everyone to do everything they could to object to the proposal. Councillor Reynolds thanked Councillor Duncan for the work she had done since becoming a Ward Councillor in 2024 and noted that they had worked very well together.

Both Members noted the invaluable support they had received from their Neighbourhoods Team, particularly Nicola Hacking and Nicola Fletcher.

Resolved:

That the update report be noted.

86. THRIVING NEIGHBOURHOODS - UPDATES FROM WARD COUNCILLORS FROM BRINSWORTH

Further to Minute No. 55 of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 19th November, 2018, consideration was given to the Ward update for Brinsworth as part of the Thriving Neighbourhood Strategy. An update report had been provided as part of the agenda and each Ward Member was invited to speak.

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Councillor A. Carter stated that it was a privilege to be able to represent Brinsworth and do his bit as part of local devolution. He noted the work that he had been done through the Towns and Villages Fund to get the parking outside the Brinsworth shops sorted. He hoped to see more devolution to Ward Councillors in order to benefit all areas of the Borough.

Councillor C. Carter highlighted particular projects that had been delivered such as bulb planting and crafts with school children. A family fitness session was being planned for after Easter in 2026 and work was being done to reduce dog fouling. She also noted the work done to improve the parking around the shops and stated that it had given the area a facelift and improved safety.

Both Members thanked their Neighbourhood Officers, particularly Mandy Ardon, Andrea Peers and Kyley Taylor.

Councillor Bennett-Sylvester asked to what extent was the usage of all budgets related to the needs of the community or needs of upcoming elections?

Councillor A. Carter stated that the spending had nothing to do with elections but simply that 2024 had been the start of a new cycle and new projects took time to plan.

Resolved:

That the update report be noted.

87. NOTICE OF MOTION - WATSONS TIP DROPPINGWELL

It was moved by Councillor Jones and seconded by Councillor Currie that:

Summary/Background:

This Council understands that the Environment Agency undertook a permit variation of an historic permit "Watsons Tip Droppingwell" in December 2016. Residents had always been aware of the reported dangerous substances that were tipped into phase 1 of the site between 1958 and 1989, these substances were both in liquid and solid forms and included barrels of cyanide and various heavy metals from local steel production facilities. In 1989 it was also discovered that the site was also receiving medical waste and some of this was being discovered in the nearby aptly named "Sicley Brook". This gave rise to a big concern around local environmental health risks and testing of the site leading to a public enquiry.

In 2016 the Environment Agency supplied the names of two EA officers to a consultant working for Grange Landfill Ltd, who in their words "had done this before" and could help them get around the issues. The "issues" referred to related to the inability of the company to navigate a way

around the legislation contained within the European Landfill Directive to allow the re-opening of the site due to its previous “toxic” history. We presume the officers obliged with the advice (no physical records of the meeting exist, only a note that phone calls took place) and in December 2016 the EA issued a variation without any public or local authority consultation.

The Permit variation was a substantial document and included 5 pre-requisite actions required by the operator prior to the permit variation allowing the commencement of landfilling at the site. One of those prerequisites was the implementation of a QA assured ground water and gas monitoring regime that tested both phase 1 and phase 2 of the site, something that should have been in place since 1978, however, this had never been enforced. In January 2017 the site owner sunk 5 boreholes around the whole site and 4 boreholes directly into the waste mass in phase 1. During this process, a previous Councillor of this Authority asked the contractors why they had removed themselves from the phase one site after drilling 3 of the 4 holes, he was told by the site foreman that, in the 9 acre site drilling with a 4 inch drill 2 of the holes had hit a “marzipan smell” this is the smell that Cyanide gives off, he also said that “they were not made aware of the site contents and didn’t bring any PPE for working on a contaminated site”. After this conversation became public the site owner brought in a second contractor to complete the works and within 6 weeks the first contractor went into liquidation.

The material from these boreholes was left in a public area for several days, in clear plastic bags, before being sent for Lab testing. One of the boreholes BH5 was drilled outside of the permitted area on public land and on 2 occasions was accidentally destroyed by contractors who were asked to “plane the walkway” due to severe rutting caused by vehicle movements. In early November 2019 concerns were raised with the EA that test results from BH5 were still being submitted to the EA as part of the testing regime despite the hole being filled in around July/ August 2019. The EA undertook a “botched investigation” and due to Covid regulation conducted most of the work via phone calls with the operator. Despite being provided with photos containing meta data showing date and time stamps, in March 2019 the EA decided that they would believe the contractor’s end of year report, where the operator claimed, “the borehole had been vandalised by members of the public” and they were not able to take any more samples in November 2019.

BH5 has now been inactive “using the operator’s own timeline” since November 2019 and no attempts have been made to rectify this situation. Part of the EA’s reassurance to the public, they committed to undertake quarterly inspections of the site; recently this has reduced to “looking over the fence”. The reason given on several occasions is that “the site is currently not active”. This statement is factually incorrect; the site according to the EA has remained an “active site” since 1978 and at no point has the site been classed as inactive, only phase 1 has been marked as in Closure. What the EA are referring to is there is no landfilling

taking place on site, however, this doesn't consider that the Monitoring of the site for water and gas monitoring purposes must be undertaken "continuously" throughout the life of the site and whilst in post-site closure. Effectively the EA have failed in its Public Health duty for over 5 years to enforce the monitoring (as per the permit pre-conditions).

The Council also understands that a second pre-condition is that the operator must construct cells within the new phase; the work on this started back in 2021 and rapidly ramped up to over 100 30-ton lorries visiting site daily. This saw the import of over 160,000 tons of material. The material used was for the construction of bunds around the first cell, it was quickly realised that the location and size of the cell was in contradiction of the 1958 planning permission. Despite the construction size being raised as an error in the original permit variation, the EA took the view that during any construction phase they had the power to vary any part of the construction so long as it still met QA certification.

During the construction of Berms of this size, the operator is required to supply QA data from a competent engineer showing construction materials used and compaction data. Again, despite regular requests, the EA have decided that they will wait for the final construction certification to ask for these assessments, this was completed over 2 years ago and no certificate has been forthcoming. In the last 2 Compliance Assessment Reports carried out over a year ago the EAs own inspector noted "large structural cracks within the Berm construction"; this is symptomatic of the wrong material being used, inappropriate water content and should have been picked up in the inspections. The "so what" is that the north-west side of this cell is on the opposite side of a Hawthorne hedge, to a public footpath and increases in height to over 10m high, creating a risk of the public being court in any possible landslide.

That this Council:

Believes that due to the list of ongoing failures by the EA to keep the site compliant with the varied permit for over 5 years and the operators unwillingness to comply with requirement to supply QA certification for the Berm on completion in a timely manner, that the EA now not only have the ability, but also a Public Health duty to remove the permit variation and require the site to be returned to its natural state, as prior to 2016.

Therefore, this Council resolves to:

1. Request that the Chief Executive writes to the Secretary of State for the Environment, to request a full and open public enquiry into the variation of the original permit, the way in which the permit was issued, and full consideration of all the failures of the Environment Agency to regulate and ensure compliance under its own variation for over 5 years.

2. Request that consideration be given to remove the historical planning permission for phase 2 of the site, for non-compliance of the 1958 permission and that any future applications for planning be judged against current legislation.

On being put to the vote, the motion was carried.

88.

NOTICE OF MOTION - FAIRNESS FOR GARDEN WASTE USERS

It was moved by Councillor Ball and seconded by Councillor Bacon that:

This Council notes:

- The Brown Bin Garden Waste Collection Service, for which residents pay an annual subscription fee, was suspended with immediate effect from early August 2025 due to a staff shortage, with disruptions continuing well beyond the initial end-of-August resumption date.
- This suspension and subsequent delays have led to widespread inconvenience, with many subscribers unable to dispose of garden waste through the service they have paid for, forcing them to seek alternative disposal methods at significant personal cost, often exceeding the value of any proposed compensation.
- The Council's offer of a £10 refund or discount on next year's subscription has been widely criticised as inadequate and insulting, failing to address the full extent of the disruption or the financial burden placed on residents.
- These service failures have disproportionately affected vulnerable groups, including disabled residents who rely on the Brown Bin Service for accessible waste management and have faced additional hardships in managing garden waste without it.
- Public confidence in the leadership of the Council's Waste Management Service has been severely eroded, as evidenced by ongoing complaints and media coverage highlighting persistent issues.

This Council believes:

- Subscribers to the Brown Bin Service deserve fair treatment and full compensation for a service that has not been delivered as promised, rather than token gestures that do not reflect the true costs incurred by residents.
- Waiving the subscription fees for the affected period is essential to restore trust in the Council's ability to provide reliable public services and to prevent further alienation of ratepayers.

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- Continuing to charge full fees amid such disruptions undermines the principles of accountability and value for money expected from local government.
- Prioritising resident welfare, particularly for disabled and vulnerable individuals, must be at the heart of any response to service failures, and that the current approach falls short of this standard.

This Council resolves to:

1. Offer residents who subscribed to the 2025 Brown Bin Garden Waste Service a waived subscription fee for the 2026 service, provided they take up the offer to continue their subscription in 2026, as compensation for issues experienced this year.
2. Issue a public apology to affected residents, acknowledging the inadequacy of the £10 offer and the broader impacts of the service disruption.
3. Conduct an independent review of the Garden Waste Service incorporating feedback from residents, including disabled users and present these findings to the Executive for their consideration and decision on any subsequent actions.
4. Explore options for enhancing support for vulnerable residents, such as assisted collections, to prevent similar disproportionate impacts in future.

On being put to the vote, the motion was lost.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 19 (2) Councillor Ball had requested that a recorded vote should be taken on the proposed motion. Five Members stood to show their support for a recorded vote to be taken on the motion. The vote was as follows:

For (21): Councillors Bacon, Ball, Baum-Dixon, Bennett-Sylvester, Blackham, Bower, A. Carter, C. Carter, Castledine-Dack, T. Collingham, Z. Collingham, Elliott, Fisher, Harrison, Hussain, Reynolds, Stables, Tarmey, Thorp, Tinsley and Yasseen.

Against (31): Councillor Adair, Ahmed, Alam, Allen, Baggaley, Baker-Rogers, Beck, Beresford, Brent, Clarke, Cowen, Cusworth, Duncan, Garnett, Harper, Hughes, Ismail, Jackson, Jones, Keenan, Lelliott, Mault, McKiernan, Monk, Rashid, Read, Sheppard, Steele, Sutton, Taylor and Williams.

Abstentions (1): Councillor Currie.

89.

NOTICE OF MOTION - STANDING UP FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES

It was moved by Councillor Baum-Dixon and seconded by Councillor Z. Collingham that:

This Council believes:

Rotherham deserves a Council that values its rural communities as vital to the Borough's wellbeing, sustainability, and prosperity. By passing this motion, we commit to ensuring rural areas receive the attention and support they need to thrive.

This Council notes:

1. That 70% of Rotherham is rural, providing vital space for recreation, wellbeing, and biodiversity, while being home to communities that face unique challenges in accessing services, infrastructure and protecting against rural crime.
2. That the current system of determining eligibility for free school transport is based on distance measured "as the crow flies." While this system works in urban areas with direct links to schools, it disadvantages rural pupils who may live within distance catchment but have to travel significantly further due to indirect routes and lack of safe, direct paths.
3. That rural communities are often poorly connected to public transport, impeding access to essential public services, including health and wellbeing services.
4. That responsibility for public transport, particularly buses, now rests with the South Yorkshire Mayor, and that the Leader of the Council, in his role with the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA), should ensure the needs of rural communities are taken into account during the rollout of the new publicly owned transport system.
5. That access to reliable 5G mobile phone service and high-speed internet is essential for rural residents and businesses, yet many areas, including parts of Rotherham, face significant connectivity gaps.
6. That rural crime, including off-road bikes, cannabis cultivation and fly-tipping on farmland, leave many rural residents feeling unsafe and lead to financial hardship for landowners and damage to our environment. Effective and timely collaboration and deployment by South Yorkshire's Rural and Off-Road Policing Team is vital in the fight against rural crime.
7. That rural communities, particularly farmers, act as custodians of our environment, safeguarding wildlife, promoting sustainability, and leading efforts to combat climate change.

8. That many family farms are asset-rich but cash-poor, with profitability often disconnected from land values. Such farms are at risk of forced sale due to Government reforms to Agricultural Property Relief (APR) and Business Property Relief (BPR). The National Farmers Union (NFU) estimates that around 75% of working farms could be affected, with a typical cereal farm making a profit of £34,000 and being hit with 10 annual tax instalments of £53,000, over 1.5 times its profits.

This Council resolves to:

1. Develop a Rural Strategy for Rotherham, prioritising transport, digital access, healthcare, and economic opportunities tailored to rural needs.
2. Work with, encourage, and facilitate the installation of 5G infrastructure in rural areas, like Woodsetts and Thorpe Hesley, while ensuring that culturally significant sites are respected.
3. Ensure rural issues are considered in all Council policies and decisions at both Borough-wide and local levels.
4. Advocate for improved public transport access for rural areas, including public services and school routes, by working with SYMCA and the South Yorkshire Mayor to ensure rural needs are prioritised in the rollout of the new publicly owned transport system.
5. Review the criteria for free school transport, exploring a test based on the shortest accessible route from home to school, rather than "as the crow flies," to ensure rural pupils are not unfairly excluded from support.
6. Work with South Yorkshire Police to address rural and wildlife crime, pushing for an expanded Off-Road team, with a dedicated Rotherham unit, and call on RMBC officers to regularly attend Rural Crime and Off-Road Policing meetings.
7. Recognise and support farmers, particularly family farmers, as key custodians of our environment, promoting biodiversity, sustainability, and climate resilience.
8. Write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to call for the reversal of APR and BPR restriction in this year's Budget, supporting family farmers in Rotherham.
9. Explore additional Council-led initiatives to support rural businesses, including strengthening local food networks, improving rural infrastructure, and advocating for fairer funding for rural communities.

On being put to the vote, the motion was lost.

90. NOTICE OF MOTION - PROPOSED WHITESTONE SOLAR FARM

It was moved by Councillor Baggaley and seconded by Councillor Duncan that:

Summary/Background:

The proposal for a 750 MW solar farm across Rotherham and Doncaster is likely to be the first Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project to apply for planning permission in the Local Authority area. The motion calls on the developers to hear the concern of the community, withdraw their proposal, and significantly scale back any future proposals.

That this Council notes:

1. Proposals for the Whitestone Solar Farm, which would stretch from Conisbrough in the north to Woodall in the South, a total area of 2,000 hectares, have recently completed their pre-statutory consultation phase. It would potentially be the largest solar farm operating in the United Kingdom.
2. The proposal has already attracted significant local concerns. It would disrupt more than 60 rights of way, force significant traffic for construction and maintenance along narrow countryside roads, remove land from agricultural use, and alter the appearance and "landscape value" of miles of local countryside. It would be an impact on an historic scale.
3. If developed as it is currently proposed, there is no clear benefit to local communities. Residents who would face the most direct consequences of the development are not currently expected to see any direct benefits to their energy bills, or local employment.
4. The concern of residents about the nature of the consultation taken so far, which have been technical and abstract, with hard copies of materials only available at considerable expense to consultees.

Further notes:

1. The objections made to the developers by all 3 Rotherham MPs, and by a cross-party group of local Councillors, as well as a number of affected local Parish Councils.
2. The January 2025 motion agreed by this Council on a cross-party basis, which calls for solar panels on buildings to be prioritised over those in undeveloped countryside.

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3. The Leader of the Council has written to the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero to express the concerns of the community that allowing a development free for all, rather than a managed process of solar farm expansion especially in more rural areas, will undermine support for the Government's Net Zero ambitions.
4. Moreover, there is a risk that confidence in potentially more acceptable, smaller scale solar farm proposals is undermined by industrial scale proposals of this nature.
5. The Whitestone proposal is not expected to make a formal application to the Planning system until May 2026 at which point it will be determined by the Government as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP).
6. That technical aspects of the Planning process, including production of a Local Impact Report, will be undertaken by the Council's Planning officers. This process must be undertaken impartially, in line with the requirements of Planning rules, in order to protect the integrity of the process and the best interests of council tax payers. This work will be reported to the Planning Board on a quarterly basis, in accordance with the decision of Cabinet on 20th October 2025.

Therefore, this Council resolves to:

1. Express its view that the current Whitestone proposal does not enjoy the support of this Full Council.
2. Calls on the developer to heed the views of the Borough's elected representatives at all levels, withdraw their current proposal, hear the voices of local residents, and significantly scale back any future proposals.
3. Support steps to ensure that local communities are fully informed about the process should a Planning application be made, to ensure that local views, experience and expertise can be heard throughout.

On being put to the vote, the motion was carried.

91. NOTICE OF MOTION - STOP PROFITEERING FROM CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES

In accordance with Procedure Rule 15 (10) a period of no more than 90 minutes was permitted for the discussion of Notices of Motion. As consideration of this motion was after the 90 minute time limit, it was, in accordance with Procedure Rule 15 (11) moved, seconded and voted on without debate.

It was moved by Councillor Tarmey and seconded by Councillor A. Carter that:

This Council notes:

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) system is under severe strain, with some families struggling to secure vital support. Children with SEND deserve the same opportunities as every child, including access to the support they need to thrive.

In December 2024 the Government introduced the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill, with the overall of better protecting children and raising standards in education. The Government also announced £740 million in new funding to support students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, and those needing alternative education within mainstream schools. Inclusion remains the overarching policy, so that as many of our children and young people as possible are educated together with their peers in their own community.

Research commissioned by the Liberal Democrats has revealed that private equity-backed SEND providers are making over £100 million a year in profits, with some achieving margins of over 20%. Many of these companies are backed by firms registered in tax havens or foreign sovereign wealth funds.

Meanwhile, councils across the country face spiralling costs, severe budget pressures, and in some cases effective bankruptcy - leading to the reduction or withdrawal of vital services for vulnerable groups.

This Council welcomes:

1. Government action to curb profiteering in Children's Social Care. Through the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill, it has introduced powers to cap the profits of providers of illegal or exploitative children's homes, alongside enhancing financial transparency and greater enforcement by Ofsted.
2. The Government review of the SEND and Alternative Provision systems.

This Council believes:

1. Whilst there is potentially a role for some independent or private provision – profiteering from the needs of children with SEND is unacceptable and must end.
2. Children with SEND are not commodities for profit and should never be treated as such.

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3. Resources must be directed into improving provision and outcomes for children, not into shareholder dividends or inflated executive pay.
4. Local authorities should be supported to provide sustainable, high-quality inclusive SEND provision within both their mainstream and specialist settings; including by building and operating their own schools to accommodate those with the most complex needs if necessary.

Therefore, this Council resolves to:

1. Call on the Government to eradicate profiteering by private SEND providers, including consideration of sanctions against providers, where necessary.
2. Support further reforms to boost the SEND system, including strong financial oversight of providers, transparency, and new powers and funding for councils to build and manage local mainstream and specialist provision directly.
3. Endorse the principle that SEND reforms must put children first - not corporate greed.
4. Request group leaders to write to the Secretary of State for Education to ask that action is taken in line with the above.

On being put to the vote, the motion was carried.

92. MINUTES OF THE CABINET MEETING

Consideration was given to the reports, recommendations and minutes of the meetings of Cabinet held on 15th September 2025 and 20th October 2025.

Resolved:

That the reports, recommendations and minutes of the meetings of Cabinet held on 15th September 2025 and 20th October 2025, be received.

Mover: Councillor Read

Seconder: Councillor Cusworth

93. AUDIT COMMITTEE

Resolved:

That the reports, recommendations and minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee be noted.

Mover: Councillor Baggaley

Seconder: Councillor Allen

94. HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

Resolved:

That the reports, recommendations and minutes of the meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board be noted.

Mover: Councillor Baker-Rogers Seconder: Councillor Cusworth

95. LICENSING BOARD AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

Resolved:

That the reports, recommendations and minutes of the meetings of the Licensing Board and the Licensing Committee be noted.

Mover: Councillor Garnett Seconder: Councillor Steele

96. PLANNING BOARD

Resolved:

That the reports, recommendations and minutes of the meetings of the Planning Board be noted.

Mover: Councillor Mault Seconder: Councillor Jackson

97. STANDARDS AND ETHICS COMMITTEE

Resolved:

That the reports, recommendations and minutes of the meetings of the Standards and Ethics Committee be noted.

Mover: Councillor Clarke Seconder: Councillor Lelliott

98. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS TO DESIGNATED SPOKESPERSONS

There was one question from Councillor Yasseen:

1. Could the Spokesperson outline what action the Panel is taking, in partnership with South Yorkshire Police and other agencies, in light of survivor testimonies alleging that some serving police officers were involved in abusing victims during grooming investigations, and what assurances can be given to survivors that these claims are being fully investigated?

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Councillor Harper, the designated Spokesperson on South Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel, stated that the Panel was deeply concerned by recent survivor testimonies alleging that serving officers within South Yorkshire Police might have been involved in the abuse of victims during grooming investigations. These accounts were deeply distressing and represented a serious breach of public trust.

At the Police and Crime Panel meeting held on 15th September 2025, Members heard from the Deputy Mayor for Policing and were told that:

- A criminal investigation into any police involvement in the Rotherham grooming scandal based on claims in the media was already taking place, led by South Yorkshire Police (SYP) under the direction of the national watchdog – the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC).
- In response to concerns from victims about the suitability of these arrangements there was a joint request by SYP and the IOPC for the National Crime Agency (NCA) to take over and continue the investigation into allegations of child sexual abuse by former SYP officers. Full responsibility for the investigation had now been handed over to the NCA.
- It was critical that victims and survivors felt heard, believed, and supported, and they must have confidence in the people and systems that were there to make sure justice was done. On this basis the transfer to the NCA was welcomed as an important acknowledgement of these concerns.

The Panel received assurances that the Deputy Mayor would be keeping this situation under close review and would provide regular updates to the Police and Crime Panel.

Councillor Harper encouraged anyone who had not yet come forward to do so; all experiences would be treated with the seriousness, dignity, and the care they deserved.

Councillor Harper confirmed that he would pass on an update after the December 2025 meeting of the Panel via email if Councillor Yasseen wanted this. In her supplementary question, Councillor Yasseen confirmed that she did want these updates and Councillor Harper committed to provide them.

99. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS AND CHAIRPERSONS

There were 13 questions:

1. Councillor Bacon: The invasion of thugs racing on the A57 is putting residents at risk - when will the Council finally act, implement a PSPO, put pressure on the police, and stamp this out before somebody dies?

Councillor Alam, Cabinet Member for Finance and Community Safety, explained that the Council wanted to see the end of this type of criminal and anti-social use of vehicles and it understood the frustrations of residents that Councillor Bacon had raised. Officers continued to work with the Police and others, such as the retail outlets whose land was sometimes used, to prevent and deter the behaviour. At present, while a draft proposal had been considered, there were several factors that meant the Council were not currently pursuing a PSPO in this area.

Firstly Councillor Alam had been advised that in terms of the data needed to legally justify a PSPO, this did not exist or was not of sufficient quality. He therefore encouraged people to report these issues to the Police as often as they could when they witnessed them.

It was also important to note that many of the behaviours associated with vehicle nuisance could already be addressed using existing legislation and enforcement powers. There was a concern that a PSPO might not offer any additional capabilities beyond what was currently available.

Councillor Alam was happy to ask officers to meet with Councillor Bacon to discuss this in more detail.

In his supplementary question, Councillor Bacon confirmed that he would be happy to meet with officers. He disputed the answer provided regarding PSPO's not offering additional powers to the Police as they had been used across the Country where racing was a problem. He asked Councillor Alam, as an elected official, to tell officers that a PSPO needed to happen there. Data was not needed to know that hundreds of people were racing on the A57, putting lives at risk and impacting the fire station.

Councillor Alam confirmed that he would ask officers to meet with Councillor Bacon.

2. Councillor Bacon: The Council raised the cost of the Brown Bin Service, it raised Council Tax, people are paying more and getting less from this service. Does the Council understand that this so-called 'refund' is insulting given the huge failure?

As the Cabinet Member, Councillor Marshall, was not at the meeting, a written response would be provided.

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3. Councillor Bennett-Sylvester: Can you please explain how tenants will be able to influence the Selective Licensing Steering Group in a way that is safe from the types of landlord coercion that we have witnessed throughout the consultation process?

Councillor Beresford, Cabinet Member for Housing, explained that the terms of reference for the stakeholder group had not yet been fully developed, but the importance of ensuring that tenants could participate in a way that was both meaningful and safe was recognised.

It was appreciated that some tenants could be uncomfortable expressing their views directly to landlords, or their representatives. The Council aimed to provide a number of routes where tenants could provide input to the Steering Group and would discuss the best models with interested parties. The solutions could take the form of anonymous opportunities for tenant input, independent tenant representation on the steering groups, providing safe spaces for engagement as part of the work of the groups as well as clear reporting mechanisms and ongoing monitoring and review of any arrangements established.

The Council was committed to creating a space where tenants felt empowered to contribute without fear, and it welcomed ongoing dialogue to strengthen these protections.

4. Councillor Bennett-Sylvester: What measures will be taken to ensure the Pride of Place programme does not lead to highly deprived communities just outside its geographic scope such as Dalton, Munsbrough and Thrybergh being even more left behind neighbourhoods?

Councillor Williams, Cabinet Member for Transport, Jobs and the Local Economy explained that the Council welcomed the significant, long term investments being made by the Government. Of course it wanted to see more, but that was not a reason not to be positive about the resources coming to Rotherham communities.

The Phase 1 Pride in Place geography was prescribed by Government and focussed on the most heavily populated central area of the Borough - covering a population of 71,600 - including the Town Centre.

Despite the prescribed geography, the way in which the funding would be delivered had the potential to improve the lives of those living both within and outside of the identified spatial area. The Phase 1 fund would deliver improved access to health provision, better safety and security, and access to skills and employment opportunities – the impact of which would be felt more widely than the prescribed geography.

Of course, it was recognised that more funding over a wider area would be welcome, and this was why the Council continued to invest in place-based improvements right across the Borough.

In his supplementary, Councillor Bennett-Sylvester stated that one of the concerns he had was that some of the areas such as Dalton, Thrybergh and Munsbrough for instance, were net contributors into the Housing Revenue Account with the way that neighbourhood budgets were funded. The deprivation figures released previously were incredibly depressing and Rotherham was seeing growing gaps between the highly priced central belt and areas particularly in the south of the Borough. Councillor Bennett-Sylvester asked whether the Council could make it policy that anything it looked at should be attuned towards narrowing the gap between the highly deprived SOAs, the 21% Rotherham had in total across the Borough, and those less deprived. He asked if the Council could enshrine that as an actual function in this and other regeneration products that whatever it did had to look towards narrowing those gaps?

Councillor Williams accepted the challenge Councillor Bennett-Sylvester had raised and acknowledged that deprivation and inequality was a challenge for all in the Chamber. He agreed to take the queries away. Councillor Williams was, however, proud of the work done by the Labour administration to tackle deprivation and inequality, such as investment in community facilities, the Council's house building programme, the Towns and Villages Fund, Our Places Funds, road investment etc.

5. Councillor Ball: Could you please provide details on the number of financial penalties, each up to £30,000, that have been issued in Rotherham as an alternative to prosecution for unlicensed properties since Selective Licensing was first introduced in 2015?

As Councillor Ball was not present at the meeting to ask the question, a written response would be provided.

6. Councillor Ball: Could you please provide details on the number of successful prosecutions by RMBC for unlicensed properties in Rotherham that have resulted in unlimited fines since Selective Licensing was first introduced in 2015?

As Councillor Ball was not present at the meeting to ask the question, a written response would be provided.

7. Councillor Reynolds: Why, in the face of absolute rejection by the people of Rotherham for the Whitestones project, are the Labour Government and Labour Council not 100% behind the people that elected them?

Councillor Williams explained that a motion had been passed in the meeting by all political groups, rejecting the proposals. A cross-party approach had been taken on the issue which recognised the substantial concerns that had been raised. Councillor Williams thanked Councillor Collingham for his submission and confirmed that, as Cabinet Member, he had written in to the consultation precisely to reflect the strength of local concerns. The Leader had also written a strong letter to the Secretary of State so much action had been taken at a local level.

8. Councillor Reynolds: Can the solar power plan for the refurbishment of the new Markets be shared please?

Councillor Williams explained that the solar power plan for the new markets was:

- Installation of rooftop solar PVs with panels mounted on the new outside market roof structure, feeding into the new single metered supply for the Market; and
- Installation of rooftop solar PVs mounted on the new library roof as part of the redevelopment, connected to the building's internal distribution board and supporting its fully electric systems.

The combined capacity was approximately 203 kW across the 2 schemes. The combined scheme was expected to generate approximately 150,000 kWh per annum, displacing 27 tCO2e [tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent] per year, compared with grid average electricity supply.

The Council believed that this would deliver significant benefits of reduced energy costs, carbon savings and supporting local traders at the Market through lower electricity charges.

9. Councillor Ball: Could you please provide details on the number of Rent Repayment Orders that have been granted by tribunals in relation to unlicensed properties in Rotherham, enabling recovery of up to 12 months' rent or Housing Benefit/Universal Credit, since Selective Licensing was first introduced in 2015?

As Councillor Ball was not present at the meeting to ask the question, a written response would be provided.

10. Councillor Thorp: Can you confirm how the Council has implemented the motion on solar panels passed on the 15th of January. The Council resolved to adopt a political stance on solar panels on rooftops of commercial buildings, public buildings, car parks, and encourage the use of brown field sites instead of farmland being eaten up by solar farms.

Councillor Williams explained that a motion is an expression of a political view and such a motion did not have a binding effect on, for example, the Planning Board. It was confirmed that there were no national or local planning policies that required brownfields or roofs to be used instead of far land. However, the Council was acting on the political view expressed in terms of the Whitestone proposals. Further, the Council were putting solar panels on the market and library development, on the car park at Drummond Street and on Riverside House so locally, the Council was promoting the political stance passed in the motion.

In his supplementary, Councillor Thorp stated that it sounded like the Council had ignored the motion. He asked if something could be included in Planning Policy to ensure new build housing had to have solar panels and electric vehicle charging points.

Councillor Williams stated that the Council had not ignored the motion, as evidenced by the examples given in the previous answer. He committed to raising the matter of what could be done within Planning Policy with officers but explained that there would be the opportunity to discuss these kinds of ideas and suggestions as part of the Local Development Scheme which had been agreed earlier in the meeting.

11. Councillor Yasseen: Does the Leader of Rotherham Council believe that ignorance is now an acceptable defence for landlords committing criminal housing offences (Section 95(1) Housing Act 200), or is that defence a privilege reserved for senior Labour politicians, like the Chancellor Rachel Reeves?

The Leader stated that he believed that everyone in public life should do their best to follow the rules and pay their bills. He asked if Councillor Yasseen agreed.

In her supplementary, Councillor Yasseen stated that Chancellor, Rachel Reeves had admitted to failing to apply for a Selective Licence, highlighting that even councils like Southwark did not know who all the landlords were. She asked, given Rotherham's Selective Licencing proposal, and the fact it had already been running for 10 years, how will the Council ensure every landlord knew that they had to apply and how would the Council identify unlicensed properties?

The Leader confirmed that a written response would be provided with the details but there was now legislation that required all landlords to register under the Renters Rights Act so there was a legal obligation on landlords to come forward. The Leader stated that the difference between him and Councillor Yasseen on this subject was that he believed that when someone was running a business, which was what a landlord was doing, they should be aware of the legal requirements and regulations that they had to operate under and they should follow

COUNCIL MEETING - 05/11/25

them. The Leader believed that Councillor Yasseen was arguing that landlords should be able to get away with not following the rules and he did not believe that was acceptable.

12. Councillor Yasseen: Please confirm how many individuals or households the Council has placed at the Carlton Park Hotel as temporary accommodation during each of the following periods:

- April 2024 to March 2025
- April 2025 to October 2025
- And the number currently placed as of today?

Councillor Beresford explained that the Council had increased the portfolio of self-contained temporary accommodation provision by 45 units, taking the total to 173 units, which were situated across the Borough. This had helped to reduce the use of hotels. For example, in May 2024 there were 88 households placed into hotels, and as at end of October 2025, this had reduced to 13 single person households. The average length of stay in hotels was kept to a minimum as the aim was always to move people into more stable accommodation as quickly and safely as possible.

The number of new placements in the Carlton Park Hotel had been reducing: between 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025 there were 286 such households, with the average placement at 17.9 nights per month. Between 1st April and 4th November 2025, there were 111, at an average of 11.9 nights per month.

In her supplementary, Councillor Yasseen stated that the Carlton Park scenario was a really good example of how one policy could have such a detrimental impact when it was not properly consulted on. When the decision was made by the Council to use Carlton Park, anti-social behaviour had gone up 5 times. Councillor Yasseen asked what lessons the Council had learned from this and how will it be engaging local residents and Councillors to manage housing pressures differently?

Councillor Beresford explained that she was not around at the time of the situation Councillor Yasseen had described. However, she was committed to learning from past experiences and, where possible, engaging with local communities via consultation. It was noted, however, that consultation was not always possible, particularly during emergency situations.

13. Councillor Yasseen: Could the Cabinet Member please confirm how many businesses in Rotherham Town Centre have received support through the £270,000 High Street Regeneration Fund, and of these how many are owned or led by ethnic minority business owners?

Councillor Williams stated that the Fund was not just for the Town Centre but covered 5 areas, the others being Swinton, Maltby, Wath and Dinnington. It was a £270,000 scheme to help support small business, shops and local high streets across the Borough. The Scheme had been oversubscribed, and the level of demand had been very high. Councillor Williams confirmed that the Council were actively looking at additional funding to be able to support as many of the applications as possible. It was hoped that progress would be made on this over the next few weeks and Councillor Williams would be able to provide more information after that time.

In her supplementary, Councillor Yasseen explained that she had received lots of emails and phone calls from concerned ethnic minority-led businesses as it was felt that they got little support from the regeneration funding schemes. She felt that there was a disparity and inequity in the Council's approach

Councillor Williams explained that he would be happy to discuss the issues raised with Councillor Yasseen when the final allocations had been made. He did reiterate that the funding needed to be spread fairly across the eligible areas.

100. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

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Councillor Chris Read – Leader of the Council

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Please Contact:
Councillor Chris Read

8th October 2025

Councillor Simon Ball
Elected Member

Via email: simon.ball@rotherham.gov.uk

Dear Councillor Ball,

Question raised at Council – Wednesday 10th September 2025

At Council on 10th September, you asked how much money Liberty Steel owed in Business Rates and whether this had been written off. You also asked what had happened to what you described as the quarterly meetings with Liberty and its predecessors.

On the latter point, my understanding is that there were never quarterly meetings between the Council and Liberty, although there have at times been meetings at officer level. As the business has declined and restructuring proposals came forward these had come to a natural end, but I can confirm that subsequent conversations with officers have taken place when the business has been willing to share information.

On the former point, it is important to note that business rates collected are split between an amount retained by the Council 49%, 1% to South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue and 50% that is paid over to Government. If the debt is not paid and needs to be written off, the cost of this is also split in the same way.

I am informed that the total outstanding balance of business rates liability for Speciality Steel up to the 21st August 2025, the date a winding up order was made against them, was as follows:

	RMBC	SYFRS	Gov't	Total
23/24	£144,142.81	£2,941.69	£147,084.50	£294,169.00
24/25	£1,383,184.86	£28,228.26	£1,411,413.13	£2,822,826.25
25/26	£546,908.48	£11,161.40	£558,069.88	£1,116,139.75
Total	£2,074,236.15	£42,331.35	£2,116,567.50	£4,233,135.00

On the advice of the Council's external legal advisors £3,055,125.26 of the 2023/24 and 2024/25 outstanding balance was written off as irrecoverable at the end of the 2024/25 financial year. The Council is able to reverse these write off amounts if there is possibility of further recovery.

Despite that write off, a claim is to be submitted to the administrators for the full balance of £4,233,135.00 as outlined above. At this stage it is too early to know whether we will receive a dividend from this claim or whether, ultimately, the full balance will need to be written off.

From the date the winding up order was issued against the company and while ever the property is occupied, business rates liability falls on the liquidator.

Finally I should note that business rates demand notices equating to an additional £1,752,811.30 for the period 21st August 2025 to 31st March 2026 were issued on the 16th September 2025. It is expected these will be paid in full, though there is uncertainty as to how the liquidators will operate and for how long.

Yours sincerely



Councillor Chris Read
Leader of Rotherham Council

Councillor Chris Read – Leader of the Council

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Please Contact:
Councillor Chris Read

14th October 2025

Councillor Michael Bennett-Sylvester
Elected Member

Via email: michael.sylvester@rotherham.gov.uk

Dear Councillor Bennett-Sylvester,

Question raised at Council – Wednesday 10th September 2025

Thank you for the question you raised in relation to minutes 31 and 32 from the Cabinet meeting on 7th July 2025 where you asked about the public realm works on Effingham Street and the Town Centre Health Hub. You asked for clarity on what work was being done in terms of ensuring the quality in the works due to improvements on Bridgegate and College Street now looking grubby, only a few years after completion. You also asked if the two schemes could be linked in order to make parking more accessible.

I can advise that Environmental Services have conducted a visit to this area, and they have confirmed that it is on the Council's schedule for cleansing and includes a range of different cleansing activities to maintain the area. The team have confirmed the schedules are being maintained and the management team will give additional oversight over the coming weeks.

Parking and drop-off arrangements will form a core part of the Health Hub project's feasibility and design work and will be shaped by the requirements of occupiers and their customers. The former Boots building has a rear car park off Henry Street, expected to be used mainly for staff, but with potential for some limited blue-badge provision. While the Effingham Street frontage is pedestrianised, nearby non-pedestrianised streets will also be considered as potential drop-off and pick-up points. These considerations will be developed in parallel with the Council's wider town centre parking approach and new weekday parking offer, with the Health Hub and Effingham Street public realm works being coordinated to ensure there is no conflict.

Yours sincerely



Councillor Chris Read
Leader of Rotherham Council

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**Councillor John Williams – Cabinet Member for
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JW/LH	01709 807949	Councillor Williams

30th September 2025

Cllr Adam Tinsley
Elected Member

Via email: adam.tinsley@rotherham.gov.uk

Dear Cllr Tinsley,

Council Meeting – Wednesday 10th September 2025

Thank you for your supplementary question raised at the Council meeting on Wednesday 10th September 2025. I have set out your question and my response below.

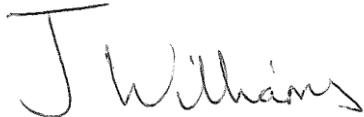
Would the Council promote that a taxi caught by Rotherham residents in Rotherham should have a Rotherham licence?

I can advise that whilst we accept that low level amounts of cross border working is inevitable (and indeed necessary in order to allow services to operate effectively) it is our view that taxis predominantly working in the Rotherham Borough should be licensed by Rotherham MBC.

The Council believe that the high standards met by the vehicles, drivers and operators that we licence are necessary to protect the safety of those using taxi services in Rotherham. For this reason, the Council would always encourage individuals to request and use a Rotherham licensed vehicle when using Hackney Carriage or Private Hire services. To this end, we have previously issued publicity material encouraging people to “ask for a Rotherham taxi” whenever they make their booking, and warning of the use of out of town vehicles – something that we are likely to do again in the run up to the busy Christmas and New Year period.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Yours sincerely,



Councillor John Williams
Cabinet Member for Transport, Jobs and the Local Economy / Ward Councillor for Hoober

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Councillor Lynda Marshall – Cabinet Member for Street Scene and Green Spaces

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LM/LH	Cllr Lynda Marshall	01709 822465

29th September 2025

Cllr Adam Carter
Elected Member

Via email: adam.carter@rotherham.gov.uk

Dear Cllr Carter

Question at Council – Wednesday 10th September 2025

Thank you for your supplementary question that you raised at the Council meeting on Wednesday 10th September. I have set out your question and my response below:

Could the watersplash be opened earlier than 11am in the summer holidays so that the Council were not encouraging young people to be out in the height of the heat, risking sun damage?

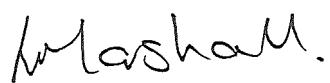
I can advise that this season, the team has been familiarising themselves with the new waterplay system, which has required additional time to ensure correct and safe operation. In addition, Park Rangers are responsible for carrying out essential safety inspections across the site each morning before initiating the waterplay start-up procedures.

The team fully acknowledge the concern regarding young people being outdoors during the hottest part of the day, and they are currently reviewing operational arrangements to identify efficiencies. The aim is to explore the feasibility of an earlier

opening time for the 2026 summer season, while maintaining the necessary safety standards.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marshall".

Cllr Lynda Marshall
Cabinet Member for Street Scene and Green Spaces

**Councillor John Williams – Cabinet Member for
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2nd October 2025

Cllr Adam Carter
Elected Member

Via email: adam.carter@rotherham.gov.uk

Dear Cllr Carter,

Council Meeting – Wednesday 10th September 2025

Thank you for your supplementary question raised at the Council meeting on Wednesday 10th September 2025.

You stated that the consultation was very clunky and difficult to access and asked me if I agreed that it was not presented well and was confusing for the residents of Brinsworth?

I can advise that the bridge at Grange Lane has not been mentioned by any member of the public during the consultation exercise. Having consulted with our Transport and Highways colleagues I understand that reopening would require a new bridge which is likely to incur significant cost and take up the majority, if not all the PfN funding.

In respect of the consultation methodology, The Place Standard Tool, is widely used across the UK for place-based consultations. Online access to the Place Standard Tool was available for a four-week period, running from 14 July to 11 August 2025, and aside from an error in one drop down box, the council has not received any feedback that it was difficult to access.

In order to maximise participation in the consultation there has been several in person consultations.

- Commissioning of Voluntary Action Rotherham (VAR) to lead tailored community consultation, utilising the strong voluntary and community sector network. VAR adapted the consultation materials to meet the needs of each community, specifically to ensure different age groups, languages, and abilities could participate.

- 13 pop-up consultation events led by officers throughout the boundary area, totalling 39 hours of engagement. To maximise accessibility and encourage participation, consultation events were strategically located in high-footfall areas within local communities, enabling residents to engage in familiar and comfortable settings without the need to travel.

A presentation went to Improving Places Select Commission on 2nd September 2025, and a copy of that can be found [here](#) for your information.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Yours sincerely,



Councillor John Williams
Cabinet Member for Transport, Jobs and the Local Economy / Ward Councillor for Hoober

**Councillor John Williams – Cabinet Member for
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14th October 2025

Cllr Adam Carter
Elected Member

Via email: adam.carter@rotherham.gov.uk

Dear Cllr Carter,

Council Meeting – Wednesday 10th September 2025

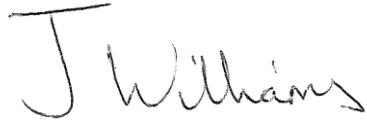
Thank you for your supplementary question raised at the Council meeting on Wednesday 10th September 2025. I am sorry for not writing back to you sooner on this matter.

You asked me to provide you with a list of the capital projects that were not going to take place due to the overspend on the refurbishment of the markets.

As confirmed in the meeting, the additional funding for the markets has not stopped any other projects from taking place. The management and delivery of a large capital programme means that some projects may not proceed or may slip into future years. This provides a mechanism for providing additional funding when required, and the decision to provide additional funding did not present a simple binary choice - it is not possible to directly relate the increased expenditure to the underspend or non-delivery of other specific projects.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Yours sincerely,



Councillor John Williams
Cabinet Member for Transport, Jobs and the Local Economy / Ward Councillor for Hooper

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**Councillor John Williams – Cabinet Member for
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15th September 2025

Cllr Adam Tinsley
Elected Member

Via email: adam.tinsley@rotherham.gov.uk

Dear Cllr Tinsley,

Council Meeting – Wednesday 10th September 2025

Thank you for your question raised at the Council meeting on Wednesday 10th September 2025. I have set out your question and my response below in writing as you were not present in the meeting to be able to ask it to me.

Parking enforcement on Maltby High Street feels inconsistent, letting cars overstay and affecting businesses. Will the Council commit to regular, reliable patrols to support fair parking and local traders?

We recognise that vehicles overstaying in restricted areas, not only disrupts traffic flow but also affects the turnover of parking spaces that local traders rely on. This is a matter the Council takes seriously.

As you know, we are investing in a new initiative—the **Street Safe Team**—which will significantly enhance our enforcement and community safety presence across the borough, including Maltby.

While our existing Civil Enforcement Officers and CCTV-equipped vehicles continue to issue penalties, the Street Safe Team will act as the Council’s “eyes and ears,” identifying, reporting and enforcing parking violations to ensure an additional layer of enforcement presence.

I’m pleased to confirm that recruitment for the Street Safe Team is well underway, and it is anticipated that patrols will commence in October. This will include regular coverage of Maltby High Street, helping to ensure that parking regulations are upheld and that local businesses are supported through improved access and turnover of parking spaces.

We will continue to monitor the effectiveness of these patrols and remain open to feedback from residents and traders to ensure our approach delivers the intended benefits.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Yours sincerely,



Councillor John Williams
Cabinet Member for Transport, Jobs and the Local Economy / Ward Councillor for Hoober

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15th September 2025

Cllr Simon Currie
Elected Member

Via email: simon.currie@rotherham.gov.uk

Dear Cllr Currie,

Council Meeting – Wednesday 10th September 2025

Thank you for your question submitted to the Council meeting held on Wednesday 10th September 2025. I have set out your question and my response below in writing as you were not present in the meeting to be able to ask it to me.

Why did Keppel ward receive no funding from the ‘our places’ pot when we were the biggest contributors to the consultation. Please could you explain the criteria for the allocation of the funding?

The “Our Places” Fund is a £4m package ringfenced in this year’s Council budget.

Borough-wide consultation and engagement with residents was undertaken, which identified several important areas for improvement including the condition of shopping areas, maximising opportunities provided by underused land, cenotaphs and memorials, and improving the experience of pedestrians. These were reported through Cabinet earlier this year.

The level of engagement from residents was really positive, and although not all areas are to benefit from this particular funding pot, many of the suggestions have been put forward for consideration for other funding streams.

I understand that in Keppel ward, suggestions came forward for improvements to St John’s Green and the memorial bench, which had been provided through the Towns and Villages programme. Suggestions for a new pedestrian crossing and general cleansing have been passed to the relevant Council services to consider as part of mainstream budgets. In addition, I am pleased to say that after approval in our Cabinet meeting earlier today, Keppel Ward will benefit from investment in improvements to community facilities at the Black Hut and at Artworks, Brook Hill.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Yours sincerely,



Councillor John Williams
Cabinet Member for Transport, Jobs and the Local Economy / Ward Councillor for Hoober

Councillor Lynda Marshall – Cabinet Member for Street Scene and Green Spaces

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Our ref	Please Contact	Direct Line
LM/KS	Cllr Lynda Marshall	01709 822465

15th September 2025

Cllr Adam Tinsley
Elected Member

Via email: adam.tinsley@rotherham.gov.uk

Dear Cllr Tinsley

Question at Council – Wednesday 10th September 2025

Thank you for you're the question you raised at the Council meeting on Wednesday 10th September. I have set out your question and my response below:

Last summer, grass cutting complaints were high, but this year dry weather limited growth. Why weren't teams redirected to other tasks, like hedge cutting, to ensure staff productivity and timely maintenance?

This year, grass cutting performance has significantly improved, thanks not only to favorable weather conditions but also to better management, upgraded machinery, and enhanced monitoring as a result of new investment.

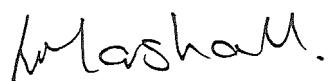
Our teams are responsible for over 40 different tasks during the summer season. Where resources allow, we have redirected staff to support other maintenance activities. Even in areas with limited grass growth, teams continue to visit sites for litter picking and other upkeep duties.

Hedge and shrub cutting during summer is restricted to essential health and safety interventions. This is to protect nesting birds, whose season can extend from March through autumn depending on the species.

From mid-October, as part of our winter works programme, we will begin more extensive hedge and shrub maintenance, alongside leaf clearance, grubbing, and weeding.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Marshall.'

Cllr Lynda Marshall
Cabinet Member for Street Scene and Green Spaces

Councillor Lynda Marshall – Cabinet Member for Street Scene and Green Spaces

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Our ref	Please Contact	Direct Line
LM/KS	Cllr Lynda Marshall	01709 822465

15th September 2025

Cllr Adam Tinsley
Elected Member

Via email: adam.tinsley@rotherham.gov.uk

Dear Cllr Tinsley

Question at Council – Wednesday 10th September 2025

Thank you for you're the question you raised at the Council meeting on Wednesday 10th September. I have set out your question and my response below:

With the review of waste collection routes and new working methods, are there plans to reduce the number of bin lorries or collection routes?

The route optimisation programme is not yet fully implemented but is now starting to be rolled out. Testing of some routes and Engagement with crews has commenced and testing of some routes is now underway, with full implementation expected to start in October.

Initial indications are that the recycling rounds can drop by one Refuse Collection Vehicle, and that fuel and carbon savings will also be seen across all collection streams.

It's important to note that our routes must remain flexible to accommodate ongoing changes such as new housing developments, recycling point installations, and

highway alterations. These factors mean that any decisions about reducing routes or vehicles will need to be carefully considered over time.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marshall".

Cllr Lynda Marshall
Cabinet Member for Street Scene and Green Spaces

**Councillor Brian Steele – Chair of the Overview and
Scrutiny Management Board**

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BS/BG Q24	01709 807961	Councillor Brian Steele

18th September 2025

Cllr Simon Ball
Elected Member

Via email: Simon.Ball@rotherham.gov.uk

Dear Councillor Ball

Question at Council – Wednesday 10th September 2025

Thank you for you're the question you raised at the Council meeting on Wednesday 10th September. I have set out your question and my response below:

Why has scrutiny failed to halt Labour's project slippages in the capital programme?

As Chairperson of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board, I work with the Committee to set agendas and ensure scrutiny meetings are conducted efficiently. Scrutiny is meant to support the Council, but it can only address a limited number of issues at Council meetings.

The contents of the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report indicated that throughout 24/25, Scrutiny considered 84 substantive items, there were 29 pre-decision reports scrutinised, two decisions were called in, seven workshops held, one site visit conducted and there were 26 off-agenda briefings. The Improving Lives Select Commission also co-opted three external members.

Scrutiny meetings are usually set for two hours, but over the past year, I have often extended them to ensure members have enough time to review agenda items thoroughly.

Additionally, a Committee member criticised the agendas for being too lengthy. My intention in setting the agendas is to ensure that issues raised during full Council could be properly scrutinised. Councillor Bacon also expressed support for concerns about the agendas being too long. As a result, I decided to reduce their length.

Councillor Ball, the OSMB Committee establishes the agenda through the Forward Plan. There has not been a comprehensive review of delays in the capital programme; this topic has never appeared as an agenda item. The matter was first raised in a meeting when Councillor Bacon referenced an audit report that had addressed the issue. As a result, it was deemed unnecessary for scrutiny to revisit the matter after the audit had already been completed.

I am grateful to all those who serve on any scrutiny committee for their dedication and commitment to the rigorous work of scrutiny. Their efforts are invaluable to the effective functioning of our council. Additionally, when I reviewed the committee memberships, I noted that, as it stands, you are not currently listed as a member of any scrutiny committee.

Yours sincerely



Councillor Brian Steele
Rawmarsh West Ward
Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board



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22nd September 2025

Cllr Simon Ball
Elected Member

Via email: simon.ball@rotherham.gov.uk

Dear Cllr Ball

Council Meeting – Wednesday 10th September 2025

Thank you for your question at the Council Meeting on 10th September 2025. I have set out your question and my response below.

How do you justify oversight amid rising regeneration costs under Labour?

The audit committee is a regulatory committee and will consider internal controls and issues raised through internal and external audit processes, alongside risk management.

There was an internal audit requested into "Asset Management estimates and capital programme" that received a partial assurance. The objective of the audit was to provide assurance on the accuracy of valuations, calculated as estimates for capital schemes that are to be included on the Capital Programme. There were actions arising from this audit report and as part of the audit committee forward work plan a progress report is planned to be received in our September meeting.

The internal audit plan also has an item on "23-24 capital programme" - to review the updated capital procedures and provide assurance that they are being complied with and that expenditure is appropriately approved, controlled and monitored. This audit report is currently in draft and once finalised will be presented to the audit committee which is being planned for our next committee meeting in September.

I hope you find this helpful.

Yours sincerely

Councillor Jamie Baggaley
Chair of Audit Committee

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Councillor Linda Beresford, Cabinet Member for Housing

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Councillor Linda Beresford

18th September 2025

Councillor Taiba Yasseen
Elected Member

Via email: taiba.yasseen@rotherham.gov.uk

Dear Councillor Yasseen

Question at Council – 10th September 2025

Thank you for your question raised at the Council meeting on 10th September. I have set out your question and my response below.

I assured my constituents I would keep them informed about Selective Licensing, especially after repeated officer assurances that we would receive regular updates on this critical issue. It directly affects my ward, yet I now face daily inquiries and remain completely in the dark. Why has the elected ward council-lor not been properly briefed or kept updated?

Thank you for your question on behalf of your constituents regarding Selective Licensing.

Officers have been processing and analysing the feedback received during the consultation. This work is essential to inform the Cabinet report, which is scheduled for consideration in October.

Until a decision is made at Cabinet, there are no substantive updates to share. However, I want to reassure you that once a decision is made, all elected members—particularly those representing affected wards—will be fully briefed and provided with the necessary information to support their communities.

We appreciate your patience and continued engagement on this matter.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Yours sincerely



Cllr Linda Beresford
Labour Member for Greasbrough Ward
Cabinet Member for Housing

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**Councillor Saghir Alam – Cabinet Member for Finance and
Community Safety**

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18th September 2025

Cllr Simon Ball
Elected Member

Via email: simon.ball@rotherham.gov.uk

Dear Cllr Ball,

Question at Council – 10th September 2025

Thank you for your question raised at the Council meeting on 10th September. I have set out your question and my response below.

Why hasn't an independent body been commissioned to review whether the budget overspends stem from ideological spending over taxpayer value?

As you are aware the Council reports regularly to Cabinet on its spending throughout the year and those reports, which are published for anyone to read, provide explanations for any significant areas of overspend.

We have consistently reported that the Council's most significant overspends have been in relation to the children's social care placements and in complying with our legal requirements to transport children who meet certain eligibility criteria, to and from school. Those are challenges faced by similar councils across the country.

The Council's accounts and spending are audited by external auditors that are appointed independently of the Council.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Yours sincerely



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

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Councillor Joanna Baker-Rogers – Cabinet Member for Adult

Social Care and Health

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18th September 2025

Councillor Simon Ball
Elected Member

Via email: simon.ball@rotherham.gov.uk

Dear Cllr Ball

Council Meeting – Wednesday 10th September 2025

Thank you for your question raised at the Council meeting on Wednesday 10th September 2025. I have set out your question and my response below.

How has your board challenged Labour's underfunding of NHS partnerships?

Health and Wellbeing Boards were established under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to act as a forum in which key leaders from the local health and care system work together to improve the health and wellbeing of their local population. As such its function is not political but to ensure that all partners work together and ensure the most efficient use of resources across the health and care system, to deliver the best possible outcomes for local people.

In answer to your question Cllr Ball, in 2024/25 the Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust secured £7 million from the government's Additional Capacity Targeted Investment Fund. The money has been used to increase Rotherham's Urgent and Emergency Care Centre, creating additional capacity for urgent primary care, minor injuries and Same Day Emergency Care. Other initiatives include a new purpose-built fracture clinic and to relocate the sexual health service and pre-assessment centre. All these initiatives improve access for Rotherham residents. A number of departments are also to be refurbished including orthotics and therapy services.

Better Care Fund funding has also realised improvements in enablement and community services. In addition, the Baby Pack Scheme has been launched that aims for better long-term outcomes from birth.

The Labour Government has delivered 55,000 more GP appointments across Rotherham in the last year. Plans are also in place for investment in nine GP surgeries across the town that will allow this figure to grow further. There is also the new medical centre at Waverley.

The Health and Wellbeing Board has, through its strong partnership working, helped to achieve all of the above initiatives and more.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Yours sincerely,



Cllr Joanna Baker-Rogers
Chair of Health and Wellbeing Board
Rawmarsh West Ward
Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health

Councillor Linda Beresford, Cabinet Member for Housing

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18th September 2025

Councillor Taiba Yasseen
Elected Member

Via email: taiba.yasseen@rotherham.gov.uk

Dear Councillor Yasseen

Question at Council – 10th September 2025

Thank you for your question raised at the Council meeting on 10th September. I have set out your question and my response below.

Do you agree that conducting a second Selective Licensing consultation survey more than three months after the statutory consultation closed could reasonably be perceived by residents as the Council acting in bad faith or attempting to shift the goalposts?

As explained at previous Council meetings, the consultation was extended to ensure we receive a broad and representative range of feedback from all stakeholders. Residents can be assured that this is not shifting the goalposts, as the consultation framework has remained the same, but it is part of our commitment to gather opinions. This ensures that everyone that has the opportunity to voice their opinions and contribute to the decision-making process.

We are committed to considering all perspectives before making any final decisions. The consultation responses will be transparently reported as part of the decision-making process.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Yours sincerely



Cllr Linda Beresford
Labour Member for Greasbrough Ward
Cabinet Member for Housing

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Councillor Brian Steele – Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

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1 October 2025

Cllr Simon Ball
Elected Member

Via email: Simon.Ball@rotherham.gov.uk

Dear Councillor Ball

Question at Council – Wednesday 10th September 2025

Thank you for you're the question you raised at the Council meeting on Wednesday 10th September. I have set out your question and my response below:

Why has there been no scrutiny of migration pressures overwhelming health resources due to Labour open-border policies?

At a local level, no representations have been received from either elected members or members of the public requesting that Scrutiny consider this matter.

Furthermore, Health Partners have not indicated any additional pressures on the system. This issue has not been raised by either the Integrated Care Board (ICB) or The Rotherham Foundation Trust (TRFT) during the performance discussions or PLACE meetings.

Yours sincerely



Councillor Brian Steele
Rawmarsh West Ward
Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

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Councillor Chris Read – Leader of the Council

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Please Contact:
Councillor Chris Read

1st December 2025

Mr Ashraf
Via email: alwaysstruthforever@proton.me

Dear Mr Ashraf

Question at Council – Wednesday 5th November 2025

Thank you for your question raised at the Council meeting on Wednesday 5th November 2025. I have set out your question and my response below.

Could the legal and financial risk to Rotherham Council and the taxpayers of non-compliance of urgently acting prudently vis-à-vis prevention and non-assistance duties in those investments under international and domestic law be given a detailed legal liabilities and monetary figure on a Rotherham borough and a per taxpayer basis?

The Council cannot speak to the investments of the Pension Authority. The Council operates investments prudently, as set out within the Council's Treasury Management Strategy (TMS), that is approved by Council annually as part of the Council's Budget and Council Tax Report. The Council's TMS has to operate within and meet the regulations set out within the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice. Consequently, the Council's view that it is operating in line with the law and so there is no legal and financial risk to taxpayers through the Council.

I hope the above information is helpful

Yours sincerely



Councillor Chris Read
Leader of Rotherham Council

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Councillor Linda Beresford

10th November 2025

Mr Horvath

Dear Mr Horvath

Question at Council – Wednesday 5th November 2025

Thank you for your question raised at the Council meeting on Wednesday 5th November 2025. I have set out your question and my response below.

Selective Licensing was rejected overwhelmingly by formal questionnaires, why did Cabinet approve it?

I can advise that the Cabinet's decision to approve the designation of six new Selective Licensing schemes was based on a comprehensive review of both the consultation feedback and the extensive evidence presented in the final report.

While the feedback received during the consultation informed our decision, of course it can't be the only thing we take into consideration. Sadly, we continue to see persistent issues in the private rented sector, including high levels of housing hazards, deprivation, crime, and anti-social behaviour. We also considered the outcomes from previous schemes, which led to thousands of hazards being addressed, enforcement actions taken, and improvements in housing standards.

Some of the feedback we received in the consultation indicated that there was no anti-social behaviour in Eastwood, for example. That sort of feedback simply isn't credible.

Some of the feedback we received was from a number of landlords whose properties had been found to be used for organised crime purposes. Those landlords wanted us to stop inspecting their properties. Frankly that would be a dereliction of duty.

So, while we've amended our proposals where we can – amending the boundaries, giving discounts on fees to landlords who haven't had problems, and bringing together a stakeholder group – in the end we have to make the best decision we can for the whole community, and that's what we've done.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Yours sincerely



Cllr Linda Beresford
Labour Member for Greasbrough Ward
Cabinet Member for Housing

Councillor Chris Read – Leader of the Council

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Councillor Chris Read

20th November 2025

Cllr Greg Reynolds
Elected Member

Via email: [ggregory.reynolds@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:gregory.reynolds@rotherham.gov.uk)

Dear Cllr Reynolds

Council Meeting – Wednesday 5th November 2025

Thank you for your question regarding the rationale provided during the pre-application process for the Whitestone Solar Farm, specifically in relation to the discounting of brownfield land in favour of the current site layout.

I can confirm that the Council as Local Planning Authority (LPA) has only received the same level of information that is publicly available on the applicant's website. No additional or supplementary information has been submitted to the LPA on this matter.

Chapter 4 of the applicant's Environmental Statement (ES), titled "*Alternatives and Design Evolution*", addresses the consideration of alternative options. This chapter, which can be accessed here: [Template](#), outlines the applicant's justification for the development, referencing the National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3). It includes an assessment of alternative renewable technologies and site locations.

For developments of this scale, categorised as Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs), applicants are expected to have regard to EN-3, which forms the primary policy framework for decisions made by the Secretary of State. This document can be viewed here: [National Policy Statement for renewable energy infrastructure \(EN-3\)](#). Paragraph 2.10.18 (page 90) of EN-3 outlines key considerations for solar farm siting, including:

- Network connection
- Irradiance and site topography
- Proximity to dwellings
- Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) and land type
- Accessibility
- Public rights of way
- Security and lighting

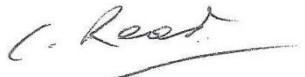
In particular, Paragraph 2.10.29 (page 91) advises that while land type should not be the overriding factor in site selection, applicants should, where feasible, prioritise the use of previously developed (brownfield), contaminated, or industrial land. Where agricultural land is proposed, lower quality land should be preferred, avoiding “Best and Most Versatile” (BMV) land—defined as ALC grades 1, 2, and 3a—where possible. Paragraph 2.10.31 further states that applicants should justify their site selection, acknowledging the preference for brownfield, industrial, and lower-grade agricultural land.

At present, the draft ES does not appear to provide a robust justification for the exclusion of previously developed, brownfield, contaminated, or industrial land, as recommended by EN-3. The LPA will therefore raise this issue with the applicant and request that it is addressed in the formal submission to the Planning Inspectorate and Secretary of State.

Thank you again for highlighting this matter. As the proposal remains at the pre-application stage, I would also encourage you to contact the applicant directly at info@whitestonesolarfarm.co.uk to express your concerns regarding the current lack of consideration for alternative land types.

I hope that this information is useful.

Yours sincerely



Councillor Chris Read
Leader of Rotherham Council

Councillor Lynda Marshall – Cabinet Member for Street Scene and Green Spaces

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Our ref	Please Contact	Direct Line
LM/LH	Cllr Lynda Marshall	01709 822465

10th November 2025

Cllr Joshua Bacon
Elected Member

Via email: Joshua.bacon@rotherham.gov.uk

Dear Cllr Bacon

Question at Council – Wednesday 5th November 2025

Thank you for your question at the Council meeting on Wednesday 5th November 2025. I have set out your question and my response below:

The council raised the cost of the brown bin service, it raised council tax, people are paying more and getting less from this service. Does the Council understand that this so-called 'refund' is insulting given the huge failure?

I sincerely apologise for the disruption to garden waste subscribers this year. We value their custom and would reassure them that we have been working hard to resolve the issues and return to the high quality and consistent levels of service seen previously.

I understand people's frustration. The announcement of the reduction on next year's subscription, or refund for those who do not choose to resubscribe, is based on a fair reflection of the number of missed collections for each household by the end of the subscription year.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marshall".

Cllr Lynda Marshall
Cabinet Member for Street Scene and Green Spaces

**Councillor John Williams – Cabinet Member for
Transport, Jobs and the Local Economy**

Riverside House

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JW/LH	01709 807949	Councillor Williams

9th December 2025

Cllr Michael Bennett-Sylvester
Elected Member

Via email: michael.sylvester@rotherham.gov.uk

Dear Cllr Bennett-Sylvester,

Council Meeting – Wednesday 5th November 2025

Thank you for your supplementary question at our last Council Meeting relating to the challenges around deprivation and inequality in areas such as Dalton, Thrybergh and Munsbrough. I am sorry for not writing back to you sooner on this matter.

I recognise the concerns that you have raised, and the widening gap evidenced by the recent IMD figures is indeed very concerning. The Council is seeking to address this in a number of ways. The Pride in Place Programmes are, by their nature, targeted at some of the most deprived communities in the borough as defined by the Government's own data. However, although Rotherham has done well from these funding allocations, I accept that these programmes will not impact upon every part of the borough that needs support.

Officers will also target our other work to focus on the most disadvantaged area. The Pathways to Work programme is targeted at those who are outside of the labour market and so by definition it will impact on our more deprived communities by seeking to get more people into employment. Additionally, we will ensure there is a focus on the impact of major capital programmes, for example Rotherham Gateway Station, upon the communities that need support.

Your wider point though is acknowledged, and the Council will look at ways these principles can be enshrined into future policy documents.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Yours sincerely,



Councillor John Williams
Cabinet Member for Transport, Jobs and the Local Economy / Ward Councillor for Hoober

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Councillor Linda Beresford, Cabinet Member for Housing

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Councillor Linda Beresford

10th November 2025

Councillor Simon Ball
Elected Member

Via email: simon.ball@rotherham.gov.uk

Dear Cllr Ball

Question at Council – Wednesday 5th November 2025

Thank you for your question raised at the Council meeting on Wednesday 5th November 2025. I have set out your question and my response below.

Could you please provide details on the number of financial penalties, each up to £30,000, that have been issued in Rotherham as an alternative to prosecution for unlicensed properties since selective licensing was first introduced in 2015?

I can advise that the council trialled their use in 2019, during the first period of selective licensing, when three civil penalties were issued. Due to the civil nature of these penalties, officers found that they are harder to enforce and recover, with one still being recovered and is scheduled to be finally and fully recovered in mid-2026.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Yours sincerely



Cllr Linda Beresford
Labour Member for Greasbrough Ward
Cabinet Member for Housing

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Councillor Linda Beresford

14th November 2025

Councillor Simon Ball
Elected Member

Via email: simon.ball@rotherham.gov.uk

Dear Cllr Ball

Question at Council – Wednesday 5th November 2025

Thank you for your question raised at the Council meeting on Wednesday 5th November 2025. I have set out your question and my response below.

Could you please provide details on the number of successful prosecutions by RMBC for unlicensed properties in Rotherham that have resulted in unlimited fines since selective licensing was first introduced in 2015?

I can advise that since 2015 the council has successfully prosecuted 49 cases for unlicensed properties under the Housing Act 2004, resulting in a range of fines being issued by the court. The sanctions ranged from a Conditional Discharge all the way up to a £13,300 fine.

It's worth noting that there were also 100 arrests over three years linked to cannabis production.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Yours sincerely



Cllr Linda Beresford
Labour Member for Greasbrough Ward
Cabinet Member for Housing

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10th November 2025

Councillor Simon Ball
Elected Member

Via email: simon.ball@rotherham.gov.uk

Dear Cllr Ball

Question at Council – Wednesday 5th November 2025

Thank you for your question raised at the Council meeting on Wednesday 5th November 2025. I have set out your question and my response below.

Could you please provide details on the number of Rent Repayment Orders that have been granted by tribunals in relation to unlicensed properties in Rotherham, enabling recovery of up to 12 months' rent or housing benefit/Universal Credit, since selective licensing was first introduced in 2015?

I can confirm that RMBC have not issued any Rent Repayment Orders to date.

Yours sincerely



Cllr Linda Beresford
Labour Member for Greasbrough Ward
Cabinet Member for Housing

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**Councillor John Williams – Cabinet Member for
Transport, Jobs and the Local Economy**

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27th November 2025

Cllr Paul Thorp
Elected Member

Via email: paul.thorp@rotherham.gov.uk

Dear Cllr Thorp,

Council Meeting – Wednesday 5th November 2025

Following our Council Meeting earlier this month, I'm writing back in relation to your further question to me regarding the requirements for renewable technology in new residential properties there are two aspects. In relation to Planning, there are some things that are currently required in planning applications for new residential developments. These are set out in a Supplementary Planning Guidance document. The requirements include provision of EV charging points. As you may be aware, we are due to commence work on a new Local Plan within the next year and there is an opportunity to explore renewable standards in the new local plan, with the caveat that we will need to make sure that new policies align with national policy/standards. We are expecting details of National Development Management Policies by the end of the year.

In relation to Building Regulations, the primary focus in relation to renewable energy is on efficiency and safety which is governed by Part L of the Building Regulations and other specific rules.

For new builds, regulations do mandate solar PV panels or other renewable generation on most new homes, along with requirements for energy efficiency like high insulation and efficient lighting.

Part S of the Building Regulations deals with electrical vehicle charging points.

I hope this information is useful to you and answers your queries.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Yours sincerely,



Councillor John Williams
Cabinet Member for Transport, Jobs and the Local Economy / Ward Councillor for Hoober

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Councillor Linda Beresford

27th November 2025

Councillor Taiba Yasseen
Elected Member

Via email: taiba.yasseen@rotherham.gov.uk

Dear Cllr Yasseen

Question at Council – Wednesday 5th November 2025

Thank you for your supplementary question in relation to how the Council will ensure all landlords know they need to apply for a licence under the scheme, alongside how the Council will identify those that do not come forward.

The Council has a significant number of contact points in order to raise awareness of the scheme with landlords including:

- all letting agents in the Borough
- the National Residential Landlords Association
- citizens advice
- all those who responded to the consultation who left contact details
- all landlords who provided email addresses as part of the previous schemes

In addition to this contact, the Council has and will continue to publish information in local press, provide a dedicated webpage and continue to engage with local Councillors and local organisations.

The Council will offer a 90-day period from the start of the scheme in which landlords or managers can use the online application process to licence their properties.

In terms of identifying any properties that do not have the appropriate license, the Council will conduct a number of actions, including but not limited to:

- interrogating a range of databases
- working with our partners and various departments to raise awareness so referrals can be made

- requiring letting agents to provide relevant information
- working with compliant landlords
- identifying through any tenant complaints

I hope the above information is helpful

Yours sincerely



Cllr Linda Beresford
Labour Member for Greasbrough Ward
Cabinet Member for Housing

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Council – 14 January 2026

Report Title

Petitions

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

No

Executive Director Approving Submission of the Report

John Edwards, Chief Executive

Report Author(s)

Samantha Mularkey, Governance Advisor
01709 247916 or samantha.mularkey@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

This report provides Members with a list of all petitions received by Rotherham MBC since the last Council meeting held on 5 November 2025 and details which petitions will be presented by members of the public at this Council meeting.

This report is submitted for Members' awareness of the items to be presented to the Council meeting.

Recommendations

1. That the report be received.
2. That the Council receive the petition listed at paragraph 2.1 of the report and the lead petitioner or their representative be entitled to address the Council for a total period of five minutes in accordance with the Council's Petition Scheme.
3. That the relevant Executive Director be required to respond to the lead petitioner, as set out in the Petition Scheme, by Wednesday 28 January 2026.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 – Petition relating to Security Measures on Brook Hill.

Background Papers

None

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

No

Council Approval Required

Yes

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Petitions

1. Background

1.1 The Council refreshed its Petition Scheme in May 2019, following its introduction in 2010 after legislative changes requiring local authorities to respond to petitions. Whilst the Localism Act 2011 repealed that statutory requirement, the Council has maintained its commitment to responding to issues raised by local people and communities in respect of matters within the Council's remit.

1.2 The current Petition Scheme sets thresholds for various routes that petitions can take through the decision-making process:-

- Up to 20 signatures – not accepted as a petition.
- 20 to 599 signatures – five-minute presentation to Council by Lead Petitioner and response by relevant Executive Director.
- 600 to 1,999 signatures – five-minute presentation to Council by Lead Petitioner and referral to Overview and Scrutiny Management Board for review of the issues, followed by response by the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Management Board setting out their findings and recommendations.
- 2,000 signatures and above – five-minute presentation to Council by Lead Petitioner followed by a 15-minute debate of the petition by the Council.

1.3 This report is submitted for information to detail the number of petitions received since the previous Council meeting held on 5 November 2025 and the route that these petitions will take through the Council's decision-making processes.

2. Key Issues

2.1 The following petition has been received which met the threshold for presentation to the Council meeting and for a response to be issued by the relevant Executive Director:

Subject	Number of Valid Signatures	Lead Petitioner	Directorate
Petition relating to a pedestrian crossing in Brampton Bierlow	100	Clive Hickman	Regeneration and Environment

2.2 The details of the petition can be found in Appendix 1 of the report.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

3.1 This report is submitted for information and Members are recommended to note the content and resolve that the petition received be administered in accordance with the provisions of the Council's Petition Scheme.

4. Consultation on proposal

4.1 This report is submitted for information in order to detail the petitions received by the Council since the previous Council meeting held on 5 November 2025. There are no consultation issues directly associated with this report.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

5.1 Under the provisions of the Council's Petition Scheme, this petition will not be debated. It will be sent to the Executive Director of Regeneration and Environment to provide a written response.

5.2 The Executive Director of Regeneration and Environment is required to provide a written response to the lead petitioner within 10 working days of the meeting. Responses are therefore due by Wednesday 28 January 2026.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

6.1 There are no financial or procurement implications directly associated with this report.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

7.1 There are no legal implications directly associated with this report.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

8.1 There are no human resources implications directly associated with this report.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

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

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 There are no specific equalities or human rights implications directly associated with this report.

11. Implications for Ward Priorities

11.1 There are no direct implications on ward priorities arising from the petition referred to earlier in this report.

12. Implications for Partners

12.1 There are no known implications for partners arising from the petition referred to earlier in this report.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 As this report is submitted for information, there are no risks associated with the presentation of information in respect of petitions received.

14. Accountable Officers

Emma Hill, Head of Democratic Services

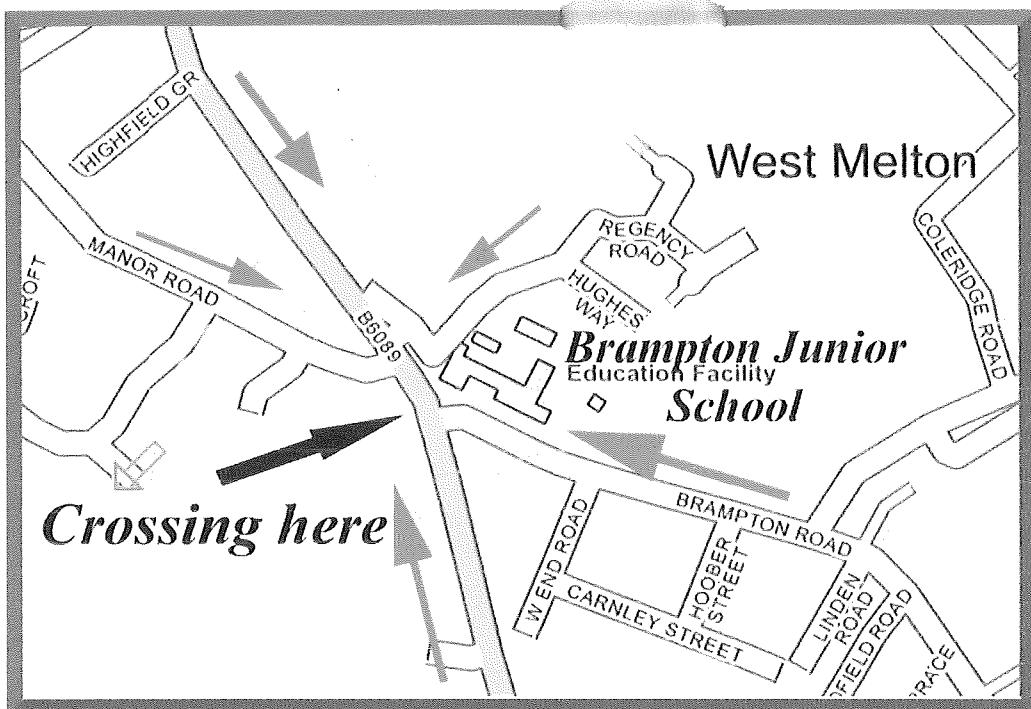
Report Author Samantha Mullarkey, Governance Advisor
01709 247916 or samantha.mullarkey@rotherham.gov.uk

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

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PETITION

We, the under-signed, are local pedestrians who have regular, almost daily experience of crossing the A6089 on Packman Road, where it joins not only Manor Road and Brampton Road, but also Regency Road, as shown below:



With traffic converging from five different directions as indicated by the red arrows, we know from first-hand experience how dangerous it is to cross, especially at peak times in the morning, and later in the day. The latest housing development on Pontefract Road is likely to make matters worse, and our two local schools – Brampton Ellis Junior and Infant schools – unlike Cortonwood Infants, Wath C of E and Wath Victoria - are the **only ones** within a radius of 2.5 miles without a safe point of crossing.

We therefore call on RMBC to install – as a matter of urgency – a point of safe crossing such as a Pelican Crossing – in the area shown, not only to enable safe passage but to prevent an impending and serious risk to public health and safety.

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Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Council – 14 January 2026

Report Title

Recommendation from Cabinet - HRA Business Plan, Rent Setting and Service Charges 2026-27

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

Yes

Executive Director Approving Submission of the report

Ian Spicer, Executive Director for Adult Care, Housing and Public Health

Report Author(s)

Lindsay Wynn, HRA Business Planning Manager

Paul Elliott, Head of Housing Income and Support Services

Kath Andrews, Finance Manager

Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide – all wards

Report Summary

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) records all expenditure and income relating to the provision of Council housing and related services, and the Council is required to produce an HRA Business Plan setting out its investment priorities over a 30-year period.

From the 1st of April 2026, the Government will implement a 10-year social rent settlement. This is the Government's Policy on the annual increase for social housing rents. The 10-year settlement sets the maximum rent increase at the Consumer Price Index (CPI) as of September the year prior plus 1%. The 10-year rent settlement has given greater certainty on the level of forecast income to fund the HRA Business Plan, going forward. It will enable longer term planning for investment, delivery of services and growth. The rent settlement is part of the Government's plan for the future of social housing which promises to enable local authorities and housing associations to deliver thousands of new affordable homes to meet need and drive up the safety and quality of existing homes.

The proposed 2026/27 HRA Business Plan incorporates the Council's commitments to continue and extend the Council's Housing Delivery Programme, alongside significant additional investment to support decency and thermal efficiency in existing council homes. The Plan includes provision for £1.329bn investment in the housing stock over 30 years, an increase of £350m compared to the 2025/26 plan. This is

alongside continuing to fund day-to-day housing management, repairs and maintenance costs.

£122.9m will be invested to deliver an estimated 500 further Council homes by 2037/38, in addition to the £90.9m that is earmarked to support the current Housing Delivery Programme which is on track to deliver 1,000 homes by summer 2027.

Alongside providing the draft HRA budget for 2026/27, the report recommends proposed levels for housing rents, non-dwelling rents, District Heating charges and other service charges for 2026/27. It is recommended to Council that dwelling rents are increased by 4.8% and up to £2 per week (equivalent to CPI+1% and up to £2 per week rent convergence). This is dependent upon a Government decision expected in January 2026, which will clarify the approach to social rent convergence.

Recommendations

That Council: -

1. Approve the proposed 2026/27 HRA Business Plan.
2. Note that the Business Plan will be reviewed annually to provide an updated financial position.
3. Agree that Council dwelling rents are increased by 4.8% and, dependent upon the Government announcement in January 2026, implement a policy of rent convergence. Allowing rents for social housing properties that are currently below the Government-calculated formula rent to increase by an additional £2 per week in 2026/27. If convergence is capped below £2 that will be the level applied.
4. Agree that the Council should retain the policy of realigning rents on properties at below formula rent to the formula rent level when the property is re-let to a new tenant.
5. Agree that affordable rents are calculated at relet, based on an individual property valuation.
6. Agree that affordable rents are increased by 4.8% in 2026/27.
7. Agree that shared ownership rents are increased by 5% in 2026/27.
8. Agree that charges for communal facilities, parking spaces, cooking gas and use of laundry facilities are increased by 3% in 2026/27.
9. Agree that charges for garages are increased by 10% in 2026/27.
10. Agree that the District Heating unit charge per kWh remains at 13.09 pence per kWh.
11. Agree that the decision to reduce the price of District Heating Charges during 2026/27 be delegated to the Service Director of Housing in conjunction with the Service Director of Financial Services following consultation with the Cabinet

Member for Housing. The delegation would only be used to respond to a change in Government policy or a significant change in the Ofgem price cap that has the effect of a lower unit price.

12. Approve the draft Housing Revenue Account budget for 2026/27 as shown in Appendix 8.

List of Appendices Included

- Appendix 0 15 December 2025 Cabinet Report - HRA Business Plan, Rent Setting and Service Charges 2026-27
- Appendix 1 Forecast Number of Council Homes
- Appendix 2 Social Rent Options
- Appendix 2a Social Rent payable by number of bedrooms
- Appendix 3 HRA Reserve Levels
- Appendix 4 non-dwelling rent, service charges and Furnished Homes Charges 2026/27
- Appendix 5 Affordability Analysis
- Appendix 6 Support for Tenants with Financial Pressures
- Appendix 7 HRA Business Planning assumptions
- Appendix 8 Housing Revenue Account Budget 2026/27
- Appendix 9 HRA Operating Statement
- Appendix 10 Interest Cover Ratio
- Appendix 11 Equalities Assessment
- Appendix 12 Climate Impact Assessment

Background Papers

- HRA Business Plan 2025/26
- Rent Setting and Service Charges 25/26
- DCLG Guidance on Rents for Social Housing
- Annual Housing Delivery Report to Cabinet

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB) – 10 December 2025
Cabinet - 15 December 2025

Council Approval Required

Yes

Exempt from the Press and Public

No.

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Appendix 0 – Cabinet Report



**Public Report
Cabinet**

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Cabinet – 15 December 2025

Report Title

HRA Business Plan, Rent Setting and Service Charges 2026-27

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

Yes

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the report

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

Report Author(s)

Lindsay Wynn, HRA Business Planning Manager

Paul Elliott, Head of Housing Income and Support Services

Kath Andrews, Finance Manager

Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide – all wards

Report Summary

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) records all expenditure and income relating to the provision of Council housing and related services, and the Council is required to produce an HRA Business Plan setting out its investment priorities over a 30-year period.

From the 1st of April 2026, the Government will implement a 10-year social rent settlement. This is the Government's Policy on the annual increase for social housing rents. The 10-year settlement sets the maximum rent increase at the Consumer Price Index (CPI) as of September the year prior plus 1%. The 10-year rent settlement has given greater certainty on the level of forecast income to fund the HRA Business Plan, going forward. It will enable longer term planning for investment, delivery of services and growth. The rent settlement is part of the Government's plan for the future of social housing which promises to enable local authorities and housing associations to deliver thousands of new affordable homes to meet need and drive up the safety and quality of existing homes.

The proposed 2026/27 HRA Business Plan incorporates the Council's commitments to continue and extend the Council's Housing Delivery Programme, alongside significant additional investment to support decency and thermal efficiency in existing council homes. The Plan includes provision for £1.329bn investment in the housing stock over 30 years, an increase of £350m compared to the 2025/26 plan. This is

alongside continuing to fund day-to-day housing management, repairs and maintenance costs.

£122.9m will be invested to deliver an estimated 500 further Council homes by 2037/38, in addition to the £90.9m that is earmarked to support the current Housing Delivery Programme which is on track to deliver 1,000 homes by summer 2027.

The Business Plan will also provide for additional investment benefitting current and future tenants, with:

- Increased investment up to £60k per home over the 30-year plan period
- £14m in 2026/27 to continue investment in the external elements of homes e.g. renewing roofs, guttering and facias etc.
- £7m in 2026/27 to be invested in internal refurbishment works such as electrical rewires, replacement boilers, kitchens and bathrooms etc.
- An additional £41 million to ensure 9,300 properties reach Energy Performance Certificate band C by 2030.

Alongside providing the draft HRA budget for 2026/27, the report recommends proposed levels for housing rents, non-dwelling rents, District Heating charges and other service charges for 2026/27. It is recommended to Council that dwelling rents are increased by 4.8% and up to £2 per week (equivalent to CPI+1% and up to £2 per week rent convergence). This is dependent upon a Government decision expected in January 2026, which will clarify the approach to social rent convergence.

It should be noted that rent convergence will only be applied to properties that are not currently at Formula Rent. Formula Rent for social housing is a calculation based on property value and size (number of bedrooms) and local affordability (earnings). The additional income generated from convergence will ensure the viability of the HRA Business plan, particularly in the early years of the plan where there is a significant amount of investment required to ensure compliance with increasing regulatory standards. In the absence of an announcement from Government confirming the availability of convergence as an option, the proposed rent increase would be the current rent settlement level of CPI+1% (4.8%).

Recommendations

That Cabinet recommends to Council to: -

1. Approve the proposed 2026/27 HRA Business Plan.
2. Note that the Business Plan will be reviewed annually to provide an updated financial position.
3. Agree that Council dwelling rents are increased by 4.8% and, dependent upon the Government announcement in January 2026, implement a policy of rent convergence. Allowing rents for social housing properties that are currently below the Government-calculated formula rent to increase by an additional £2 per week in 2026/27. If convergence is capped below £2 that will be the level applied.

4. Agree that the Council should retain the policy of realigning rents on properties at below formula rent to the formula rent level when the property is re-let to a new tenant.
5. Agree that affordable rents are calculated at relet, based on an individual property valuation.
6. Agree that affordable rents are increased by 4.8% in 2026/27.
7. Agree that shared ownership rents are increased by 5% in 2026/27.
8. Agree that charges for communal facilities, parking spaces, cooking gas and use of laundry facilities are increased by 3% in 2026/27.
9. Agree that charges for garages are increased by 10% in 2026/27.
10. Agree that the District Heating unit charge per kWh remains at 13.09 pence per kWh.
11. Agree that the decision to reduce the price of District Heating Charges during 2026/27 be delegated to the Assistant Director of Housing in conjunction with the Assistant Director of Financial Services following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing. The delegation would only be used to respond to a change in Government policy or a significant change in the Ofgem price cap that has the effect of a lower unit price.
12. Approve the draft Housing Revenue Account budget for 2026/27 as shown in Appendix 8.

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- Appendix 9 HRA Operating Statement
- Appendix 10 Interest Cover Ratio
- Appendix 11 Equalities Assessment
- Appendix 12 Climate Impact Assessment

Background Papers

HRA Business Plan Rent Setting and Service Charges 2025-26
Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities - Guidance on Rents for Social Housing
[Delivering a decade of renewal for social and affordable housing](#)

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

No

Council Approval Required

Yes

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

HRA Business Plan, Rent Setting and Service Charges 2026-27

1. Background

1.1 This report sets out the proposals for the HRA Business Plan alongside proposed rents, service charges and fees for 2026/27 and presents the draft HRA budget for 2026/27. The HRA is a self-financing, ring-fenced account which retains and uses housing rental income to fund landlord services, deliver the capital programme and invest in new housing.

1.2 The HRA Business Plan is updated annually to ensure it reflects the current operating environment. This year's Business Plan continues to prioritise investment in three core areas:

- Ensuring tenants' homes are safe, decent and thermally efficient.
- Extending the benefits of Council housing to more residents by expanding the Housing Delivery Programme.
- Modernising the housing service to enhance customer experience, improve productivity and achieve full regulatory compliance.

1.3 This year the HRA Business Plan incorporates additional investment into the Council's existing housing stock, while continuing to deliver the housing growth programme. A stock condition surveying programme has been commissioned which will further inform the Housing Investment Strategy and priorities for investment going forward.

1.4 The business plan and budget are focused on delivering the Council's strategic priorities and all legal and regulatory requirements including the consumer standards under the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023. The Council, as landlord, is accountable in ensuring that our homes meet each consumer standard, which includes ensuring the safety and quality of stock. This means ensuring that our homes meet decency standards, are safe and meet all compliance requirements and that our tenants can access a repairs and maintenance service which aligns to service standards. The Business Plan continues to ensure Council homes are safe, good quality and well-managed, while protecting surpluses to ensure the HRA is well-placed to respond to ongoing inflationary and future cost pressures as they arise.

1.5 Alongside these priority areas, the Business Plan protects day to day expenditure on front line services, including provision to respond to growing demand in areas like damp and mould and planned repairs.

1.6 The Council's HRA has been, and continues to be, under increasing pressure over recent years due to a range of factors including an increased regulatory compliance framework, an ageing stock profile, losses from Right to Buy, inflation costs affecting repairs and maintenance, building and fire safety requirements and historic central Government interventions in rent setting, meaning that the Council's rents, some of the lowest in the country, are not aligned to the set formula rent. Whilst new standards and requirements are greatly welcomed by the social housing sector, they have placed additional financial burdens on the HRA, which were not considered when the self-

financing model regime was introduced in 2012. Legal and regulatory requirements are now more stringent, and the self-funding settlement has not kept up with this. However, there have been several Government policy changes in 2025/26 that will impact on the 2026/27 HRA Business Plan. These include:

Social Housing Rent Settlement

1.7 From the 1st of April 2026, the Government will implement a 10-year social rent settlement. The 10-year settlement sets the maximum rent increase of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) as of September plus 1%. The 10-year rent settlement has given greater certainty on the level of forecast income to fund the HRA Business Plan. It will enable longer term planning for investment, delivery of services and housing growth.

Rent Convergence

1.8 In the summer of 2025, the Government consulted on the introduction of social rent convergence at £1 or £2 per week. Social rent convergence was a previous Government policy introduced to make rents for council and housing association homes fairer and more consistent. Historically, similar properties could have very different rents depending on the landlord. To address this, a national formula was created based on local earnings and property size, and landlords were allowed to gradually adjust rents towards these “target rents”, also known as formula rents. The aim was full alignment by 2015, but later policies stopped this process. Today, the formula still influences rent-setting, but many homes remain below their target rent.

1.9 The Government will respond to the consultation in full and announce a decision about how Social Rent convergence will be implemented in January 2026. If implemented, it is expected to be up to a maximum annual increase of £2 per week's rent, and it is a Council decision on the level of rent convergence up to the maximum amount set by Government.

1.10 Both the 10-year rent settlement and rent convergence have been assumed in the 2026/27 HRA Business Plan but the decision to increase rents each year remains a Council decision taken annually. Both policy changes will impact positively on the HRA Business Plan, generating £500m over the life of the plan enabling the Council to address the pressures identified in section 1.6.

Right to Buy

1.11 In November 2024, the maximum discount allowed through Right to Buy was reduced to £24,000. Alongside this change, the retention of 100% of Right to Buy receipts by local authorities was extended indefinitely. This change resulted in many Right to Buy applications in the short-term, which will continue to be processed into 2026/27. Over the longer term, the reduction in the level of discount should result in lower Right to Buy applications, going forward.

1.12 Further consultation has taken place during the Summer of 2025 on additional reforms to Right to Buy. These include:

- Increasing the eligibility period for Right to Buy from 3 to 10 years.
- Preventing those who have already benefited from Right to Buy exercising the right again except in exceptional circumstances.
- Amending the discount rule so discounts start at 5% of the property value and increase by 1% for every extra year an individual is a secure tenant up to the maximum discount of 15%
- The exemption of new build social housing from the Right to Buy scheme. This could be achieved by stipulating that any home built after a given date could never be sold under the scheme. This would be simple to understand and give councils greater confidence to build new homes.

1.13 If these reforms are introduced, it would enable the potential to see a net increase in social housing stock. With reducing sales, protecting new builds, and giving councils full control over receipts, RTB reforms could create conditions where more homes can be built than lost. The graph at Appendix 1 shows the forecast stock numbers.

Housing Delivery

1.14 The Government target to achieve 1.5 million new homes over five years has been backed by the policy paper 'Delivering a decade of renewal for social and affordable housing' in which a 10 year, £39bn Social and Affordable Housing Programme (SAHP) has been announced with a core objective of maximising the supply of social rented homes. The policy paper also confirmed the continuation of the discounted Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) rate for Housing Revenue Account (HRA) borrowing. The Council intends to maximise opportunities to increase housing stock and the grant income from the SAHP. Since 2024, £9.6m has been brought into the borough from previous rounds of the Affordable Housing Programme. Regionally SYMCA has new delegations to shape the strategic direction of the SAHP with around £700m funding expected to be available for the region over the next 10 years

Regulation

1.15 There continues to be a strong focus on regulation of the social housing sector. The Council has successfully implemented the first phase of Awaab's Law, which focuses on emergency hazards and the treatment of damp and mould. Future phases will come into effect during 2026 and 2027 and will include other hazards such as excess cold/ heat, structural collapse, fire and electrical hazards. This will result in increased volumes and new ways of working, meaning significant resourcing and cost issues for RMBC and contractors. The Council is awaiting further information as to what is in and out of scope.

Heat Network Regulations

1.16 In April 2025, Heat Network Regulations were introduced. Heat networks will be regulated by Ofgem who have had oversight from April 2025, and the full regulatory regime will be introduced in 2026. These will regulate how the district heating network is managed and maintained. The regulations will ensure consumer protection, clear pricing and billing, and a reliable service.

There are currently 18 different schemes and approximately 1,260 properties which receive heat through the Council's District Heating service.

Competence and Conduct Standard

1.17 This standard is a new regulatory requirement for social housing providers in England, introduced under the Social Housing Regulation Act. It aims to professionalise the sector, improve service quality, and ensure tenants are treated with respect and dignity. The standard comes into force October 2026, with a 3-year transition period.

Decent Homes 2

1.18 Formal consultation on Decent Homes 2 took place in the Summer of 2025. It is proposed that the revised Government standard will contain a new criterion to address damp and mould. Elements will be assessed based on condition, safety, and layout rather than age thresholds. There will also be a stronger alignment with Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) and hazard-based enforcement. The consultation also introduced the minimum energy efficiency standards, aiming for EPC C by 2030 and will form part of the decent homes standard. A 'fabric first' approach is recommended prioritising insulation, ventilation, and airtightness before upgrading heating systems. It is also proposed to have targeted exemptions for hard-to-treat homes, tenant refusal, or where costs exceed a proposed £10,000 cap.

1.19 Taken together, these policy changes will add significant burdens to the HRA across both day-to-day expenditure and capital investment requirements. The 2026/27 HRA Business plan does not currently include any assumptions regarding Decent Homes 2 or the minimum energy efficiency standards as the associated costs are unknown currently.

1.20 The 2026/27 HRA Business Plan has also been informed by:

- Tenant satisfaction results (including Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs))
- Complaints feedback
- Tenant Scrutiny reviews
- Feedback from Members

1.21 The Plan has also considered tenant feedback received through consultation as part of developing the Housing Strategy. The consultation identified that tenants' main priorities are investing in existing homes and having affordable housing available to meet local need. This has been reflected in the 2026/27 HRA Business Plan through the planned increased investment in existing stock (section 2.5.3) and the continuation of the Housing Delivery Programme up to 2037/38, providing new affordable homes to meet tenants' needs (section 2.5.9). Tenants also highlighted issues around energy efficiency and damp and mould; this year's plan contains £41m to meet EPC Band C by 2030.

1.22 In 2024/25 there was a 28% reduction in Housing Service complaint volumes. There are however persistent issues in repairs, timeliness, and complaint handling. This is backed up by recent TSMs that identified issues in repairs

delays, poor quality, damp/mould, Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) response gaps and weak communication. Proactive steps are being taken, such as tenant engagement panels and governance reviews, that will position Housing Services to deliver better outcomes and meet regulatory expectations.

- 1.23 A large proportion of additional investment identified as part of the HRA Business Planning process is to maintain and improve existing stock. Work to refresh stock condition data is in progress and will inform investment priorities, ultimately reducing the burden on responsive repairs and the level of complaints received.
- 1.24 Day to day financial performance remains strong in key areas of the business, resulting in high income collection rates and value for money services for Council tenants. This is supported by positive benchmarking data from Housemark and TSM survey results. Tenancy sustainment outcomes remain extremely positive, with very few evictions. This performance allows the Council to invest HRA resources in maintaining existing housing stock and in housing growth so that more residents can enjoy the benefits of a well-managed, affordable, good quality home.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 As at 31st March 2025, the Council owned 19,942 homes, 627 leasehold homes, 127 shared ownership homes and 3,080 garages with a turnover from rents and other sources approaching £106m per annum (excluding the sale of new properties).
- 2.2 This year's HRA Business Plan will continue to build on the additional provisions for investment in existing council homes made in the 2025/26 HRA Business Plan. The plan also includes provision to continue the Housing Delivery Programme to ensure new homes are added to the stock, mitigating some of the impacts of Right to Buy and generating additional rental income.
- 2.3 The Plan requires additional borrowing over the short term to fund this investment and includes the provision to repay any borrowing related to investment in existing stock.
- 2.4 Work has commenced in 2025/26 to develop a set of financial metrics to assess the overall financial health of the HRA and the viability of any borrowing requirements. Work will continue in 2026/27 to further develop a risk-based approach to reserves and stress testing the Plan to ensure future unforeseen cost pressures can be managed effectively.

2.5 Capital Investment

- 2.5.1 One of the main components in the HRA Business Plan is the Council's strategy for maintaining and developing its housing stock. This strategy will be outlined in the Council's Housing Asset Management Framework, which will be drafted to align with initial modelling from the Council's whole stock

condition survey, taking a data informed approach to future investment with a focus on:

- Ensuring that our homes are safe and well-maintained
- Ensuring that our homes meet current and future need (supply vs demand)
- Improving the energy efficiency of our stock
- Ensuring that the tenant voice is embedded in the development and delivery of our investment programmes

2.5.2 A four-year Housing Capital Programme will be taken to Cabinet in March 2026. To support the Programme, the 2026/27 Business Plan makes provision in the following areas.

Improving homes and estates

2.5.3 Investing in existing homes and estates means that the repairs and maintenance service can remain affordable and focused on day-to-day minor repairs and cyclical servicing. It is also required to ensure the Council's housing stock is decent, energy efficient and safe to live in.

2.5.4 Capital expenditure on existing homes has doubled over the last 5 years and more recently reactive capital expenditure has been higher than planned. This has been driven by increased volumes of major repairs and high-cost voids which have required increased damp and mould works and kitchen replacements. The 2026/27 HRA Business Plan increases investment up to £60k per home over the 30-year plan period, which is in line with benchmarking data. The additional funding will be used to ensure that as a social landlord we continue to meet and/ or exceed the regulatory requirements of ensuring tenants live in safe, warm and decent homes.

2.5.5 The Council is also committed to ensuring all Council homes achieve Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) Band C by 2030. The Council has been successful in its grant funding bid to the Warm Homes scheme, which is the Government's main funding for supporting retrofit of social housing. The plan includes c£18m to deliver this programme. The Warm Homes scheme will bring c. 1,000 properties up to EPC Band C. Additional capital investment of £41m has been earmarked in the Business Plan to ensure the remaining 9,300 properties meet EPC band C by 2030.

2.5.6 The Plan includes investment of £14m in 2026/27 to continue investment in the external elements of homes. This includes renewing roofs, guttering and facias, balcony structural and resurfacing works, and windows and doors. £7m will be invested in internal refurbishment works such as electrical rewires, replacement boilers, kitchens, and bathrooms to continue with our plan to ensure tenants' homes are safe, decent, thermally efficient and that stock condition is maintained.

2.5.7 Funding continues to be allocated to fund aids and adaptations within Council housing stock in 2026/27.

2.5.8 Total capital expenditure on existing council homes in 2026/27 is planned to be £43.3m. Across the 30-year Business Plan, £1.3bn capital investment has been allocated to ensure the Council's housing stock is well maintained, an increase of £350m compared with the 2025/26 Business Plan.

Housing Delivery Programme

2.5.9 The Council has been very successful in using HRA land and finances to build and acquire new Council homes. The Council is approaching delivery of its 750th affordable home since 2018 and the Business Plan includes provision for £213.8m investment to deliver the existing commitment of 1,000 homes by the Summer of 2027 and to ensure the continuation of the Housing Delivery Programme to 2037/38. The continuation of the Housing Delivery Programme will add a further estimated 500 units to the Council stock. This will provide much needed social housing, mitigate properties lost through right to buy and increase rental income ensuring the on-going viability of the HRA Business Plan. Rising costs and uncertain grant funding remain major risks to the Programme: it is vital that the continued Housing Delivery Programme contains the most appropriate mix of acquisitions and new build homes to ensure continued affordability of the programme.

2.5.10 The precise mix of schemes, number and types of homes and levels of investments are all subject to separate Cabinet approvals or officer delegations, where these are in place.

2.6 Revenue Account

Repairs and maintenance

2.6.1 Ensuring adequate investment in the repair and maintenance of the housing stock is essential to keep tenants safe, provide good quality homes, and mitigate against more substantial costs later. The Housing Property Service and its contractors complete approximately 90,000 repairs and servicing visits every year.

2.6.2 As reported last year, capital expenditure on existing homes has doubled over the last 5 years and the greater share of this increase can be characterised as reactive, rather than planned, expenditure. The drivers continue to be increased damp and mould works, more responsive repairs that require major works, and higher costs associated with properties becoming vacant. The data from the stock condition survey and increased planned capital expenditure will support the Council to shift the focus towards a more proactive capital programme in the future.

2.6.3 To reflect the importance of this service and increased demands, the Business Plan proposes an increase in revenue spending by £2.9m to £30.5m in 2026/27. This reflects levels of demand in 2025/26 and includes an increase in the planned repairs revenue budget of £1.2m to £6.7m in total.

2.6.4 In 2026/27, the budget includes:

- £6.5m for day-to-day responsive repairs
- £6.7m for planned repairs, like replacements of doors and windows or kitchen and bathroom repairs
- £3.9m for minor works to properties that have become vacant
- £2.8m for damp and mould works
- £4.7m for gas servicing and other cyclical maintenance.
- £5.9m other related expenditure (e.g. fire and flood damage, safer homes, estates management, overheads).

Supervision and management

2.6.5 A supervision and management budget of £37.7m is proposed for 2026/27. This is an increase of £2.5m from 2025/26. £1m of this is a temporary one-year increase to enable resources to be allocated to implementing the new Housing Service operating model and to begin the review of how the repairs and maintenance service will be delivered when the existing contracts cease in 2030. Costs also reflect additional staffing requirements arising from increased focus on compliance, regulation and inflationary increase.

2.6.6 Key areas of expenditure in 2026/27 include:

- £15.8m for contributions to other Council services required to operate the HRA, including central services like finance and HR; and services delivered by other directorates like grass cutting, the contact centre and community protection.
- £14.3m for staff salaries.
- £1.5m for gas and electricity costs.
- £1.5m for contracted services including grounds maintenance, translation and decants.
- £1m implementing service operating models.
- £3.6m other related expenditure (e.g. IT, pensions, training, insurance).

Estate caretaking

2.6.7 Estate caretaking is a service provided by the Council's repairs and maintenance contract partners. The service is delivered on a planned basis, to an agreed service standard and cyclical programme, across neighbourhoods. The service also responds reactively to issues as they arise, such as fly tipping, to maintain a safe and attractive estate environment. Additional resources of £196k is provided in 2026/27 to support investment in this service.

2.7 Rents, Fees and Charges

2.7.1 There are three rent types within the HRA – Social Rent, Affordable Rent and Shared Ownership Rent.

Social Rent

2.7.2 The amount the Council can increase rents by is governed by the Rent Standard which is published by Government to ensure all social housing is affordable. This formula allows social housing rent to be increased by a maximum of CPI (3.8% as at September 2025) plus 1% each year. In addition, permission for convergence of up to £2 per week where it is necessary to reach formula rent is subject to an announcement on Convergence expected by Government in January 2026. Three rent increase options have been modelled for business planning purposes:

1. CPI+1%; an increase of 4.8%
2. CPI+1% plus £1 per week; an increase of 4.8% plus up to £1 per week
3. CPI+1% plus £2 per week; an increase of 4.8% plus up to £2 per week

The options are detailed in Appendix 2 with the recommended option (dependent upon the Government announcement in January 2026) being CPI+1% plus £2 per week. The graph at Appendix 3 shows the impact the three rent increase options have on HRA reserve levels. All three options show a drop in reserves at year two, which is due to the level of capital investment required on the Housing Delivery Programme and the increased investment in existing stock. For the purposes of comparison, the proposed capital investments outlined in this report are consistent across all rent setting options.

2.7.3 The recommended rent increase of 4.8% plus £2 per week has been modelled for business planning purposes and is detailed in Table 1 below:

Table 1 – Social Rent increase

Social Rent following a 4.8% rent increase + £2 per week (CPI+1%+£2 per week)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2026/27 average weekly rent based on an increase of 4.8% + £2 per week would be £101.07, an average increase of £6.17 per week.

2.7.4 The recommended rent increase of 4.8% plus £2 per week would generate an additional £83m of rental income over the life of the plan. This additional income will ensure additional investment activity can be completed in the early years of the plan when a large amount of regulatory activity is planned alongside the completion of the 1,000 new homes programme. It will also enable the continuation of the Housing Delivery Programme up to 2037/38.

Affordable Rent

2.7.5 Where the Council has been successful in securing grant income from Homes England to deliver Affordable Rent properties, the new properties will be managed in line with existing policies, for example mutual exchange, succession, subletting etc. The key difference for grant funded properties, compared to Social Rent properties, is the method of calculating the rent values is prescribed by the Government. These are contained within the Capital Funding Guide for Homes England grant and the Rent Standard.

2.7.6 The Council is required to rebase (revalue) the Affordable Rent value on each occasion that a new Affordable Rent tenancy is issued (or renewed) for a

particular property; and ensure that the rent remains at no more than 80% of gross market rent (inclusive of service charges) as of the date the property is re-let.

2.7.7 Previously, Affordable Rent properties were revalued in October and March each year to provide a valid rent value for when Affordable Rent properties are re-let. The rebased Affordable Rent will only apply to new tenants or tenancies. It is proposed to move to an individual property valuation upon relet, which will ensure RMBC is fully meeting the rent standard requirements, and the valuations would be based on individual properties, assessed against comparable properties in the relevant ward area.

2.7.8 The actual rents for existing tenants in Affordable Rent properties will only be adjusted in April each year as per the existing annual rent and charges review process.

2.7.9 It is proposed that affordable rents increase in line with the rent settlement of CPI+1%. The proposed rent increase has been modelled for business planning purposes and is detailed below.

Table 2 – Affordable Rent increase

Affordable Rent – 4.8% rent increase (CPI+1%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The average weekly Affordable Rent in 2025/26 is £120.91 when aggregated over 52 weeks. The 2026/27 average weekly rent based on an increase of 4.8% would be £126.72, an average increase of £5.81 per week.

Formula Rent

2.7.10 Since 2015, the Council's policy has been when a property is re-let or first let in the case of an acquisition or new build, rent is set at the formula rent. It is proposed this policy continues, given the additional income this generates over the life of the Business Plan and the Government's planned expected announcements on convergence. The amount raised through this policy would be £130m over 30 years.

2.7.11 The average weekly rent for new lets at formula will be £104.90 per week.

2.7.12 It is proposed that guidance is prepared and issued for officers to ensure discretion is applied in exceptional circumstances, e.g. where a tenant is forced to move due to domestic abuse. This will be explored as part of an update to the rent setting framework.

Shared Ownership Rent

2.7.13 The Council is the landlord for 134 Shared Ownership properties. Rent increases for shared ownership properties are subject to a different formula than Social Rents or Affordable Rents. The formula is Retail Price Index (RPI) (as of September 2025 = 4.5%) plus 0.5%, an increase of 5%. Applying this formula means rents would increase on average by £10.80 per month from

£269.46 to £280.26. This is the recommended approach for Shared Ownership rents.

Furnished Tenancy Charges

2.7.14 The proposal in 2026/27 is to freeze furnished tenancy charge pending a review of the service. A full list of Furnished Homes charges and proposed values for 2026/27 is included in Appendix 4.

District Heating

2.7.15 There are currently 18 different schemes and approximately 1,260 properties which receive heat through the Council's District Heating service.

2.7.16 Given the volatility of energy prices the Council took the decision in July 2023 to match the average District Heating charging rate to the average gas charging rate under the Ofgem price cap for July – September 2023. This approach continued in 2024/25 and 2025/26.

2.7.17 The forecast Ofgem price cap for 2026/27 means the average gas bill will be £894 for April 2026 onwards. Based on the Council's forecast for average gas bills, maintaining this matching approach would generate a surplus of £150k due to the Council's forecast average gas bill being less than the forecast Ofgem price cap average bill. It is therefore proposed to maintain the existing unit rate of 13.09 pence per kWh. This would mean an average District heating bill will be £834 per year, approximately £60 less than the forecast average gas bill under the Ofgem price cap for April 2026. The forecast Ofgem price cap has been calculated using market data and is subject to change.

2.7.18 The annual cost to customers will depend on their actual usage, therefore the annual district heating bill could be higher or lower. Customers will be advised of their usual annual usage so that they can consider their payment options.

2.7.19 In prior years to maintain lower district heating costs the HRA has subsidised the cost of the heat network by approximately £850k between 2023/24 to 2025/26. Any surplus generated in 2026/27 will go towards netting off this deficit while ensuring tenants on the district heating network continue to pay a fair price in line with the average gas bill under Ofgem price cap

2.7.20 A series of options for District Heating pricing have been modelled in the tables below. The first table summarises the options. The second table summarises unit rates and Business Plan impacts. Any reference to the Ofgem price cap does not take into account any changes announced as part of the Budget announcement on the 26th November 2025.

Table 3 – District Heating pricing options

District Heating Option 1 – Existing unit rate based on Apr-Jun 2025 Ofgem Cap (preferred option)	District Heating Option 2 – Unit rate based on forecast Apr-Jun 2026 Ofgem Cap	District Heating Option 3 – Cost recovery of utility costs only
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This option would see the unit rate remain unchanged at 13.09 pence per kWh and would mean an average annual cost per user of £834. This option means the average District Heating bill will be £60 lower per year than an average gas bill. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This option would see an increase in the unit rate to 14.03 pence per kWh and would mean an average annual average District heating bill of £894. This option maintains the link to the Ofgem price cap and means the average District Heating bill will be equivalent to that of a resident on mains gas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This option would see the unit rate reduce to 12.10 pence per kWh and would mean an average annual cost per user of £771. This option means the average District Heating bill will be £123 lower per year than an average gas bill.

Table 4 – District Heating pricing option 2026/27 – unit rates and impact on the Business Plan

	Original 2025/26 Budget	Budget 2026/27		
		Option 1 (preferred option)	Option 2	Option 3
District Heating Options 2024/25	Forecast Ofgem Cap (Apr-Jun 25)	Existing unit rate Forecast Ofgem Cap (Apr-Jun 25)	Forecast Ofgem Cap (Apr-Jun 26)	Cost recovery (utilities only)
Unit rate (inc VAT)	0.1309	0.1309	0.1403	0.1210
Expenditure (Fuel only except full cost recovery)	1,355,073	1,107,868	1,107,868	1,107,868
Net Income	-1,148,754	-1,184,824	-1,257,478	-1,107,868
Deficit (+) / Surplus (-)	206,319	-76,956	-149,610	0
<hr/>				
Pooled Schemes Weekly Prepayment Charge (inc VAT)				
Bedsit	8.50	8.50	9.00	7.50
1 Bed	13.50	13.50	14.00	12.50
2 Bed	17.50	17.50	18.00	16.50
3/4 Bed	21.50	21.50	22.00	20.50
<hr/>				
Annual pre-payment charge (inc VAT)				
Bedsit	442.00	442.00	468.00	397.50
1 Bed	702.00	702.00	728.00	662.50
2 Bed	910.00	910.00	936.00	874.50
3/4 Bed	1,118.00	1,118.00	1,144.00	1,086.50
<hr/>				
Annual average bill (inc VAT)	828	834	894	771

2.7.21 The prepayment charge is the amount a customer would pay to their rent account on an annual basis. Customers will be advised of their average annual usage. Customers who require assistance can access the Council's Energy Crisis scheme to seek further cash support and are able to access ongoing support through the financial inclusion team.

2.7.22 As in 2025/26 it is recommended that authority be delegated in 2026/27 to the Assistant Director for Housing in consultation with Cabinet Member for

Housing and Assistant Director for Finance to reduce district heating pricing should there be a significant movement in the Ofgem price cap.

Garage Rents

2.7.23 A 10% increase of garage rents is proposed and has been modelled within the HRA Business Plan with the aim of creating additional revenue to facilitate more investment in the garage estate. A 2% increase is forecast to generate an additional income of £31,340 compared to 2025/26 charges. A 10% increase is forecast to generate £94,340, an increase of £63,000. The difference in pricing between tenants and non-tenants is due to VAT being payable by non-tenants.

Table 5 – Impact of Weekly Garage Rent Increase

	2025/26	2026/27 Proposed (10%)	Increase	2026/27 (2%)	Increase
RMBC average garage rent for tenants	£ 6.56	£ 7.21	£ 0.66	£ 6.69	£ 0.13
RMBC average garage rent for non-tenants	£ 7.88	£ 8.67	£ 0.79	£ 8.04	£ 0.16

Other Fees and Service Charges

2.7.24 This report also considers the potential increase in HRA non dwelling rent fees and charges for 2026/27 and proposes a 3% increase. A full list of Fees and Service charges for the HRA for 2026/27 is included at Appendix 4.

2.7.25 The proposed increase of 3% would generate additional income of approximately £17.7k in 2026/27 compared with current charges.

2.7.26 There are several leasehold management charges that are based on the full recovery of actual costs. These are excluded from this report as they are not standard charges that are subject to an inflationary increase. These are included for information in Appendix 4.

2.8 Impact on tenants

2.8.1 There are c.15,000 tenancies in receipt of Housing Benefit or Universal Credit (UC) who would not be directly affected by an increase in rent and approximately 4,500 tenancies that would be affected as they would pay rent from their household income. The tenants in receipt of benefits (Housing Benefit or UC) who would see their benefit entitlement adjusted to meet an increase in rent are:

- c10,969 households who are on Universal Credit
- 2,559 households who are on full Housing Benefit entitlement
- 1,404 households who are on part Housing Benefit entitlement

Affordability

2.8.2 An affordability analysis shows that based on all three rent increase options those aged under 25 and on benefits would struggle to meet housing affordability tests given working age benefits are lower for this age group. The

affordability challenges are the same irrespective of the rent increase adopted. This is an issue which has existed for a number of years. Other age groups would meet affordability tests assuming they only spent on essential items. The Council offers support to under 25's as set out in sections 2.8.5-7 and Appendix 6.

2.8.3 Tenants receiving full benefit would have any rent increase covered in full. Tenants in part time work (assumed 20 hours for modelling purposes) and in receipt of the National Living Wage would still be in receipt of benefit and so in all scenarios their rent would be covered in full by an increase in benefit. Larger families receiving either part or full benefit would be impacted by a rent increase due to the benefit cap; although some circumstances may be mitigated by the benefit changes announced in the Budget.

2.8.4 Affordability modelling has been undertaken using Policy in Practice software. This software is used to assess all new tenants' ability to afford properties they have been offered, prior to signing a tenancy agreement. The modelling does not consider any potential changes announced by the Government as part of the Budget on 26th November 2025. A detailed analysis of affordability is attached at Appendix 5.

Supporting tenants with financial pressures

2.8.5 A key priority is the ongoing work to mitigate the effects of the cost-of-living crisis. The Council is committed to supporting tenants and will do this through continuing early intervention and arrears prevention. Work will continue to support tenants to pay their rent, including offering additional support to vulnerable tenants to help with money, benefits and debt advice.

2.8.6 The Council and its partners provide a comprehensive package of support to tenants, care leavers and residents facing crisis. Current support offered in Rotherham is outlined in Appendix 6.

2.8.7 Tenancy Support for care leavers is mainly delivered by Roundabout who are commissioned to provide this support by RMBC. However, if for some reason they are unable to support, RMBC Tenancy Support will provide holistic support once the care leaver is in a council tenancy. This can include help with benefits and debts, applications for enrolment at GP/Dentist/College and any financial support that may be available other than that provided above.

Private Sector Rents

2.8.8 With the proposed rent increase of 4.8% plus £2 per week Council rents will still offer far better value than those in the private sector. The table below illustrates the average Council rent compared to the average private sector rent in Rotherham.

Table 6 – Average Council rent vs private rent by bedroom size

	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed
Average weekly Council rent £ (assuming 4.8% plus up to £2 increase)	91.57	99.84	107.75	120.29
Average weekly private sector rent £	130.95	172.74	213.57	333.10

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

3.1 The options considered as part of scenario modelling are detailed at Appendix 7 of the report. Options for rent increases are outlined in Appendix 2.

3.2 The recommended option results in an Operating Surplus at Year 30 of £143.4m and ensures expenditure is affordable throughout the life of the Business Plan.

3.3 The recommended option increases investment in existing stock and enables delivery of an on-going Housing Delivery programme and ensures all statutory compliance functions are met alongside resources to meet requirements of the new social housing regulations.

4. Consultation on proposal

4.1 The Council has an active tenant engagement service supported by a Tenant Engagement Framework and a commissioned Tenant Federation contract. Consultation on housing services provided by the Council is undertaken throughout the year via the Housing Involvement Panel. The draft 2026/27 HRA Business Plan was presented at the Panel on the 19th November 2025. The Housing Service also hold numerous tenant consultation events throughout the year, for instance the Annual Tenants Conference. The 2026/27 HRA Business Plan has also been informed by on-going consultation via complaints feedback and priorities identified via the Housing Strategy, as set out in sections 1.20-22.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

5.1 The table below shows the approval timeline:

Date	Meeting
10/12/25	Overview and Scrutiny Management Board
15/12/25	Cabinet
14/01/26	Council
6/03/26	Rent and service charge letters posted
6/04/26	New charges take effect

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

6.1 In developing the HRA Business Plan the CIPFA / CIH code of practice for a self-financed housing revenue account, the Financial Viability principle has been considered which states that: -

- The housing authority has arrangements in place to monitor the viability of the housing business and take appropriate actions to maintain viability

6.2 The HRA Business Plan is reviewed and updated annually to take account of changes to all income streams and the revenue and capital costs of managing and maintaining HRA properties and tenancies. It also considers Capital investment in new build and housing acquisitions for affordability.

Financial Position of the Housing Revenue Account

6.3 The table below provides a summary of the proposed income and expenditure budgets for 2026/27 for Option 3 which would see rent increases of 4.8% plus up to £2 per week for rent convergence. This indicates that the general HRA revenue reserve is forecast to have a balance of £19.348m on 31 March 2026. Budget proposals for 2026/27 would see the reserve reduced to £8.3m by 31 March 2027. This is within the parameters of the minimum HRA revenue balance.

Housing Revenue Account	Current Budget 2025/26 £'000	Proposed Budget 2026/27 £'000	Difference
Expenditure	104,634	110,969	6,335
Income (including service charges)	-107,163	-113,597	-6,434
Net Cost of Service	-2,529	-2,628	-99
Interest Received	-105	-150	-45
Net Operating Expenditure	-2,634	-2,778	-144
Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay	9,658	13,836	4,178
Transfer from Reserves	-7,024	-11,058	-4,034
Surplus/Deficit for the Year	0	0	0
HRA Revenue Reserve Balance	19,348	8,290	-11,058

6.4 Based on the recommended 4.8% plus up to £2 increase in dwelling rent income and an increase in service charges of 3%, budgeted income of £113.6m is anticipated to be achieved in 2026/27. This will enable £110.9m of budgeted expenditure to be funded.

6.5 As budgeted income is greater than the cost of delivering the service, there is an overall net income of £2.7m to the service after interest received. A revenue contribution of £13.8m is required to fund the Housing Capital Programme. This will be funded by £2.7m net income and a transfer from the HRA Revenue reserve of £11.1m to balance the HRA in 2026/27.

6.6 A copy of the proposed draft detailed HRA budget 2026/27 is attached at Appendix 8.

6.7 The HRA operating balances in the recommended option are forecast to be maintained within the parameters of the minimum revenue balance. This is set at £5.5m in Year 1 in the BP and uplifted by CPI annually and is the minimum level required to manage financial risk. The level required will be assessed on an ongoing basis to ensure that appropriate levels of reserves are being maintained. Appendix 9 is the HRA Business Plan Model Operating Account which shows the revenue balance values.

6.8 Option 3 is subject to Government announcement on convergence which is expected in January 2026. Without the convergence announcement the proposed rent increase would revert to the current rent settlement level of CPI+1%, which is option 1. This would result in the revenue balances being at minimum balance for years 2-5 and further years throughout the plan which does not provide financial resilience. This will be considered in the mid-year review of the HRA BP model. Spending proposals may need to be adjusted in future years.

6.9 To maintain adequate operating balance levels the Housing Delivery programme will need to breakeven overall. This will support the overarching strategy for the Business Plan to promote growth rather than manage decline. The viability of the Housing Delivery Programme will be managed via existing capital governance routes.

Capital Borrowing Requirement

6.10 The Plan makes provision for additional borrowing of £124m in years 3 to 10 of the plan to fund the additional investment in existing stock and the on-going Housing Delivery Programme. Borrowing will only be set in place as required. The graph at Appendix 10 shows the interest ratio cover over the life of the plan. This ratio looks at the cost of servicing any debt (interest payments) over the life of the plan as a percentage of forecast rental income. The proposed option enables borrowing that is not for housing growth to be repaid between years 11-14. This ensures that additional borrowing is within viable limits.

6.11 Subject to the rent convergence announcement, if option 1 is implemented the borrowing requirement rises to £165m with repayment of loans not for housing growth not possible until years 14-28.

6.12 The BP model assumes funding will be available from existing capital receipts and from new capital grants, Right-to-Buy (RTB) one-for-one receipts and existing RTB Receipts.

6.13 The income available from RTB one-for-one receipts is subject to change following recent Government amendments to the Right-to-Buy scheme which significantly limits the discounts that tenants receive under the new scheme. The new scheme also allows the Council to retain the “Treasury share” of the RTB receipts. It is too early to accurately assess the impact on one-for-one receipts but may result in lower one-for-one income to the Council over the long term if the number of RTB sales falls.

6.14 There are no direct procurement implications arising from this report. All procurement activity to support the delivery of the HRA Business Plan must be conducted in compliance with relevant procurement legislation (Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or the Procurement Act 2023), dependant on the route to market selected as well as the Council's own Financial and Procurement Procedure Rules.

7. **Legal Advice and Implications**

7.1 It is vital that the Council has and maintains a robust HRA Business Plan, which is subject to regular review and scrutiny to enable the Council to comply with the duties placed upon it. The HRA provisions are contained within the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and include the duty in January or February each year to formulate proposals relating to HRA income and expenditure which satisfy the requirements set out within s.76(3) of the Act. Those proposals are contained in this report.

7.2 The HRA specifically accounts for revenue expenditure and income relating to the Council's own housing stock and is ring-fenced from the Council's General Fund as required by the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, which specifies the items that can be charged and credited to it. The account must include all costs and income relating to the Council's landlord role. The Council has a legal duty to budget to ensure the account remains solvent and to review the account throughout the year.

7.3 Under Section 24 of the Housing Act 1985 (the 1985 Act) the Council has a broad discretion in setting such reasonable rents and other charges as it may determine, and the Council must from time-to-time review rents and make such changes as circumstances may require. The duty to review rents and make changes is itself subject to the requirements for a notice of variation and the prescribed process as set out in Section 103 of the 1985 Act. This will follow any Council decision following a recommendation from Cabinet.

7.4 Local authorities must set rents from 1 April 2020 in accordance with the Government's Policy Statement on Rents for Social Housing 2019. For rents set from 1 April 2024 onwards the 2020 Rent Standard applies in full and it sets out requirements around the increase of rents in line with the Government Policy Statement on Rents for Social Housing as updated on 14 December 2022. The Council must comply with all of the requirements and expectations set out in the Rent Standard and the Government's Rent Policy Statement. A failure to do so will leave the Council open to legal challenge from both the Regulator and tenants.

8. **Human Resources Advice and Implications**

8.1 There are no immediate human resource implications.

9. **Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults**

9.1 There are no implications for CYPS or Vulnerable Adults.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 The Council is aware of its duties under the Equality Act 2010 to promote equality, diversity, cohesion and integration and has ensured that the HRA Business Plan is compliant with that duty. An initial equalities screening has been carried out to assess the impact of these proposals and due to the scale of investment and nature of households affected the Council has completed an Equality Impact Assessment for this plan. This will ensure the Council continues to promote positive impact and reduce or remove negative impact as a result of the proposed investments. An Equalities Analysis is attached at Appendix 11.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

11.1 The HRA Business Plan sets out the proposed value of investment in the housing service for the next 30 years. Given the Government's commitment for the UK to achieve net zero carbon by 2050 and the Council's target for Net Zero greenhouse gas emission in the Borough of Rotherham is 2040, 10 years sooner than the UK target, this will require substantial investment in the Council's housing stock over the life of the Business Plan. Initial estimates put the cost of this at circa £600m which represents a formidable challenge to the HRA. As a result, this means that drawing in external funding to progress net zero commitments becomes even more significant. Participation in national grant funding schemes will be prioritised.

11.2 A copy of climate impact assessment is attached at Appendix 12.

12. Implications for Partners

12.1 This proposal is about making effective use of Council assets and managing them to best effect. It contributes to the sustainable neighbourhoods agenda by addressing future investment needs and will help deliver a better quality of affordable housing to the community.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 Self-financing involved a significant transfer of risk from Government to the Council. Variables such as interest rates, cost inflation, number of homes owned etc. are all risks managed by the Council.

13.2 Any adverse changes in rental income (for example as a result of welfare reform or changes in the number of Right to Buy sales) must be managed locally.

13.3 The risk management plan follows the Council's risk management methodology and approach. It includes a clear description of the risk, an assessment of probability and impact of the risk, a summary of controls and information on when the risk will be reviewed.

13.4 Significant risks will be placed on the Corporate Risk Register and risk issues will be escalated as necessary.

13.5 The Council has risk-based reserves to ensure that HRA reserves are maintained at the appropriate level. Stress testing of this business plan will be carried out and reviewed regularly to ensure the HRA Business Plan can adapt to future cost pressures and issues. Stress testing will inform a risk register and ensure the reserves will be maintained at the appropriate level to fund potential future financial pressures from risks such as welfare reform and investment requirements.

14. Accountable Officers

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

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	John Edwards	28/11/2025
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	28/11/2025
Assistant Director, Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phil Horsfield	28/11/2025

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Lindsay Wynn, HRA Business Planning Manager

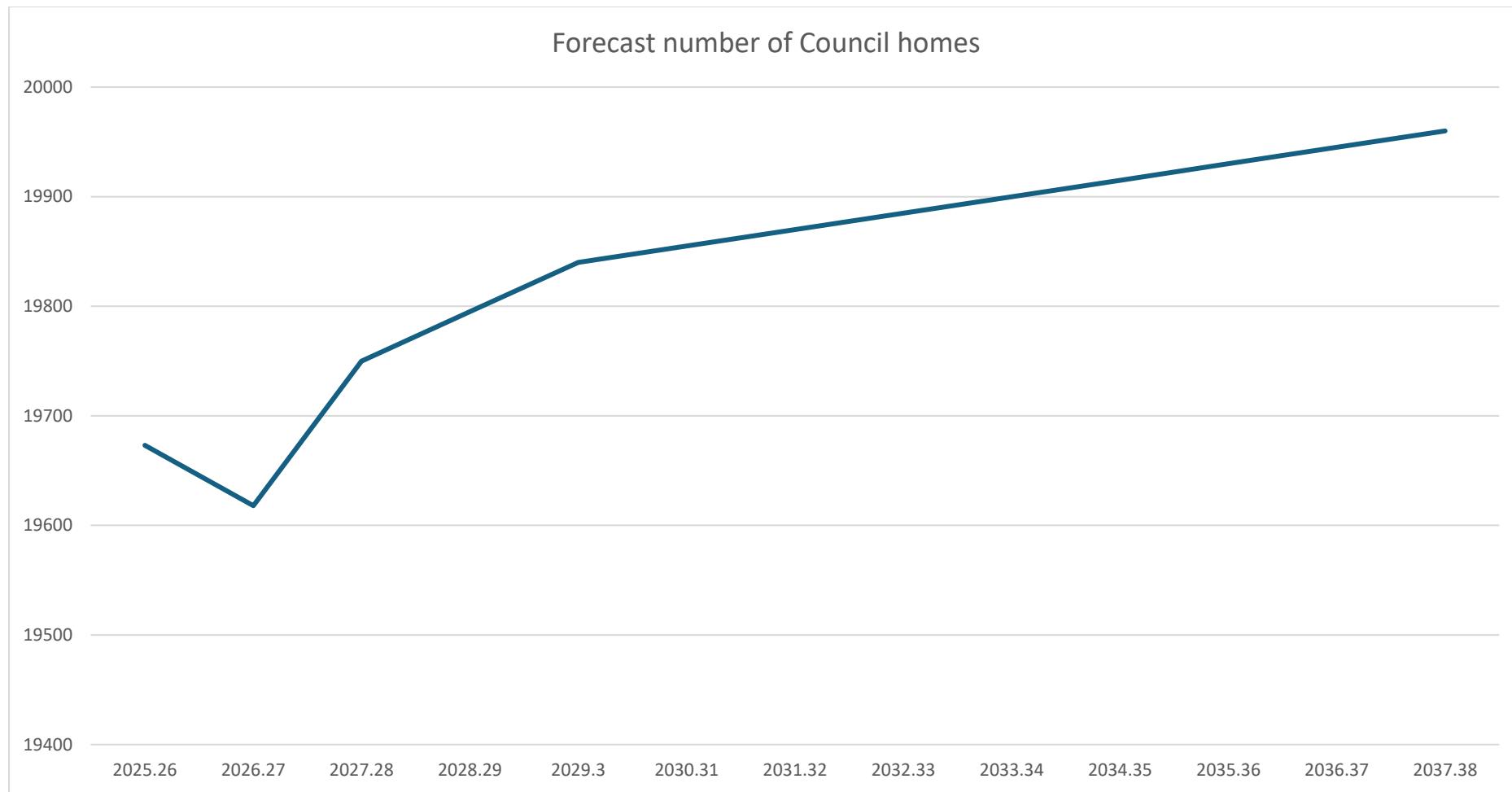
Paul Elliott, Head of Housing Income and Support Services

Paul Elliott, Head of Housing Income and Support Services

Kath Andrews, Finance Manager (Housing), 01709 255987

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

Appendix 1 – Forecast number of Council Homes



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Social Rent Option 1 - 4.8% plus (CPI+1%)	Social Rent Option 2 - 4.8% plus up to £1 per week rent increase for convergence (CPI+1% plus £1 per week)	Social Rent Option 3 – 4.8% plus up to £2 per week rent increase for convergence (CPI+1% plus £2 per week) - Recommended
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Average rent increase of £4.56 per week from £94.90 to £99.46 per week (further details in Appendix 2). This option is up to £2 per week lower than maximum allowable under the Government's rent policy. It would generate £4.13m additional income in 2026/27 when compared to 2025/26. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Average rent increase of £5.36 per week from £94.90 to £100.27 per week (further details in Appendix 2). This option is up to £1 per week lower than maximum allowable under the Government's rent policy. It would generate £4.88m additional income in 2026/27 when compared to 2025/26. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This option would result in an average rent increase of £6.17 per week from £94.90 to £101.07 per week (further details in Appendix 2). This increase is in line with the maximum allowed under the Government's rent policy. It would generate £5.63m of additional income in 2026/27 when compared to 2025/26. Assuming a rent increase of CPI +1% plus £2 for 10 years in line with the proposed Government Policy generates an additional £13m of rental income over the life of the Plan compared to CPI +1% plus £1. This additional income is critical to enabling the Council to meet its priorities and 30-year HRA Business Plan requirements

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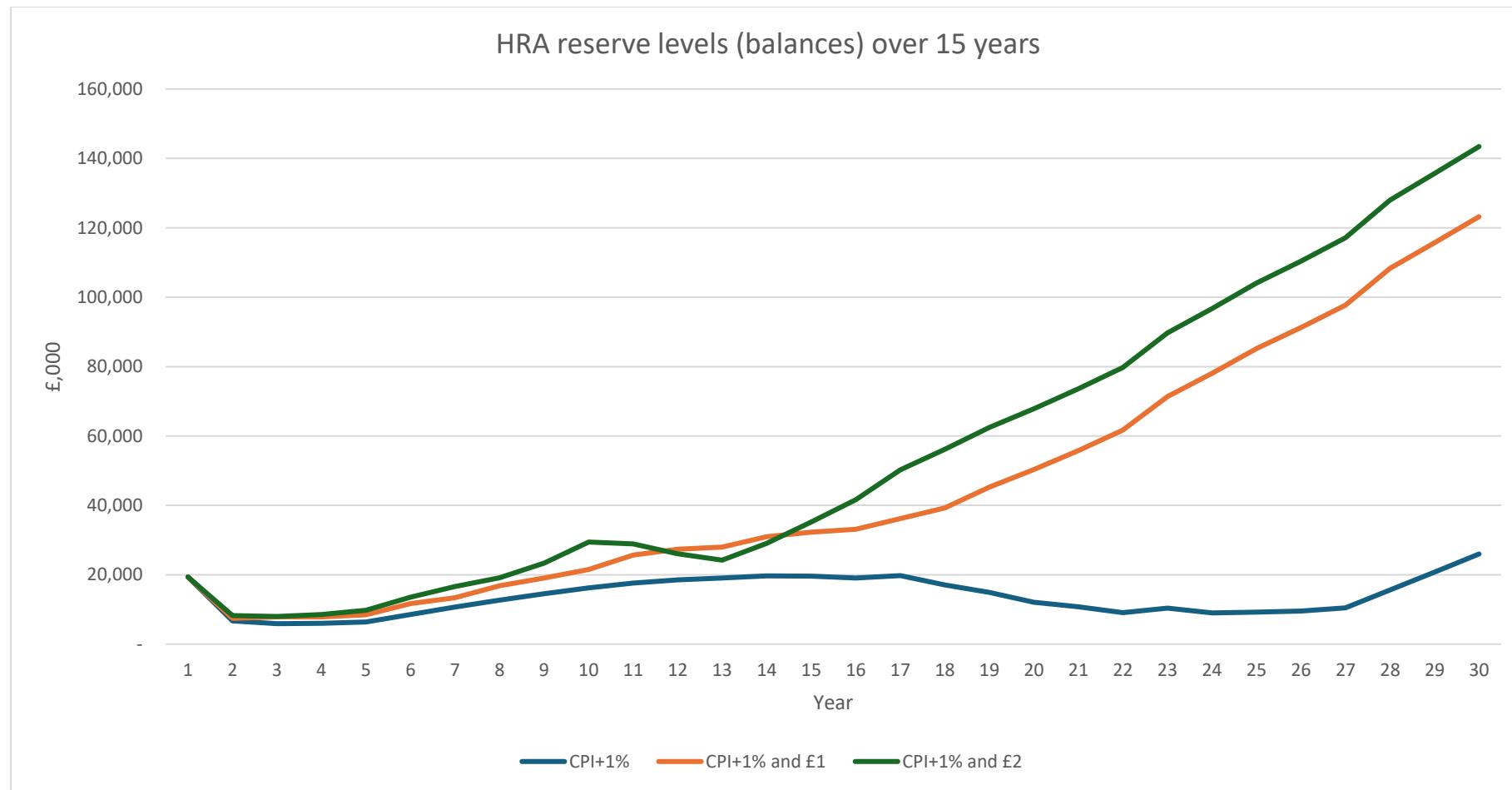
Appendix 2a

Weekly social rent payable by number of bedrooms and % increase

Bedroom Numbers	Current Rent			Option 1 - 4.8% (CPI + 1%)			Option 2 - 4.8% (CPI +1% + £1)			Option 3 - 4.8% (CPI +1% + £2)		
	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Average	Minimum	Maximum
0	64.87	62.45	70.49	67.98	65.45	73.87	68.60	66.45	73.87	69.22	67.45	73.87
1	85.90	70.22	97.87	90.02	73.59	102.57	90.80	74.59	102.58	91.57	75.59	103.28
2	93.77	82.88	128.42	98.27	86.86	134.57	99.05	87.86	134.57	99.84	88.86	134.57
3	101.18	86.51	147.21	106.04	90.66	154.27	106.90	91.66	154.27	107.75	92.66	154.27
4	113.19	95.24	157.79	118.63	99.81	165.36	119.46	100.81	165.36	120.29	101.81	165.36
5	116.45	97.48	155.61	122.04	102.16	163.08	123.01	103.16	164.08	123.84	104.16	165.08
6	110.81	110.81	110.81	116.13	116.13	116.13	117.13	117.13	117.13	118.13	118.13	118.13
All	94.90			99.46			100.27			101.07		
Increase				4.56			5.36			6.17		

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Appendix 3 – HRA Reserve Levels



At CPI+1% reserve levels increase at a slower rate and level out from year 12 to 17 when they begin to fall again. Both CPI+1% plus £1 and CPI+1% plus £2 result in a healthy balance position. The drop in balances on CPI+1% plus £2 in year 13 relates to the earlier payback of borrowing for investment in existing stock.

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Housing Revenue Account
Non Dwelling Rents, Service Charges and Furnished Homes Charges
APPENDIX 4

Description of Fee or Charge	Basis of Charge	Fixed Charge 2025/26 £	Proposed Fixed Charge 2026/27 £	Increase / Reduction
Furnished Homes: Carpets only	Per Week	11.88	11.88	0.00
Furnished Homes: Washer only	Per Week	3.39	3.39	0.00
Furnished Homes: Dryer only	Per Week	2.50	2.50	0.00
Furnished Homes: Washer and Dryer	Per Week	5.88	5.88	0.00
Furnished Homes: Combi Washer/Dryer	Per Week	6.71	6.71	0.00
Furnished Homes: Bronze only	Per Week	11.02	11.02	0.00
Furnished Homes: Bronze + carpets	Per Week	22.90	22.90	0.00
Furnished Homes: Silver only	Per Week	17.41	17.41	0.00
Furnished Homes: Silver + carpets	Per Week	29.30	29.30	0.00
Furnished Homes: Gold only	Per Week	28.17	28.17	0.00
Furnished Homes: Gold + carpets	Per Week	40.05	40.05	0.00
Furnished Homes: Platinum only	Per Week	39.76	39.76	0.00
Furnished Homes: Platinum + carpets	Per Week	51.65	51.65	0.00
Garage Rent / Car Park space - Council tenant	Per Week	6.56	6.76	0.20
Garage Rent / Car Park space - Non Council tenant or council Tenants with more than one gar	Per Week	7.88	8.12	0.24
Surface Garage plot	Per annum	79.05	81.42	2.37
Non-surface Garage plot	Per annum	71.14	73.27	2.13
Warrncliffe Flats car park space	Per Week	7.98	8.22	0.24
Hot Water charge	Per Week	2.37	2.44	0.07
Cooking Gas	Per Week	1.09	1.12	0.03
Community Facility	Per Week	5.78	5.95	0.17
Communal Block - additional bedroom charge	Per week	25.26	26.02	0.76
Laundry Facility	Per Week	1.94	2.00	0.06
District Heating Unit Charge	Per unit of heat	0.1309	0.1309	0.00
District Heating - Bedsit	Per Week	8.50	8.50	0.00
District Heating - 1 bed	Per Week	13.50	13.50	0.00
District Heating - 2 bed	Per Week	17.50	17.50	0.00
District Heating - 3-4 bed	Per Week	21.50	21.50	0.00
Contents Insurance	Per Week	Full Cost Recovery	Cost Recovery	
Acquired Ground Rent	Per Week	8.36	9.20	0.84
Acquired Estate Fee	Per Week	4.42	4.62	0.20
Commercial hire of Neighbourhood Centre	Per Hour	11.46	11.80	0.34
Community or Voluntary hire of Neighbourhood Centre	Per Hour	7.68	7.91	0.23
Non resident charge to attend activity at Neighbourhood Centre	Per Session	0.57	0.59	0.02
Estate Service Charge Eligible	Per month	Full Cost Recovery	Full Cost Recovery	
Block Service Charge Eligible	Per month	Full Cost Recovery	Full Cost Recovery	
Property Service Charge Eligible	Per month	Full Cost Recovery	Full Cost Recovery	
Leasehold Mgmt	Per annum	Full Cost Recovery	Full Cost Recovery	
Leasehold Admin Fee	Per annum	Full Cost Recovery	Full Cost Recovery	
Leasehold Mgmt Fee VPC	Per annum	Full Cost Recovery	Full Cost Recovery	
Leasehold Mgmt Fee LTA	Per annum	Full Cost Recovery	Full Cost Recovery	
Leasehold Court Costs	Per annum	Full Cost Recovery	Full Cost Recovery	
Leasehold Capital	Per annum	Full Cost Recovery	Full Cost Recovery	
Leasehold Grd Rent	Per annum	Full Cost Recovery	Full Cost Recovery	
Leasehold Bldg Ins	Per annum	Full Cost Recovery	Full Cost Recovery	
Leasehold Cleaning	Per annum	Full Cost Recovery	Full Cost Recovery	
Leasehold Admin	Per annum	Full Cost Recovery	Full Cost Recovery	
Leasehold R&M	Per annum	Full Cost Recovery	Full Cost Recovery	
Sales/Resales - Landlords Enquiries (Flats)	AD-HOC	159.00	163.77	4.77
Sales/Resales - Landlords Enquiries (houses with services)	AD-HOC	159.00	163.77	4.77
Sales/Resales - Landlords Enquiries (houses no services)	AD-HOC	159.00	163.77	4.77
Processing resales - shared ownership	AD-HOC	212.00	218.36	6.36
Staircasing fees	AD-HOC	212.00	218.36	6.36
Remortgage Applications	AD-HOC	80.00	82.40	2.40
Further advance applications	AD-HOC	80.00	82.40	2.40
Notice of transfer	AD-HOC	80.00	82.40	2.40
Notice of charge	AD-HOC	60.00	61.80	1.80
Deed of covenant	AD-HOC	80.00	82.40	2.40
Copy lease (from Land Registry)	AD-HOC	30.00	30.90	0.90
Copy of lease if held on file	AD-HOC	20.00	20.60	0.60
Insurance policy document	AD-HOC	20.00	20.60	0.60
Standard valuation fee (basic market valuation)	AD-HOC	216.00	222.48	6.48
Lease extension/enfranchisement valuations	AD-HOC	430.00	442.90	12.90
Lease extension admin fee	AD-HOC	216.00	222.48	6.48
Enfranchisement admin fee (per unit)	AD-HOC	160.00	164.80	4.80
Home improvements / alterations (permission request - basic)	AD-HOC	60.00	61.80	1.80
Home improvements / alterations (permission request - complex)	AD-HOC	120.00	123.60	3.60
Home improvements (Surveyor report)	AD-HOC	130.00	133.90	3.90
Retrospective consent for alterations	AD-HOC	160.00	164.80	4.80
Deed of postponement	AD-HOC	60.00	61.80	1.80
Deed of variation/rectification administration fee	AD-HOC	125.00	128.75	3.75
Equity loan transfers, licence to assign and lease extensions	AD-HOC	216.00	222.48	6.48
Certificate of compliance	AD-HOC	50.00	51.50	1.50
Copy of Service Charge account	AD-HOC	20.00	20.60	0.60
Additional copies of correspondence	AD-HOC	20.00	20.60	0.60
Issue of Notice of Forfeiture	AD-HOC	125.00	128.75	3.75
Landlords Notice for Mortgage Application	AD-HOC	50.00	51.50	1.50
Landlords Approval for new mortgage	AD-HOC	50.00	51.50	1.50
Supply of Fire Risk Assessment	AD-HOC	50.00	51.50	1.50
Landlords Reference	AD-HOC	50.00	51.50	1.50
Surrender & Regrant of Lease	AD-HOC	375.00	386.25	11.25
Copy Fire Risk Assessment	AD-HOC	20.00	20.60	0.60
Right of First Refusal Discharge Certificate	AD-HOC	50.00	51.50	1.50
Change of Name - fee plus legal fees	AD-HOC	20.00	20.60	0.60
Notice Seeking Possession	AD-HOC	50.00	51.50	1.50
Breach of lease	AD-HOC	25.00	25.75	0.75
Letter 3 on arrears/approaching lender	AD-HOC	25.00	25.75	0.75
Temporary accommodation	Per night	33.55	34.56	1.01
Replacement Allegate Keys - Council Tenant	AD-HOC	14.00	14.42	0.42
Replacement Allegate Keys - Non Council Tenant	AD-HOC	16.80	17.30	0.50
Replacement Key Fobs	AD-HOC	15.00	15.45	0.45
Additional key fobs - if on same request	AD-HOC	5.00	5.15	0.15

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Appendix 5 – Affordability Analysis

Household make-up	Bedrooms	Full UC				Working Full time (40hrs)				Working Part Time (20hrs)			
		Current Affordability At Formula	CPI+1%	CPI+1%+ £1	CPI+1%+ £2	Current Affordability At Formula	CPI+1%	CPI+1%+ £1	CPI+1%+ £2	Current Affordability At Formula	CPI+1%	CPI+1%+ £1	CPI+1%+ £2
Single Under 21	1	£39.21	£39.21	£39.21	£39.21	£962.78	£982.83	£978.60	£974.27	£351.21	£351.21	£351.21	£351.22
Single Under 25	1	£39.21	£39.21	£39.21	£39.21	£1,345.85	£1,366	£1,361.67	£1,357.33	£428.35	£428.35	£428.35	£428.35
Single Over 25	1	£122.37	£122.37	£122.37	£122.37	£1,345.85	£1,366	£1,361.67	£1,357.33	£511.51	£511.41	£511.51	£511.51
Single Parent under 25 + Child	2	£414.55	£414.55	£414.55	£414.55	£1,505.93	£1,505.93	£1,505.93	£1,505.93	£1,029.74	£1,029.74	£1,029.74	£1,029.74
Single Parent over 25 + Child	2	£497.71	£497.71	£497.71	£497.71	£1,589.09	£1,589.09	£1,589.09	£1,589.09	£1,112.90	£1,112.90	£1,112.90	£1,112.90
Couple Under 25 + Child	2	£464.84	£464.84	£464.84	£464.84	£3,296.91	£3,325.25	£3,320.92	£3,316.63	£1,527.20	£1,527.20	£1,527.20	£1,527.20
Couple Over 25 + Child	2	£595.39	£595.39	£595.39	£595.39	£3,296.91	£3,325.25	£3,320.92	£3,316.63	£1,657.75	£1,657.75	£1,657.75	£1,657.75
Single Parent over 25 + 2 Child	3	£788.81	£788.81	£788.81	£788.81	£1,745.45	£1,745.45	£1,745.45	£1,745.45	£1,402.59	£1,402.59	£1,402.59	£1,402.59
Couple Over 25 + 2 Child	3	£780.48	£820.05	£815.71	£811.38	£2,650.20	£2,689.77	£2,685.43	£2,681.10	£1,945.89	£1,945.89	£1,945.88	£1,945.89
Single Parent over 25 + 3 Child	4	£708.91	£773.56	£769.23	£764.89	£2,120.09	£2,120.09	£2,120.09	£2,120.09	£1,643.90	£1,643.90	£1,643.90	£1,643.90
Couple Over 25 + 3 Child	4	£578.62	£643.27	£638.94	£634.61	£3,141.13	£3,187.39	£3,183.05	£3,178.72	£2,188.75	£2,188.75	£2,188.75	£2,188.75

Amount of household disposable income after Rent, Council Tax, TV Licence, Utilities including Gas, Electricity and water ONLY, Food, Mobile Phone and public transport costs deducted. Average costs used are provided by Policy in Practice are taken from the ONS family spending workbook. Last updated in April 2025, with Energy costs adjusted with the implementation of the energy price cap.

Living Wage updated for April 2025 : Over 21 at £12.21 hr & 18-20 at £10.00

Assumptions

- Where the adult of the family is under 25 and working that they are over 21 and getting the highest rate of National Living Wage as at April 2025.
- All those entitled to UC uplifts and Child related benefits are claiming their full entitlement.
- Where the example contains a couple, that both are working the benchmarked hours and each receive the National Living Wage

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Appendix 6 – Support For Tenants with Financial Pressures

Support Service	Description
RMBC Tenancy Support Service	Provide practical support on all tenancy related issues including debt and budgeting. The team have access to funds to support people in crisis i.e. no gas/ electric. Tenants must be actively working with the team to receive financial benefit.
Age UK Age Related Benefit Advisory Service	Provide support and guidance to residents over pension age to claim all age-related benefits to maximise income.
RMBC DHP Fund	Residents with rent arrears can apply to the RMBC Discretionary Housing Payment Fund for assistance to clear or reduce their debt subject to criteria.
Inclusive Employment and Individual Placement Support Employment Projects	Provide support and assistance to people looking to access training and employment in order to better their financial situation. The team also have access to funding to help people in crisis i.e. no food/ heating. Participants must be actively working with the team to receive financial benefit.
Crisis Resilience Fund	From April 2026 this will replace the current Household Support Fund. This will be a longer term funding stream to provide ongoing support for people facing financial difficulty.
RMBC Money and Benefits Advice Service	Providing people with practical support to challenge refusal of benefits. The Team assist with mandatory reconsideration and appeals/ tribunals. Money Advice Workers who works with residents to provide affordable debt solutions and budgeting advice. Macmillan benefit service provide access to benefits and grants for residents with cancer, their families and carers.
Foodbanks	Provided through Liberty Church, the Trussell Trust and Rotherham Foodbank. Vulnerable tenants can be supported through the provision of free food parcels in times of crisis.
Social Supermarket	Rotherham Minster and VAR supporting residents through the provision of a social supermarket that allows members to pay £3 a week for a maximum of 3 months to allow them to shop in their store. This service transitions people from foodbank dependency and promotes empowerment through teaching budgeting skills.
Citizens Advice Rotherham	Providing advice and guidance to all residents on money management and debt solutions enabling clients to resolve the cycle of debt.
Roundabout	RMBC have commissioned Roundabout to offer tenancy support for all under 25's including care leavers, this includes help with benefits and debts, applications for enrolment at GP/Dentist/College and any financial support that may be available other than that provided above.

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APPENDIX 7 - HRA Business Planning Assumptions

	CPI +1%	CPI +1% +£1	CPI +1% +£2
HRA Business Plan 2026/27 - Assumptions	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Average Rent Increase	4.8%	5.6%	6.5%
Service charge increase	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%
DH Unit rate options Increase/(Decrease) vs current charge	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
New Borrowing requirement	£164.7m	£134.8m	£123.9m
Opening Debt	£345.0m	£345.0m	£345.0m
Total Debt	£460.5m	£460.5m	£460.5m
Debt repaid	£49m	£19.5m	£8m
Council homes to be delivered	860	860	860
Inflation - CPI:			
Year 2	3.80%	3.80%	3.80%
Year 3	2.70%	2.70%	2.70%
Year 4	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%
Year 5	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%
Year 6	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%
Inflation - RPI:			
Year 2	4.50%	4.50%	4.50%
Year 3	3.50%	3.50%	3.50%
Year 4	2.80%	2.80%	2.80%
Year 5	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%
Year 6	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%
Interest rates on external borrowing	4.03%	4.03%	4.03%
RTB projections:			
Year 1	358	358	358
Year 2	198	198	198
Year 3	50	50	50
Year 4	25	25	25
Year 5	25	25	25
Assumed S&M unit cost reduction linked to RTB	50%	50%	50%
Assumed R&M unit cost reduction linked to RTB	75%	75%	75%
Repairs & Maintenance - 30 year cost	£882.5m	£882.5m	£882.5m
Capital Repairs & Maintenance Investment Base values	£1,328.6m	£1,328.6m	£1,328.6m
Capital Housing Growth Investment	£213.8m	£213.8m	£213.8m
Bad debt - percentage of rental income	0.89%	0.89%	0.89%
Void loss - percentage of rental income	1.30%	1.30%	1.30%
Reserves	£'000	£'000	£'000
Year 1	19,348	19,348	19,348
Year 2	6,688	7,445	8,202
Year 3	5,910	7,818	7,985
Year 4	6,025	7,837	8,550
Year 5	6,382	8,493	9,761
Year 30	25,996	123,217	143,437

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APPENDIX 8

Housing Revenue Account
Draft Budget Operating Statement 2026/27

Option 3: Rents increased by 4.8% plus up to £2 convergence (CPI+1%)

Narrative	Full-year Budget 2025/26	Full-year Budget 2026/27	Year on Year Change
	£	£	£
Contributions to Housing Repairs Account	27,601,970	30,478,020	2,876,050
Supervision and Management	35,119,060	37,659,390	2,540,330
Rents, Rates, Taxes etc.	458,000	462,000	4,000
Provision for Bad Debts	874,370	926,470	52,100
Cost of capital Charge	14,500,000	14,300,000	-200,000
Depreciation of Fixed Assets	25,880,700	26,943,300	1,062,600
Debt Management Costs	200,000	200,000	0
Expenditure	104,634,100	110,969,180	6,335,080
Dwelling Rents	-97,151,680	-102,940,180	-5,788,500
Non-dwelling Rents	-852,680	-954,580	-101,900
Charges for Services and facilities	-8,351,900	-8,860,440	-508,540
Other fees and charges	-509,440	-540,170	-30,730
Leaseholder Income	-297,330	-301,440	-4,110
Income	-107,163,030	-113,596,810	-6,433,780
Net Cost of Services	-2,528,930	-2,627,630	-98,700
Interest received	-105,000	-150,000	-45,000
Net Operating Expenditure	-2,633,930	-2,777,630	-143,700
Appropriations:			
Revenue Contributions to Capital Outlay	9,658,150	13,836,220	4,178,070
Transfer to Reserves	0	0	0
Transfer from Reserves	-7,024,220	-11,058,590	-4,034,370
Surplus/Deficit for the year	0	0	0
HRA Balance carried forward	19,348,395	-11,058,590	8,289,805

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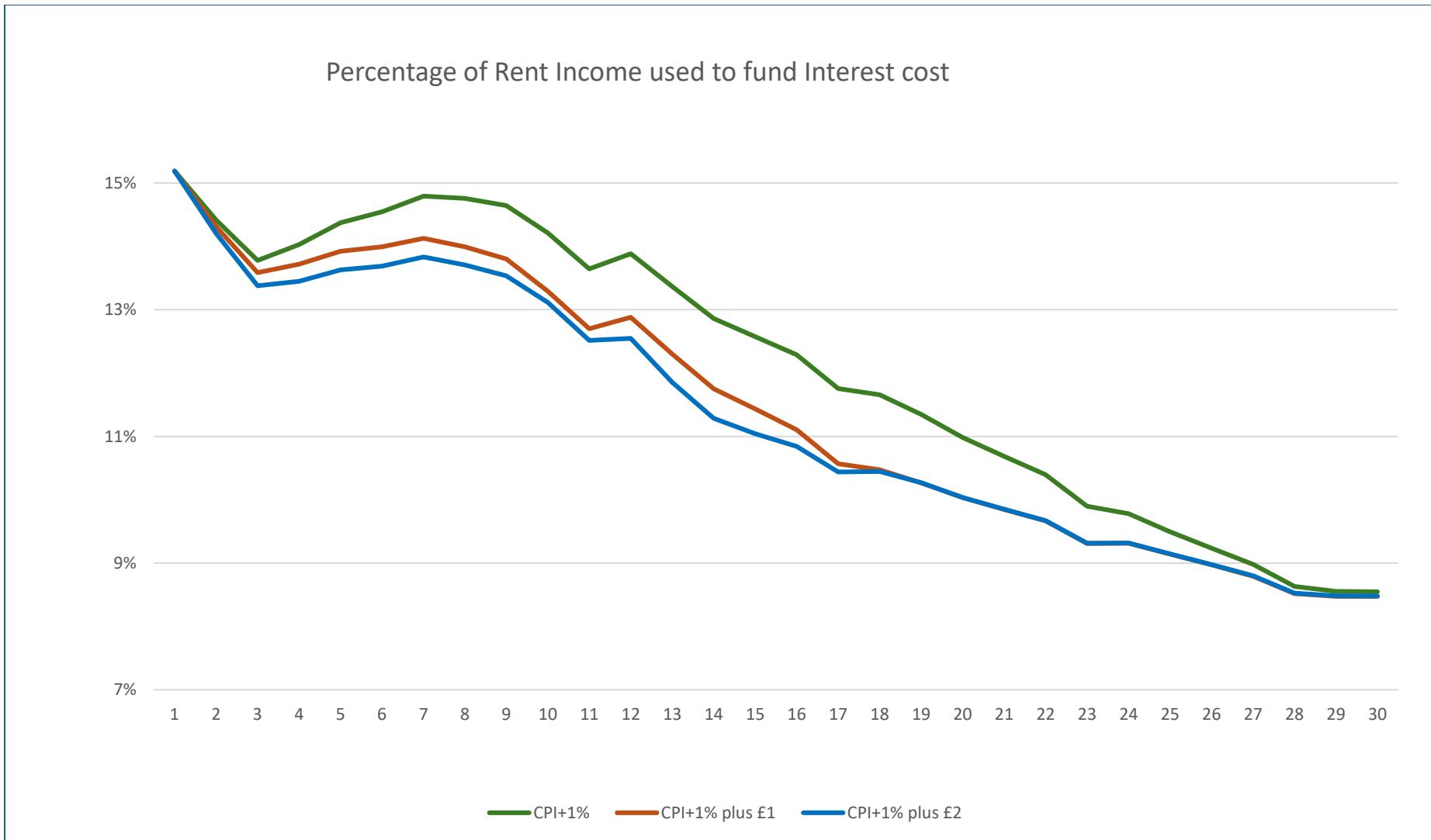
Rotherham MBC
HRA Business Plan
Operating Account
 (expressed in money terms)

Appendix 9 - HRA Business Plan Operating Account

Year	Year	Income				Expenditure								RCCO	Surplus (Deficit) for the Year	Surplus (Deficit) b/fwd	Surplus (Deficit) Interest	Surplus (Deficit) c/fwd		
		Net rent Income	Other income	Misc Income	Total Income	Managt.	Depreciation	Responsiv e & Cyclical	Other Revenue spend	Misc expenses	Total expenses	Capital Charges	Net Operating (Expenditure)	Repayment of loans	Transfer to MRR	Transfer from / (to) Revenue Reserve				
		£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000		
1	2025.26	96,364	9,205	2,807	108,375	(35,119)	(25,881)	(27,602)	(458)	0	(89,060)	(14,636)	4,679	0	0	(9,658)	(4,979)	24,171	156	19,348
2	2026.27	101,995	9,780	837	112,611	(37,659)	(26,942)	(30,478)	(475)	0	(95,555)	(14,488)	2,568	0	0	(13,836)	(11,268)	19,348	122	8,202
3	2027.28	107,557	9,878	858	118,293	(37,570)	(27,803)	(31,324)	(487)	0	(97,184)	(14,387)	6,722	0	0	(7,000)	(278)	8,202	60	7,985
4	2028.29	112,199	9,959	874	123,032	(38,247)	(28,768)	(31,928)	(496)	0	(99,439)	(15,090)	8,503	0	0	(8,000)	503	7,985	62	8,550
5	2029.30	116,499	10,034	887	127,420	(38,872)	(29,555)	(32,467)	(504)	0	(101,398)	(15,878)	10,143	0	0	(9,000)	1,143	8,550	68	9,761
6	2030.31	122,889	10,111	900	133,900	(39,531)	(30,362)	(32,978)	(511)	0	(103,383)	(16,822)	13,696	0	0	(10,000)	3,696	9,761	87	13,544
7	2031.32	124,455	10,189	914	135,558	(40,240)	(31,145)	(33,498)	(519)	0	(105,402)	(17,216)	12,940	0	0	(10,000)	2,940	13,544	113	16,597
8	2032.33	128,338	10,269	927	139,535	(41,002)	(31,948)	(34,027)	(527)	0	(107,504)	(17,589)	14,442	0	0	(12,000)	2,442	16,597	134	19,173
9	2033.34	132,304	10,352	941	143,597	(41,820)	(32,771)	(34,566)	(534)	0	(109,691)	(17,905)	16,001	0	0	(12,000)	4,001	19,173	159	23,333
10	2034.35	136,379	10,436	955	147,771	(42,695)	(33,616)	(35,114)	(542)	0	(111,967)	(17,886)	17,918	0	0	(12,000)	5,918	23,333	197	29,449
11	2035.36	143,280	10,523	970	154,773	(43,631)	(34,482)	(35,672)	(551)	0	(114,336)	(17,931)	22,506	(2,000)	0	(21,245)	(739)	29,449	218	28,928
12	2036.37	143,501	10,612	984	155,097	(44,717)	(35,371)	(36,240)	(559)	0	(116,887)	(18,003)	20,207	(2,000)	0	(21,284)	(3,077)	28,928	205	26,056
13	2037.38	146,487	10,703	999	158,189	(45,831)	(36,282)	(36,818)	(567)	0	(119,498)	(17,361)	21,330	(2,000)	0	(21,384)	(2,055)	26,056	188	24,189
14	2038.39	149,386	10,796	1,014	161,196	(46,946)	(37,217)	(37,347)	(576)	0	(122,086)	(16,855)	22,255	(2,000)	0	(15,554)	4,701	24,189	199	29,089
15	2039.40	152,191	10,892	1,029	164,112	(48,089)	(38,100)	(37,884)	(584)	0	(124,657)	(16,807)	22,648	0	0	(16,795)	5,853	29,089	240	35,182
16	2040.41	155,048	10,990	1,045	167,083	(49,259)	(39,004)	(38,429)	(593)	0	(127,285)	(16,807)	22,991	0	0	(16,807)	6,185	35,182	287	41,654
17	2041.42	160,997	11,090	1,060	173,148	(50,458)	(39,928)	(38,981)	(602)	0	(129,970)	(16,807)	26,371	0	0	(18,122)	8,248	41,654	343	50,245
18	2042.43	160,925	11,193	1,076	173,195	(51,686)	(40,875)	(39,542)	(611)	0	(132,714)	(16,807)	23,673	0	0	(18,133)	5,540	50,245	398	56,183
19	2043.44	163,946	11,299	1,092	176,337	(52,944)	(41,844)	(40,111)	(620)	0	(135,519)	(16,836)	23,982	0	0	(18,132)	5,850	56,183	443	62,476
20	2044.45	167,023	11,407	1,109	179,539	(54,233)	(42,836)	(40,688)	(630)	0	(138,386)	(16,763)	24,390	0	0	(19,496)	4,895	62,476	487	67,858
21	2045.46	170,158	11,518	1,126	182,802	(55,552)	(43,852)	(41,273)	(639)	0	(141,316)	(16,763)	24,722	0	0	(19,494)	5,229	67,858	529	73,615
22	2046.47	173,352	11,632	1,142	186,126	(56,904)	(44,891)	(41,867)	(649)	0	(144,311)	(16,763)	25,052	0	0	(19,480)	5,572	73,615	573	79,760
23	2047.48	180,001	11,748	1,160	192,909	(58,289)	(45,955)	(42,470)	(658)	0	(147,373)	(16,763)	28,774	0	0	(19,454)	9,319	79,760	633	89,713
24	2048.49	179,920	11,868	1,177	192,964	(59,707)	(47,045)	(43,082)	(668)	0	(150,502)	(16,763)	25,700	0	0	(19,417)	6,283	89,713	696	96,692
25	2049.50	183,296	11,990	1,195	196,480	(61,160)	(48,160)	(43,702)	(678)	0	(153,700)	(16,763)	26,018	0	0	(19,366)	6,651	96,692	750	104,094
26	2050.51	186,736	12,116	1,212	200,064	(62,648)	(49,301)	(44,332)	(688)	0	(156,969)	(16,763)	26,332	0	0	(20,806)	5,526	104,094	801	110,421
27	2051.52	190,240	12,244	1,231	203,715	(64,172)	(50,469)	(44,971)	(699)	0	(160,311)	(16,739)	26,664	0	0	(20,751)	5,913	110,421	850	117,184
28	2052.53	197,536	12,376	1,249	211,162	(65,734)	(51,665)	(45,619)	(709)	0	(163,727)	(16,838)	30,597	0	0	(20,683)	9,914	117,184	916	128,014
29	2053.54	197,446	12,511	1,268	211,225	(67,333)	(52,889)	(46,277)	(720)	0	(167,218)	(16,746)	27,260	0	0	(20,601)	6,659	128,014	985	135,658
30	2054.55	201,150	12,650	1,287	215,087	(68,971)	(54,142)	(46,944)	(731)	0	(170,788)	(17,059)	27,240	0	0	(20,504)	6,736	135,658	1,043	143,437
		4,581,597	330,371	33,326	4,945,294	(1,501,023)	(1,173,101)	(1,146,229)	(17,784)	0	(3,838,136)	(500,833)	606,325	(8,000)	0	(491,003)	107,322	1,537,129	11,944	

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Appendix 10 – HRA Interest Cover



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Appendix 11.

PART B – Equality Analysis Form

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

This form:

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

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

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

1. Title	
Equality Analysis title: HRA Business Plan, Rent Setting and Service Charges 2026-27	
Date of Equality Analysis (EA):	
Directorate: ACH & PH	Service area: Housing Services
Lead Manager: Lindsay Wynn, HRA Business Planning Manager	Contact number: 07342718601
Is this a: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strategy / Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Service / Function <input type="checkbox"/> Other	
If other, please specify	

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

Name	Organisation	Role (eg service user, managers, service specialist)
Lindsay Wynn	RMBC	HRA Business Planning Manager
Kath Andrews	RMBC	Finance Manager
Mark Edmondson	RMBC	Housing Income Manager

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

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

This may include a group/s identified by a protected characteristic, others groups or stakeholder/s e.g. service users, employees, partners, members, suppliers etc.)

The annual HRA Business Plan, Rent setting and service charges report sets out all proposed income and expenditure for the HRA for the next 30 years as required by HRA Self-financing and ensures the strategic allocation of resources within the HRA for period of 30 years.

The HRA Business Plan specifically responds to changes in government policy, regulations, macro-economic environment and gearing towards housing growth.

HRA Business Plan, rent setting, fees and charges 2026-27 provides information on the positioning of the HRA Business Plan to deliver large scale planned investment to existing stock, deliver 1,000 new Council homes by 2027 and deliver against the Council Plan.

The overall financial strategy for the proposed HRA Business Plan is focused on:

- Improving tenant's homes and addressing non-decency
- Improving thermal comfort and bringing energy costs down
- Continuing the housing growth programme
- Modernising the housing service to improve customer experience

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

There is a range of housing data available that is used by all housing service areas, including information captured from our tenants and data regarding the wider population. Protected characteristic information is collected by the council in order to fairly allocate homes.

The HRA Business plan will fund key activities such as the housing development programme. The plan is underpinned by analysis of housing need and demographic data which has been gained from a variety of sources including:

Demographic information

- The Census population of Rotherham in 2021 was 265,800, an increase of 8,200 (+3.2%) compared with the 2011 Census, with around half living in and around the main urban area of Rotherham. The remainder live in smaller towns such as Wath, Dinnington and Maltby, and in numerous large villages and rural communities, all of which have their own distinct identities
- The 2021 Census further shows that Rotherham had 113,900 households, compared with 108,300 in the 2011 Census, an increase of 5,600 or 5.2%. In 2021, 17.7% of Rotherham's population were under 15 years, whilst 25.8% were aged 60 or over. The population of Rotherham aged 60 or over is slightly higher than the England figure of 24.2% and the Yorkshire and Humber figure of 25%.
- Rotherham's young population (under 15) increased from 46,000 in 2011 to 47,100 in 2021 (a 2.4% increase). This increase followed a 6% fall from 48,900 in 2001 to 46,000 in 2011. Whilst the school age population has increased, the number of children aged 0-4 has decreased from 15,738 in 2011 to 14,600 (a 7.3% reduction) which reflects the impact that the pandemic has had on the birth rate.
- Rotherham's older population (over 60) has increased from 61,500 in 2011 to 68,600 in the 2021 Census, an 11.5% rise (51,700 in 2001). Rotherham's population is ageing broadly in line with national trends and the percentage aged over 85 increased from 2.1% in 2011 to 2.3% in 2021.

120,600 Rotherham residents are in employment whilst 106,000 people have workplaces in the Borough, giving a net outflow of 14,700 workers. One in five workers who live in Rotherham are employed in Sheffield and another one in five work elsewhere outside Rotherham.

Rotherham has a similar age profile to the national average and in common with the national trends, the population is ageing. Central Rotherham has a younger population than average whilst the more suburban and rural areas, mainly in the south of the borough, have older age profiles.

Rotherham's Black and minority ethnic (BME) population was 8.1% in 2011 and is now estimated at around 11%. The central area of Rotherham is far more ethnically diverse than the rest of the Borough. The largest minority ethnic group is Pakistani & Kashmiri (4% of the population), followed by the Slovak & Czech Roma (1.5% of the population). Rotherham also has smaller Black African, Indian, Chinese, Irish and Arab communities, all with between 500 and 2,000 people.

One in six homes is rented from the council and although house prices have risen over the years, they are about half the national average.

Despite improvements overall, some areas of Rotherham are affected by high economic and social deprivation. Rotherham is the 52nd most deprived district in England according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015, which showed 19.5% of residents living in the 10% most deprived areas nationally.

Central Rotherham forms the main area of high deprivation although there are also pockets in Maltby, Rawmarsh, Dinnington, Thurncroft, Wath, Swinton and Aston. The main forms of deprivation affecting Rotherham are low levels of qualification, poor health, high rates of disability and high worklessness, notably long term sickness.

- Profile of applicants on **Council's Housing Register** (numbers of households eligible for age restricted accommodation etc).
- The Housing Occupational Health Team assesses households to determine their need which leads to a priority of allocation under the Housing Allocations Policy.
- A profile of existing tenants is maintained within the **Housing Management System**. As of September 2025 the profile of existing council tenants showed: 29.63% of tenants have a disability – 44.1% of tenants are Christian, 3.51% Muslim, and less than 0.3% Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish or Sikh. 34.2% of tenants have no religious faith. 45.44% of tenants have no religion. – 92.79% of tenants are heterosexual or straight, 1.18% lesbian or gay, 0.68% bisexual. 91.78% of tenants are white, 1.8% Black African, Caribbean or Black British and 0.56% mixed or multiple ethnic groups
- Rotherham is a relatively deprived local authority, ranking 35th most deprived in England out of 151 upper-tier local authorities in the **Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019**. Rotherham has areas with significant deprivation, particularly in housing accessibility and quality, as measured by the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). The "Barriers to Housing and Services" domain includes geographical proximity to services and wider issues like affordability and homelessness. Areas within the borough have a high proportion of households facing homelessness prevention duties and have a higher prevalence of health conditions and other issues linked to deprivation.
- The Rotherham **Strategic Housing Market Assessment** (SHMA) is a study to understand the need for housing in the area, including both market and affordable housing. It helps determine the quantity and type of homes required to inform local planning policies. The latest study is a combined assessment with Sheffield, as the two areas function as a single housing market. Key findings from the 2019 study include a need for an additional 716 households per year to be supported and evidence of significantly worsening affordability.
- Rotherham **ward profiles** are detailed reports on each of the 25 wards in the Rotherham borough. These profiles cover demographic, social, and economic data including demographics, language, employment, education, health, housing, and crime statistics. Key housing-related topics covered include the number of households, population density, housing prices, and mortgage information, with data sourced from the Census and other reports.
- Ward members will receive specific briefings on potential sites in their wards and their feedback will be considered and including in individual scheme EAs
- Pilot data from new rented, shared ownership and open market sales is in the process of being collated and analysed to understand the equality impact of each development.

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

From January 2024 it has been mandatory to collect protected characteristics for new records as per the equalities and monitoring standard data collection and monitoring form. From November 2024 the system has been updated to ensure any missing fields are captured for existing records. There are gaps in historic data but this should reduce over time.

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

Individual services within the HRA ensure relevant monitoring arrangements are in place.
Annual Tenant Satisfaction Measures

Engagement undertaken with customers. (date and group(s) consulted and key findings)	Consultation on services provided by Housing is undertaken throughout the year via the Housing Involvement Panel. This panel meets bimonthly. A tenant open day is also held annually, the last one being held on 19th November 2025.
Engagement undertaken with staff (date and group(s) consulted and key findings)	<p>Workshops held with Assistant Director of Housing, Heads of Service and Managers.</p> <p>The plan has been developed with support from Council Officers and input from the Strategic Leadership Team and Members.</p> <p>Councillors, staff and partners play a vital role in the review of the business plan.</p> <p>Following approval there will be effective communication to staff and members and training will be undertaken in-house.</p> <p>Members have been consulted on various aspects of the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan. Seminars and Workshops have been held on Housing Growth, Repairs and Maintenance, Cost of Living and Housing Policy updates. This has helped inform the proposed Business Plan.</p>

4. The Analysis - of the actual or likely effect of the Policy or Service (Identify by protected characteristics)

How does the Policy/Service meet the needs of different communities and groups?
(Protected characteristics of Age, Disability, Sex, Gender Reassignment, Race, Religion or Belief, Sexual Orientation, Civil Partnerships and Marriage, Pregnancy and Maternity) - see glossary on page 14 of the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance)

The HRA Business Plan responds to the above concerns by allocating resources to ensure our existing homes are compliant with the **Decent Homes Standard and that they are energy efficient** to tackle fuel poverty (which disproportionately affects vulnerable groups), budget allocations are made for adaptations to meet the needs of disabled and older residents and the plan also allocates resources for **affordable housing delivery** for diverse communities.

Customers are offered and provided with **tenancy support** which is tailored to individual needs to help them sustain their tenancy and live in the community. Support available in Rotherham includes:

- RMBC Tenancy Support Service – Provide practical support on all tenancy related issues including debt and budgeting. The team have access to funds to support people in crisis i.e. no gas/ electric. Tenants must be actively working with the team to receive financial benefit.
- Age UK Age Related Benefit Advisory Service – Provide support and guidance to residents over pension age to claim all age related benefits to maximise income.
- RMBC DHP Fund- Residents with rent arrears can apply to the RMBC Discretionary Housing Payment Fund for assistance to clear or reduce their debt subject to criteria.
- Inclusive employment projects – Provide support and assistance to people looking to access training and employment in order to better their financial situation. The team also have access to funding to help people in crisis i.e. no food/ heating. Participants must be actively working with the team to receive financial benefit
- RMBC Household Support Fund – Supporting vulnerable people through the provision of food vouchers, one-off grants of £250 to help with energy costs.
- RMBC Money and Benefits Advice Service – Providing people with practical support to challenge refusal of benefits. The Team assist with mandatory reconsideration and appeals/ tribunals. Money Advice Workers who works with residents to provide affordable debt solutions and budgeting advice. Macmillan benefit service provide access to benefits and grants for residents with cancer, their families and carers.
- Foodbanks – Provided through Liberty Church, the Trussell Trust and Rotherham Foodbank. Vulnerable tenants can be supported through the provision of free food parcels in times of crisis.
- Social Supermarket – Rotherham Minster and VAR supporting residents through the provision of a social supermarket that allows members to pay £3 a week for a maximum of 3 months to allow them to shop in their store. This service transitions people from foodbank dependency and promotes empowerment through teaching budgeting skills.
- Citizens Advice Rotherham – Providing advice and guidance to all residents on money management and debt solutions enabling clients to resolve the cycle of debt.

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

The proposed rent increase of 4.8% plus £2 per week may affect those working full time. The Council and its partners provide a comprehensive package of support to tenants and residents facing crisis. Current support offered in Rotherham is outlined in the section above.

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

The **funding for new build housing** will assist vulnerable groups on the housing register as it will increase the supply of new Council housing so reducing the use of temporary accommodation for such groups when they are homeless. It will also increase the number of Disabled person units so meeting the needs of disabled tenants.

Investment in homes and estates will ensure that existing stock is well maintained ensuring better health outcomes and reduced inequalities for tenants.

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

It is not envisaged that the HRA Business Plan, rent setting and service charges report will negatively impact on community relations.

The Council will closely monitor the viability of the HRA Business Plan. Current measures monitored across the Housing service include:

- Number of homes built against the Council's 1000 target
- Rental income
- Rent arrears and bad debts
- Voids and void rent loss
- Debt levels and repayment
- Reserve levels, and
- Maintenance backlog

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

5. Summary of findings and Equality Analysis Action Plan

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

Title of analysis: HRA Business Plan, rent setting and service charges 2026-27
Directorate and service area: ACH & PH – Housing Services
Lead Manager: Lindsay Wynn – HRA Business Planning Manager
Summary of findings:
<p>The HRA Business Plan responds to some of the above concerns by increasing investment in Supervision and management allowing the service to increase capacity in the housing allocations teams to reduce use of temporary accommodation and re-house people quicker. Management teams to deal with issues of ASB, financial inclusion and engaging with under-represented groups.</p> <p>The Business plan, rent setting and service charges report maintains investment in housing stock which ensures investment in properties to install insulation, new heating systems etc. which tackle the fuel poverty agenda. The Business Plan also continues subsidies of District Heating to minimise fuel poverty to those households on District Heating.</p> <p>The Business plan responds to the needs of communities for affordable housing through gearing funds towards building circa 500 more new Council homes over the next 2 years (1,000 overall). The tenure, size and type of accommodation (including Disabled person units) has been informed by the Strategic Housing Market assessment.</p> <p>The proposed rent increase of 2.7% may affect low income groups in or out of work on benefits and under 25 as both benefits for this group are capped at a lower rate than those over 25.</p>

Action/Target	State Protected Characteristics as listed below	Target date (MM/YY)
Data is now collected on protected characteristics at tenancy sign up and updates are mandatory for existing records when they are edited. Monitor new data for any adverse impacts.	A,D,S,GR,RE,SO,RoB	On-going

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

6. Governance, ownership and approval

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

Name	Job title	Date
Sarah Clyde	Assistant Director of Housing	
Councillor Beresford	Cabinet Member for Housing	

7. Publishing

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

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

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

Date Equality Analysis completed	20/11/25
Report title and date	HRA Business Plan, Rent Setting and Service Charges 2026-27
Date report sent for publication	1/12/25
Date Equality Analysis sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	20/11/25

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Will the decision/proposal impact...	Impact	If an impact or potential impacts are identified:			
		Describe impacts or potential impacts on emissions from the Council and its contractors.	Describe impact or potential impacts on emissions across the Borough as a whole.	Describe any measures to mitigate emission impacts	Outline any monitoring of emission impacts that will be carried out
Emissions from non-domestic buildings?	Unknown	Schemes to upgrade District Heating boiler houses will be funded through the HRA Business Plan, with a view to replace existing gas boilers with low or zero carbon alternatives in the long term.	<p>Recommendations with respect to District Heating charges are benchmarked to the Ofgem energy price cap, so that households with a heat network connection are not penalised compared to those with central heating and a gas boiler. This may become relevant to carbon emissions in the longer term, since low or zero carbon heat networks offer an alternative technology to decarbonise domestic heating, in dwellings where an air source heat pump might be unviable.</p> <p>Homes which are connected to the Council's existing district heat networks comprise ca. 1% of all domestic properties in Rotherham.</p>		Supply of gas and biomass (wood pellets) to District Heating boiler houses is monitored through the Council's energy procurement portfolio. Greenhouse gas emissions from District Heating are outside the scope of the Council's NZ30 target, however they will be included as scope 3 emissions in the 2025 Climate Change Annual Report.

Emissions from transport?	Unknown	For new residential developments and works to existing council stock vehicle movements to and from the site will be generated during demolition and construction.	While it is possible that new households will increase vehicle movements, they may also reduce them, depending on the location of new developments with respect to residents' places of work and access to services.	It is recommended that new housing development should account for access to public transport and active travel, in its location and design.	
Emissions from waste, or the quantity of waste itself?	Increase	Construction and works to existing Council stock will generate waste materials through demolition, exporting of materials from groundworks and waste construction materials	Albeit new homes might not mean more people living in the Borough, there may be a small increase in the amount of waste collected from households and distance travelled by waste collection vehicles.	Prospective contractors will be required to demonstrate how they will mitigate waste in their tenders, to include re-using/recycling materials on site where possible.	
Emissions from housing and domestic buildings?	Decrease		<p>It is a principal focus of the 2026/27 HRA Business Plan to improve the thermal comfort of existing Council homes and to save Council tenants' spending on energy bills, which should have the additional benefit of cutting emissions from domestic heating. In 2022, domestic gas heating accounted for ca. 16.5% of all greenhouse gas emissions in the Borough of Rotherham; at the 2021 Census, 16.7% of</p>		<p>EPC ratings are recorded for all the Council's housing stock. This data will be supplemented by stock condition surveys..</p> <p>New buildings are monitored once they are occupied, to ensure their stated energy performance standards are met in practice.</p>

		<p>households rented from the Council.</p> <p>£41 million is allocated in the HRA business plan to increase all Council homes' energy performance to EPC band C by 2030: the Council has also been successful in a bid to the Warm Homes scheme, £8.8m of grant funding has been secured.</p> <p>New build homes will be designed to Future Homes Standard, to be introduced in 2025. All options set out in the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government consultation on the Future Homes Standard exclude the use of fossil fuel boilers in new dwellings.</p>		
Emissions from construction and/or development?	Increase	<p>There will be emissions from the construction of new and refurbishment of existing housing. In the HRA business plan, 860 dwellings are to be added to the Council's housing stock between 2025/26 and 2037/38, by a combination of</p>	<p>For new build schemes, there may be a smaller carbon impact per dwelling, where modern methods of construction are used.</p> <p>For refurbishment schemes, emissions from retrofitting properties to a</p>	<p>It is recommended that a RICS 'whole life carbon assessment' or suitable alternative should be completed for at least one housing development, to provide evidence which can inform the design of future schemes and</p>

		<p>acquisition and new development.</p> <p>Some new properties in the programme i.e., homes purchased by the Council as strategic acquisitions, will have a carbon impact regardless of the Council's purchase.</p> <p>It is possible that mature trees will be removed as part of the development of some new sites.</p>		<p>higher energy performance standard will be partially offset by increased energy efficiency.</p> <p>If trees are present on the site of a proposed development, they will be retained wherever possible. Planning consent for the removal of mature trees will depend on their equivalent replacement, plus 10%.</p>	<p>increase understanding of their respective carbon impacts.</p>
Carbon capture (e.g. through trees)?	Choose an item.	<p>The HRA Business plan identifies £213m funding the Housing Delivery Programme. New build schemes may include tree planting as part of bio diversity net gain. Under the Environment Act 2021, most new developments must deliver at least 10% biodiversity net gain</p>			
Identify any emissions impacts associated with this decision which have not been covered by the above fields:					
N/A					

Will the proposal affect Council services' resilience to climate change, or the capacity of people living in the Borough to adapt to climate change?

The proposed investment set out within the HRA Business Plan aims to improve both the Council's resilience and residents capacity to adapt to climate change. Investment in existing stock aims to make homes energy efficient, safe and secure, and the delivery of new homes via the Housing Delivery Programme will be to the relevant standards for space and energy efficiency.

Provide a summary of all impacts and mitigation/monitoring measures:

The HRA Business Plan sets out the proposed value of investment in the housing service for the next 30 years. Given the Council's commitment for carbon emissions in Rotherham to be Net Zero by 2040, this will require substantial investment in the Council's housing stock over the life of the Business Plan. Initial estimates put the cost of this at circa £600m which represents a formidable challenge to the HRA. As a result, this means that drawing in external funding to progress net zero commitments becomes even more significant. Participation in national grant funding schemes will be prioritised.

Supporting information:	
Climate Impact Assessment Author	Lindsay Wynn HRA Business Planning Manager Housing Income and Support Service Adult Care, Housing and Public Health
Please outline any research, data or information used to complete this Climate Impact Assessment.	N/A
If quantities of emissions are relevant to and have been used in this form please identify which conversion factors have been used to quantify impacts.	N/A
Validation	Tracking Reference: CIA561 Louise Preston Climate Change Manager

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Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Council – 14 January 2026

Report Title

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board Update – January 2026

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

No

Executive Director Approving Submission of the Report

Judith Badger, Executive Director of Corporate Services

Report Author(s)

Barbel Gale, Governance Manager

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Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

In accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, this report provides an update to Council of the activities and outcomes of Overview and Scrutiny activity at the Council.

It summarises the work carried out by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB) and the Select Commissions - Health (HSC), Improving Lives (ILSC) and Improving Places (IPSC).

Recommendations

That Council receive the report and note the updates.

List of Appendices Included

- Appendix 1 OSMB Work Programme
- Appendix 2 HSC Work Programme
- Appendix 3 ILSC Work Programme
- Appendix 4 IPSC Work Programme

Background Papers

Constitution of the Council, Appendix 9 – Responsibility for Functions, Section 5 – Terms of Reference for Committees, Boards and Panels

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

None.

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board Update – January 2026

1. Background

- 1.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules require a regular update to Council on the activities of the Overview and Scrutiny function.
- 1.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board Annual report was presented to Council in September 2025 and provided an overview of the operation of the overview and scrutiny select commissions.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 This report is intended as a summary of highlights and outcomes and is an indicative rather than definitive account of recent scrutiny work, which aims to hold the Council and key partners to account for decision-making, policy development, and performance. The report summarises information that is already in the public domain regarding progress, changes, or improvements resulting from recommendations and feedback provided by councillors on scrutiny committees. These include Health Select Commission, Improving Lives Select Commission, Improving Places Select Commission, and Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.
- 2.2 Although this report emphasises outcomes, it should be noted that scrutiny is chiefly a discursive process rather than a product. For further insight into the process of overview and scrutiny, the archive of public meetings webcasts, reports submitted for scrutiny, and minutes of discussions leading to recommendations are available on the Council's website.
- 2.3 The following principles were endorsed by OSMB at its meeting of 5 July 2023, as criteria to support the long/short listing of each of the commission's respective priorities:

Establish as a starting point:

- What are the key issues?
- What is the outcome that we want?

Agree principles for longlisting:

- Can scrutiny add value or influence?
- Is it being looked at elsewhere?
- Is it a priority – council or community?

Developing a consistent shortlisting criteria e.g.

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

3. Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – Update on activity

3.1 Pre-decision Scrutiny

3.1.1 Since the last update in July 2025, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board in its pre-decision scrutiny work, has examined the following reports and made recommendations in advance of them being considered by Cabinet:

- July 2025-26 Financial Monitoring Report
- Investing in our Community Facilities
- Community Safety Strategy 2025-2028
- Selective Licensing Policy
- Authorisation of Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP) - Whitestone Solar Farm
- Medium Term Financial Strategy Update
- General Enforcement Policy
- Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Plan, Rent Setting and Service Charges 2026-27
- Library Strategy
- Rotherham Employment and Skills Strategy

3.1.2 Further actions that arose from those pre-decision scrutiny discussions were that:

- Information on the movement in number of units and number of savings associated with the Brampton Vale strategic acquisitions item would be provided to members of OSMB.
- Information on the criteria used to select the properties could be shared outside of the meeting.
- An asset register of all Council buildings, including the wards they were located in be produced immediately and circulated to all Members.
- An update report regarding Investing in our Community Facilities be provided in 12 months to include the updated condition survey results, where available.
- The annual review of the selective licensing planned designations is brought back to the relevant scrutiny committee to review the progress being made on the overall selective licensing scheme and to review any amendments to the scheme in twelve months' time.
- A Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document regarding NSIP - Whitestone Solar Farm proposal be developed to provide clear and accessible guidance on the process for making representations to support elected members and residents.
- Confirmation of the year in which the Council began applying rent convergence for re-let properties will be provided.
- The Treasury Management Team will provide OSMB members with detailed information on the methodology used to calculate the HRA risk-based reserve.

- OSMB will receive a mid-point progress update on the implementation of the Library Strategy 2027–2032.
- OSMB will receive a detailed breakdown of footfall data for each community library covering the period 2022–23 to 2024–25.
- OSMB will receive a follow-up report in September 2026 on the Rotherham Employment and Skills Strategy, providing an update on performance against the agreed targets, along with detailed information on any additional costs incurred for activities undertaken.

3.2 Other Scrutiny work update:

3.2.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board has also carried out other scrutiny work based on its Work Programme for 2025/26, which is attached as Appendix 1.

3.2.2 The Work Programme for the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board, as always, covers a diverse range of topics within its remit.

3.2.3 Other items that have been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board are:

- Progress update on the implementation of the Pathways to Work Economic Inactivity Trailblazer programme
- Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2024-2025
- Annual Compliments and Complaints Report 2024/25
- Call-in - Selective Licensing Policy

3.2.4 Following the Cabinet meeting on 20 October 2025, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board reviewed the call-in request to further scrutinise the Selective Licensing Policy decision. The call-in request recommended that the matter be referred back to Cabinet for reconsideration. However, this recommendation was not supported by the Board when put to a vote, and therefore the original decision stood.

3.3 Sub and Project Group work update:

3.3.1 In addition to the scrutiny activity carried out in the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board meetings, members either have carried out or are in the process of carrying out work on:

- Life Saving Equipment and By-laws:

The outstanding information has now been provided by the Service Director, Community Safety and Street Scene. This information has been circulated to members of the review group seeking their comments on this with a view to a meeting of the review group being arranged.

- Waste Collections:

In response to concerns raised by Members, a meeting has been scheduled with the Executive Director of Regeneration and Environment, the Service Director for Community Safety and Street Scene, the Chair of OSMB, and the Vice-Chair of OSMB to obtain a comprehensive update on the current status of refuse services. The outcome of this meeting will determine if further actions are required.

- Snow Warden Scheme:

In response to concerns raised by Members regarding the provision of the necessary equipment and the number of Snow Wardens volunteering in each ward, the Chair of OSMB sought and received assurance from the Service Director for Community Safety and Street Scene that these concerns were being addressed. No further action is required.

3.4 Items to be Considered by Other Means (e.g. off-agenda briefing, workshop etc) update:

- Waste Service Route Optimisation (Joint with IPSC):

An update on progress following the implementation of Waste Service Route Optimisation programme be brought back to OSMB within twelve months via an off-agenda briefing.

- Street Safe Team (Joint with IPSC):

An update on the progress following the implementation of the Street Safe Team programme be brought back to OSMB within twelve months via an off-agenda briefing.

- Replacement of refuse vehicles:

Off-agenda briefings to be provided to give an update on the procurement of the new refuse vehicles and progress against the target for renewal of the fleet. These briefings should be split to represent the different phases of the programme.

- Public on-street bin collections:

An off-agenda briefing to be provided regarding the emptying of public bins. This information should include details of how overflowing bins can be reported, how often collections are scheduled for and how those are monitored, what joint arrangements are in place with Parish Council's, if any, and a list of the locations of bins under RMBC management, if available.

- IT Systems:

Workshop to be arranged for members of OSMB to understand what IT systems the Council is using, what the purpose of those systems is, are those systems as up to date as possible, how updates to those systems are managed, how the Council is using artificial intelligence (AI), is the Council using outdated technology, and was the Council spending too much or too little in this area.

- Pathways to Work Economic Inactivity Trailblazer programme:

Agreed that an off-agenda briefing be provided to share the details of the commissioned VCSE organisations and their geographic reach with members of OSMB.

3.5 Items for Future Consideration update:

3.5.1 The items listed for future consideration remain on the work programme as place holders, to be considered if appropriate.

- Future Rothercare Model:

A progress report was to be provided in twelve months to OSMB following the implementation of the new technology enabled care delivery model, which was agreed by Cabinet in October 2024. This would be due for presentation in April 2026.

- Town Centre Developments (Forge Island, Markets & Library Redevelopments (Joint with IPSC):

An initial site visit to be arranged to consider a midterm evaluation of the Market's redevelopment including a briefing detailing information on construction costs, the retention of market traders along with information on the plan for encouraging new businesses.

- Energy Efficiency:

An off-agenda briefing to be provided to members of OSMB and IPSC to provide information on the energy efficiency retrofits in social housing. This should cover aspects such as the feasibility and prioritisation of upgrades to heating systems and insulation across the borough. It would include details on how these retrofits align with the Council's net-zero goals, what potential funding was available to support this and timescales for implementation.

4. Health Select Commission – Update on activity

4.1 Scrutiny work:

4.1.1 Since July 2025, the Health Select Commission (HSC) has scrutinised the following reports and made recommendations in line with its Work Programme for 2025/26 which is attached at Appendix 2:

- ADASS (Association of Directors of Adult Social Services) Peer Review:

Members considered the findings of the report, and how this built upon the progress made outlined in the LGA (Local Government Association) Peer Review report presented in the previous year.

- Healthwatch Annual Report:

Members reflected on the value of the work undertaken by Healthwatch to support continuing improvements to the Rotherham Health and Wellbeing place infrastructure and service delivery.

- Yorkshire Cancer Care White Rose Report:

Members considered the information shared during a regional event to launch this report, and the data provided built upon the information shared during an Oncology Transformation Workshop and ahead of further public consideration of the implementation stage of the programme due to come to the Commission in March 2026.

- Physical Activity for Health (Sport England):

Members considered the programme's aims and targeted impact for communities throughout the borough. They sought reassurances as to its governance arrangements, reliance on continuing partner engagement, and longer-term funding whilst highlighting the need to ensure inclusivity and sustainable infrastructure. It was agreed that a further report to the Commission would follow the main funding bid decision in 2026.

- TRFT (The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust) Annual Report:

Members reflected on TRFT's successes and challenges over the previous 12 month, building on the Commissions consideration of the Trust's Quality Account in April 2025. Members sought reassurances in respect of digital innovation and its impact on exclusion, health inequality initiatives, on patient experience improvements, community service expansion and financial sustainability.

- Draft Adult Social Care Mental Health Strategy 2026-2029:

Members considered the work undertaken to develop the Strategy, alongside its aims and wider alignment with the borough's health and wellbeing priorities and contribution to tackling health inequalities. Members shared their views on the content of the Strategy prior to its presentation to Cabinet for approval in December 2025.

- Place Partners Winter Planning:

Members considered actions outlined by Place Partners to manage high demand and maintain patient flow during winter 2025/26. They reflected on how preparations built on last year's plan, the introduction of new initiatives and examined risks to successful service delivery.

4.1.2 Since the last update to Council, the Health Select Commission have also received the following reports for information to enhance understanding of the strategic landscape and support agenda planning and work programming considerations:

- Health and Wellbeing Board Annual Report
- How Did We Do - Adult Social Care Local Account
- Rotherham Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2025-2030

4.1.3. At the next meeting of the Commission in January 2026, members will scrutinise the following items:

- Rotherham Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report and Strategic Plan 2025-2028
- Access to Contraception Review Report

4.1.4. The Work Programme for the Health Select Commission covers a diverse range of topics within its remit. It also draws on items referred to it for attention by the South Yorkshire, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC), where the Health Select Commission is represented by its Chair.

4.2 Sub and Project Group work:

4.2.1 In addition to the scrutiny activity carried out in the Health Select Commission meetings, members either have carried out or are in the process of carrying out work on:

- The Access to Contraception Review:

The Access to Contraception Review concluded its evidence gathering sessions on October 8th, 2025, at which time Members developed a number of draft recommendations which are intended for presentation to the Health Select Commission in January 2026.

- Menopause Workshop:

The Menopause Workshop took place on 16 September 2025, bringing together Council services, NHS services, Primary Care and Community and Voluntary Services to consider and raise awareness in relation to the Rotherham offer, and to consider any opportunities for improvement.

- All-Age Carers Strategy Workshop (Joint pre-decision scrutiny with the Improving Lives Select Commission):

The Unpaid Carer's Strategy Workshop took place on 28 November 2025 in conjunction with the Improving Lives Select Commission. It considered the development of the Unpaid Carer's Strategy, its key themes and priorities and offered Members an opportunity to share their views on its contents prior to it being presented to Cabinet. Members made two recommendations for amendments prior to publication in April 2026 which were accepted by Cabinet in December 2025.

4.2.2 The following additional pieces of work have been progressed and are due to be delivered:

- SDEC (Same Day Emergency Care) Site Visit
- Oncology (Lung Clinic) Site Visit

5. Improving Lives Select Commission – Update on Activity

5.1 Scrutiny Work:

5.1.1 Since the last update, the Improving Lives Select Commission at its November meeting focused on key areas relating to Children's Services and SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) provision. Members have scrutinised updates on the Looked After Children and Care Leavers Sufficiency Strategy and the draft SEND Sufficiency Strategy, requesting additional data and governance details to strengthen oversight in line with its Work Programme, which is attached at Appendix 3.

5.1.2 At its December meeting the Commission also considered in detail the Fostering Transformation Programme (incorporating the Future Deaths Report) and Rotherham Safeguarding Children's Partnership Annual Assurance Report 2024/25.

5.2 Pre- Decision Scrutiny:

5.2.1 The Improving Lives Select Commission was also involved in the following pre-decision scrutiny work since the last update and made recommendations in advance of them being considered by Cabinet:

- Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Sufficiency Strategy 2026-2029:

Informative and detailed discussion with questions suitably answered. The Select Commission did request that consideration be given to the holding of a separate session providing an update on the Thresholds of Needs document, along with a further update being provided on childcare sufficiency and the funding available for nurseries.
- RSCP Annual Assurance Report Pre-Decision:

Informative discussion took place on the Annual Report and the questions raised by Improving Lives Members were suitably answered. On this basis the Select Commission did not wish to add any further recommendations or comments prior to the submission to Cabinet.
- All Age Carers Strategy:

Members of Improving Lives also attended a Health Select Commission workshop on 28th November 2025 to review the draft All Age Carers Strategy. A number of questions were raised and suitably answered.
- Rotherham Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report and Strategic Plan 2025-2028:

Members of Improving Lives have also been invited to attend the January Health Select Commission meeting to jointly scrutinise the Rotherham Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report and Strategic Plan 2025-2028.
- Domestic Abuse Strategy:

The Select Commission were currently looking at dates to consider the Domestic Abuse Strategy by way of a dedicated workshop session with officers prior to the strategy being considered by the Cabinet.

5.3 Sub and Project Group Work:

5.3.1 The Commission have completed a scoping session for the proposed review of “Understanding the Impact of Trauma on Children Currently Missing Education”. Questions for a survey were now being devised to circulate to all secondary schools for responses, and it was anticipated that the first review group meeting would be held in the coming weeks.

5.3.2 In addition to the scrutiny activity and meetings the Select Commission would shortly be engaged in:

- A workshop looking at the Threshold Needs Assessment in conjunction with the Rotherham Parent Carers Forum combining a visit

to the Eric Manns Building scheduled to take place on Thursday, 29th January 2026.

- A workshop to look specifically at support available for women who have had one or more child removed, following cessation of PAUSE Project scheduled to take place on Monday, 2 March 2026.
- A workshop considering the Children's Capital of Culture Workshop - Impact and Legacy for Children and Young People to be scheduled in early April 2026.

The meeting scheduled for Tuesday, 10th February 2026 would include on its agenda:

- Ofsted Inspection Outcome
- Educational Attainment Update

6. Improving Places Select Commission – Update on activity

6.1 Scrutiny work:

6.1.1 Since July 2025, the Improving Places Select Commission (IPSC) has carried out the following scrutiny work based on its Work Programme for 2025/26, which is attached as Appendix 4.

6.1.2 IPSC has scrutinised reports and made recommendations on:

- Draft Housing Strategy 2025-2030:

Members were given opportunity to review the draft Housing Strategy 2025-2030 prior to it going to Cabinet in September 2025. Members were supportive of the Strategy but made some recommendations around the wording of the key priorities under the Strategy and the inclusion of more detail on how anti-social behaviour is dealt with (see 6.2 below).

- Review of Selective Licensing 2020-2025:

Members were provided with a review of the successes and challenges of the former Selective Licensing scheme, prior to the launch of the new scheme. Members of IPSC had opportunity to scrutinise proposals for the proposed new Scheme when the item came before OSMB for pre-decision scrutiny, in October 2025.

- Plan for Neighbourhoods 2025-2035:

Members were provided with a presentation outlining the new Plan for Neighbourhoods 2025-2035 (now Pride in Place – see below). Explanation was provided of the funding available and the boundaries of the areas that would be eligible to receive this funding, based on government data and mapping. Members asked questions

around the potential make-up of the Neighbourhood Board, which would oversee implementation of the plan and were keen to ensure that this Board would include appropriate representation from the communities within the relevant areas.

- **Housing Strategy 2025-2030 Draft Action Plan:**

Following approval of the Housing Strategy 2025-2030 by Cabinet, Members of IPSC were able to have input into the draft Action Plan, which will sit alongside the Housing Strategy to implement and monitor progress under the four key priorities. As performance will be measured April-March, an Action Plan progress report will be presented to IPSC annually in July throughout the lifetime of the Strategy, to enable IPSC to monitor and scrutinise progress under the Plan.

- **Pride in Place Programme for Central Rotherham 2025-2035 (formerly Plan for Neighbourhoods):**

This item returned to IPSC after the initial report in September's meeting. In the intervening time, the name of the scheme had changed to Pride in Place. A presentation was given to Members on the Council's overall strategy for regeneration and how the various funding streams that become available are applied to fit that wider strategy. Members received an update on the proposed interventions and budget allocations under the programme, ahead of the formal submission of proposals to the government in November 2025.

More detail was provided to Members on the potential make-up of the Neighbourhood Board. IPSC will receive an annual update on progress under the Pride in Place programme and a separate update on the recently announced Pride in Place funding to the Maltby area has been added to the IPSC work programme for Spring 2026, once more information is available.

- **Annual Bereavement Services Report:**

In the most recent meeting in December, IPSC Members were presented with an Annual Report from both Bereavement Services within the Council, and Dignity Funerals Limited (Dignity).

Bereavement Services provided an update on their management of the Council's contract with Dignity, along with other contracts for Public Mortuary and Digital Autopsy services. Progress on works carried out to Council-retained cemeteries and buildings within them was also reported on and Members sought more information on the surveyed state of some disused buildings.

Dignity provided a performance update and details of their 5-year plan and Operational Plan. Members requested more detail on the

types of complaints received from customers. Dignity have yet to confirm their fees for 2026-27 but it is anticipated there will be an increase under the contract and IPSC have requested that the level of this increase is reported back to Members once it is confirmed.

6.2 Pre-decision Scrutiny:

- Draft Housing Strategy 2025-2030:

As a result of their scrutiny and consideration of the Draft Housing Strategy 2025-2030 in September's IPSC meeting, IPSC Members put forward the following comments/recommendations to Cabinet, via Councillor Steele, in September 2025:

- 1) 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.”; and

- 2) That the word “*happy*” is removed from Priority 4 of the Housing Strategy – “*safe, happy and thriving*” and replaced with “*safe, thriving and places people want to live in*”. Members felt that the word “*happy*” is too subjective and difficult to measure as it can mean different things to different people.

Cabinet accepted and endorsed recommendation 1) - the inclusion of wording around ASB but did not accept recommendation 2) - the removal and replacement of the word “*happy*” from Priority 4 of the Strategy. The addition of the wording around ASB and an additional case study on ASB have now been incorporated into the final, approved Housing Strategy.

6.3 Sub and Project Group work:

6.3.1 In addition to the scrutiny activity carried out in IPSC meetings, Members are in the process of carrying out the following work:

- School Road Safety Review:

Following scoping of the Review in summer 2025, the Review got underway in October 2025, with six Members of IPSC, including

Councillor Tinsley, as Chair. A number of productive and informative meetings have now taken place, including with officers in Highways and Facilities Management and an officer from Sheffield City Council who was involved in the School Streets scheme there. The group will be moving on to look at crossing patrol and enforcement, and the Governance Advisor is trying to set up meetings with the relevant officers for the New Year. It is also hoped that a meeting can be arranged with a representative at SYMCA.

6.4 Items to be Considered by Other Means (e.g. off-agenda briefing, workshop etc) Update:

- Anti-Social Behaviour Workshop:

An ASB Workshop was delivered by Housing on 4th December 2025. This was a very useful and insightful session which allowed Members the opportunity to ask questions of a number of Officers who work within Housing across the borough.

Officers delivered a very informative presentation to start with, covering topics such as what does and doesn't constitute ASB; the legal position under the Council's tenancy agreement; what tools and powers are available to tackle ASB; and service KPI data and customer feedback. Input was also provided from the Community Protection Unit, which works very closely with Housing Officers on tackling ASB.

Members also took part in a breakout Case Study group session where Members and Officers worked through a number of real-life scenarios together and were able to discuss the particular complexities of each case and valuable lessons learnt. Feedback from the session was that both Members and Officers found it very useful to consider each other's experiences and consideration is being given as to whether the session be rolled out again to wider Members.

- Market/Library Redevelopment Site Visit:

A joint site visit to for certain members of OSMB and IPSC to view progress on this major town centre redevelopment project is currently scheduled for late Jan/early February.

- Waste Service Route Optimisation (Joint with OSMB):

An update on progress following the implementation of Waste Service Route Optimisation programme be brought back to OSMB/IPSC within twelve months via an off-agenda briefing.

- Street Safe Team (Joint with OSMB):

An update on the progress following the implementation of the Street Safe Team programme be brought back to OSMB within twelve months via an off-agenda briefing.

6.5 Items for Future Consideration Update:

At the next scheduled meetings of IPSC in early 2026, Members will have opportunity to scrutinise the following items:

- Flooding Alleviation Report
- Thriving Neighbourhoods Annual Report
- Climate Emergency Annual Report
- Review of Borough-wide Events

7. Options considered and recommended proposal

7.1 The report is submitted for information.

8. Consultation on proposal

8.1 The report is submitted for information.

9. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

9.1 The report is submitted for information.

10. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

10.1 There are no financial or procurement implications directly arising from this report.

11. Legal Advice and Implications

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

12. Human Resources Advice and Implications

12.1 There are no Human Resource implications directly arising from this report.

13. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

13.1 There are no implications for Children, Young People, or Vulnerable Adults directly arising from this report.

14. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

14.1 There are no equalities or human rights implications directly arising from this report.

15. Implications for CO₂ Emissions and Climate Change

15.1 There are no climate or emissions implications directly arising from this report.

16. Implications for Partners

16.1 There are no implications for partners directly arising from this report.

17. Risks and Mitigation

17.1 There are no risks directly arising from this report.

Accountable Officer(s)

Emma Hill, Head of Democratic Services and Statutory Scrutiny Officer

Approvals obtained on behalf of:

	Name	Date
Chief Executive	John Edwards	06/01/26
Executive Director of Corporate Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	24/12/25
Service Director of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phillip Horsfield	24/12/25
The Executive Director with responsibility for this report	Judith Badger, Executive Director of Corporate Services	24/12/25

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Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – Work Programme 2025-26

Chair: Councillor Brian Steele
Governance Manager: Barbel Gale

Vice-Chair: Cllr Joshua Bacon
Link Officer: Phil Horsfield

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

Establish as a starting point:

- What are the key issues?
- What is the outcome that we want?

Agree principles for longlisting:

- Can scrutiny add value or influence?
- Is it being looked at elsewhere?
- Is it a priority – council or community?

Developing a consistent shortlisting criteria e.g.

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

Meeting Date	Responsible Officer	Agenda Item
Wednesday 7 May 2025	Sharon Kemp / Jo Brown	Council Plan 2025 - 2028 & New Year Ahead Delivery Plan - Pre-decision
	Ian Spicer	Review of the Non-Residential Charging Policy - Pre-decision
	Barbel Gale	Work Programme
	Each Governance Advisor	Work in progress from Select Commissions
	Barbel Gale	Forward Plan of Key Decisions
Wednesday 4 June 2025	Judith Badger / Rob Mahon	Finance Update - June 2025 - Pre-decision
	Sharon Kemp / Jo Brown	Social Value Annual Report - Pre-decision
	Ian Spicer / John Holman	Employment Solutions 2025-26 - Pre-decision
	Barbel Gale	Work Programme
	Each Governance Advisor	Work in progress from Select Commissions
	Barbel Gale	Forward Plan of Key Decisions
Wednesday 2 July 2025	John Edwards / Jo Brown	Council Plan 2022-2025 and Year Ahead Delivery Plan Progress Update 2024-25 - Pre-decision
	Judith Badger	Ethical Procurement Policy - Pre-decision
	Judith Badger / Rob Mahon	Financial Outturn 2024- 25 - Pre-decision
	Judith Badger / Rob Mahon	Treasury Management Outturn 2024-25 - Pre-decision
	Judith Badger / Rob Mahon	May 2025-26 Financial Monitoring Report - Pre-decision
	Barbel Gale	Work Programme
	Each Governance Advisor	Work in progress from Select Commissions
	Barbel Gale	Forward Plan of Key Decisions
Tuesday 9 September 2025	Andrew Bramidge / Simon Moss / Fiona Fletcher	Progress update on the implementation Economic Inactivity Trailblazer programme
	Barbel Gale	Scrutiny Annual Report 2024-2025
	Judith Badger / Rob Mahon	July 2025-26 Financial Monitoring Report - Pre-decision scrutiny
	Andrew Bramidge / Emma Ellis	Community Safety Strategy 2025-2028 - Pre-decision scrutiny
	Judith Badger / Kevin Fisher	Investing in our Community Facilities - Pre-decision scrutiny
	Barbel Gale	Work Programme
	Each Governance Advisor	Work in progress from Select Commissions
	Barbel Gale	Forward Plan of Key Decisions
Wednesday 8 October 2025	Andrew Bramidge	Rotherham Employment & Skills Strategy - Pre-decision scrutiny
	Andrew Bramidge	Selective Licensing Policy - Pre-decision scrutiny - joint with IPSC
	Barbel Gale	Work Programme
	Each Governance Advisor	Work in progress from Select Commissions
	Barbel Gale	Forward Plan of Key Decisions
Wednesday 12 November 2025	Judith Badger & Rob Mahon	Medium Term Financial Strategy Update - Pre-decision scrutiny.
	Craig Cornwall, Lewis Coates & Andrew Bramidge	General Enforcement Policy - Pre-decision scrutiny
	Andrew Bramidge/Sam Barstow	Call-In - Selective Licensing
	Fiona Boden	Complaints Annual Report
	Barbel Gale	Work Programme
	Each Governance Advisor	Work in progress from Select Commissions
	Barbel Gale	Forward Plan of Key Decisions

Wednesday 10 December 2025	Lindsay Wynn & Rob Mahon	2026/27 HRA Business Plan & Rent Setting - Pre-decision scrutiny
	Judith Badger	Inclusion Strategy and Annual Report – Pre-decision scrutiny
	Andrew Bramidge	Library Strategy – Pre-decision scrutiny
	Simeon Leach & Andrew Bramidge	Rotherham Employment & Skills Strategy - Pre-decision scrutiny
	Barbel Gale	Work Programme
	Each Governance Advisor	Work in progress from Select Commissions
	Barbel Gale	Forward Plan of Key Decisions
Tuesday 13 January 2026	John Edwards	Council Plan and Year Ahead Delivery Plan Progress Update - Pre-decision
		Leader Q&A - to be scheduled after Council plan on the agenda.
	Judith Badger & Rob Mahon	MTFS Presentation (TBC)
	Barbel Gale	Work Programme
	Each Governance Advisor	Work in progress from Select Commissions
	Barbel Gale	Forward Plan of Key Decisions
Wednesday 4 February 2026		Question and answer session, Mayor Coppard, South Yorkshire Combined Mayoral Authority.
	Barbel Gale	Work Programme
	Each Governance Advisor	Work in progress from Select Commissions
	Barbel Gale	Forward Plan of Key Decisions
Wednesday 11 March 2026	Sam Barstow	Modern Slavery Transparency Statement - Annual Refresh
	Barbel Gale	Work Programme
	Each Governance Advisor	Work in progress from Select Commissions
	Barbel Gale	Forward Plan of Key Decisions
Wednesday 8 April 2026	Andrew Bramidge / Simon Moss / Fiona Fletcher	Progress update on the Economic Inactivity Trailblazer programme
	Barbel Gale	Work Programme
	Each Governance Advisor	Work in progress from Select Commissions
	Barbel Gale	Forward Plan of Key Decisions
Substantive Items for Scheduling		
January 2026 & July 2026	Barbel Gale	Leader Q&A - to be scheduled after Council plan on the agenda.
Feb-26	Barbel Gale	Question and answer session, Mayor Coppard, South Yorkshire Combined Mayoral Authority.
Jul-26	John Edwards	Council Plan 2025 - 2028 & New Year Ahead Delivery Plan - Pre-decision
Completed	Andrew Bramidge	Selective Licensing - Joint with IPSC
Sep-26	Kevin Fisher & Judith Badger	Investing in our Community Facilities - An update report be provided in 12 months to include the updated condition survey results, where available.
Nov-26	Fiona Fletcher	Progress update on the implementation of the Pathways to Work Economic Inactivity Trailblazer programme
Expected March / April 2026	Joanne Hacking & Mat Dyson	Children's Commissioners Takeover Challenge
Reviews for Scheduling		
In progress	Sam Barstow	A spotlight review - Life-saving equipment and related byelaws
Off agenda briefing provided	Lynsey Linton	Spotlight Review - Agency Staff - A briefing has been provided with other aspects being picked up as part of other tasks on this work programme. Nothing further to be done at this time.
Completed	Sam Barstow	Spotlight Review - Grass Cutting / Ground Maintenance
Items to be Considered by Other Means (e.g. off-agenda briefing, workshop etc)		
Completed	Ian Spicer / Sarah Clyde / Paul Elliott	A report be provided to OSMB within three months detailing the performance information for the Employment Solutions Team.
Autumn 2026	Andrew Bramidge	An update on progress following the implementation of Waste Service Route Optimisation programme be brought back to OSMB within twelve months via an off-agenda briefing.
Autumn 2026	Andrew Bramidge	An update on the progress following the implementation of the Street Safe Team programme be brought back to OSMB within twelve months via an off-agenda briefing.
TBC	Andrew Bramidge	Replacement of refuse vehicles: Off-agenda briefings to be provided to give an update on the procurement of the new refuse vehicles and progress against the target for renewal of the fleet. These briefings should be split to represent the different phases of the programme.

TBC	Andrew Bramidge / Sam Barstow	<p>Public on street bin collections:</p> <p>Off-agenda briefing to be provided regarding the emptying of public bins. This information should include details of how overflowing bins can be reported, how often collections are scheduled for and how those are monitored, what joint arrangements are in place with Parish Council's, if any, and a list of the locations of bins under RMBC management, if available.</p>
TBC	Luke Sayers	<p>IT Systems:</p> <p>Workshop to be arranged for members of OSMB to understand what IT systems the Council is using, what the purpose of those systems is, are those systems as up to date as possible, how updates to those systems are managed, how the Council is using artificial intelligence (AI), is the Council using outdated technology, and was the Council spending too much or too little in this area.</p>
TBC	Fiona Fletcher	<p>Pathways to Work Economic Inactivity Trailblazer programme:</p> <p>Agreed that an off-agenda briefing be provided to share the details of the commissioned VCSE organisations and their geographic reach with members of OSMB.</p>
Items for Future Consideration		
Apr-26	TBC	Future Rothercare Model
Cross Commission scrutiny opportunities		
Jan/Feb 2026	Andrew Bramidge	<p>Town Centre Developments (Forge Island, Markets & Library Redevelopments):</p> <p>An initial site visit to be arranged to consider a midterm evaluation of the Market's redevelopment including a briefing detailing information on construction costs, the retention of market traders along with information on the plan for encouraging new businesses. The site visit is to involve Councillor Williams, Councillor Steele, Councillor Bacon, Councillor McKiernan, Councillor Tinsley, Councillor Jones, Councillor Sheppard, Cabinet Members and Officers from R&E.</p> <p>Then to be followed by an off-agenda briefing providing a progress update for these projects, indicating if slippages had occurred, if there was underspend or overspend on any of the schemes and the proposed mitigates, if any.</p>
TBC	Ian Spicer/Sarah Clyde	<p>Energy Efficiency:</p> <p>An off-agenda briefing to be provided to members of OSMB and IPSC to provide information on the energy efficiency retrofits in social housing. This should cover aspects such as the feasibility and prioritisation of upgrades to heating systems and insulation across the borough. It would include details on how these retrofits align with the Council's net-zero goals, what potential funding was available to support this and timescales for implementation.</p>

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Health Select Commission – Work Programme 2025-2026

Chair: Cllr Keenan

Vice-Chair: Cllr Yasseen

Governance Advisor: Kerry Grinsill-Clinton

Link Officer: Emily Parry-Harries

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

Establish as a starting point:

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

Agree principles for longlisting:

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

Developing a consistent shortlisting criteria e.g.

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

Meeting Date	Responsible Officer	Agenda Item
26-Jun-25	Jayne Metcalfe, Cllr Baker-Rogers Simon Moss, Gilly Brenner and Cllr Williams Governance Advisor	Adult Contact Team Referral Pathway (Adult Social Care) Health Hub Nominate Representative to Health, Safety and Welfare Panel
31-Jul-25	Dania Pritchard, Cllr Baker-Rogers Kym Gleeson Cllr Clarke	ADASS Peer Review Healthwatch Annual Report Yorkshire Cancer Research White Rose Report Update
12-Sep-25	Governance Advisor	Access to Contraception Evidence Gathering Session
16-Sep-25	Governance Advisor, Cllr Keenan	Menopause Workshop
23-Sep-25	Governance Advisor	Access to Contraception Evidence Gathering Session
02-Oct-25	Gilly Brenner, Cllr Baker-Rogers Bob Kirton, Helen Dobson Jackie Scantlebury, Cllr Baker-Rogers Dania Pritchard, Cllr Baker-Rogers Alex Hawley, Cllr Baker-Rogers	Physical Activity for Health (Sport England) TRFT Annual Report Rotherham Safeguarding Adults Board Strategic Plan 2025–2028 How Did We Do - Adult Social Care Local Account (For Information Only) Rotherham Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2025-2030 (For Information Only)
08-Oct-25	Governance Advisor	Access to Contraception Evidence Gathering Session
20-Nov-25	Holly Smith, Cllr Baker-Rogers Steph Watt, Emily Parry-Harries Cllr Baker-Rogers	Draft Adult Social Care Mental Health Strategy 2026-29 - Pre-Decision Scrutiny Place Partners Winter Planning Health and Wellbeing Board Annual Report (For Information Only)
28-Nov-25	Jacqueline Clark, Katy Lewis and Joanne Bell	Unpaid Carer's Strategy Workshop
22-Jan-26	Jackie Scantlebury, Moira Wilson, Cllr Baker-Rogers Governance Advisor, Cllr Keenan Emily Parry-Harries	Rotherham Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report and Strategic Plan 2025-2028 Access To Contraception Review Outcome and Recommendations (TBC) Director of Public Health's Annual Report (For Information Only)
26-Mar-26 Extended Meeting (4pm - 7pm)	Liz Howarth, Julia Jessop and Mark Tuckett Bob Kirton Ian Spicer, Councillor Baker-Rogers	Cancer Alliance Lung Clinic Update SDEC (TRFT) Implementation Update Adult Social Care - CQC Inspection

14-May-26	TBC	NHS 10 Year Plan - Local Implications incorporating NHS Neighbourhood Health Services
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Substantive Items for Scheduling

TBC		Armed Forces Covenant - GPs commitments

Reviews for Scheduling

2025/26 municipal year		Access to NHS Dentistry - Review (to follow conclusion of Access to Contraception)

Items to be Considered by Other Means (e.g. off-agenda briefing, workshop etc)

	Jayne Metcalfe, Kirsty Littlewood	AI Implementation in Adult Social Care (Adult Contact Team Referral Pathway) Update.

Items for Future Consideration

TBC		Learning Disabilities Update (Castle View)
June/July 2026	Simon Langmead	Primary Care Network (PCN) Development
June/July 2026		Immunisation Programme Commissioning Changes
Sep-26	Garry Parvin	Consultation/Co-production engagement with HSC re All Age Autism Strategy Refresh
Early-Mid 2027	Garry Parvin	All Age Autism Strategy Pre-Decision Scrutiny
May-26		NHS Neighbourhood Health Services (Rotherham approach)
TBC	Bob Kirton	ERCP Reintroduction at TRFT
Sept/Oct 2026	Cllr Baker-Rogers, Gilly Brenner, Carole Foster	Physical Activity for Health (Sport England Main Bid and progress update)
Sept/Oct 2027	Cllr Baker-Rogers, Holly Smith, Scott Matthewman	Adult Social Care Mental Health Strategy - Mid point review of delivery

**Improving Lives Select Commission –Summary Work Programme
2025/26**

Chair: Councillor Monk **Vice-Chair: Councillor Brent**
Governance Advisor: Natasha Aucott/ Debbie Pons **Link Officer: Kelly White**

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

Establish as a starting point:

- What are the key issues?
- What is the outcome that we want?

Agree principles for longlisting:

- Can scrutiny add value or influence?
- Is it being looked at elsewhere?
- Is it a priority – council or community?

Developing a consistent shortlisting criteria e.g.

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

Meeting Date	Responsible Officer	Agenda Item
17-Jun-25	Monica Green/ Chris Macdonald N/A	Draft Kinship Local Offer (pre-decision scrutiny) Closed session following meeting to discuss and draft 2025-2026 work programme
22-Jul-25	Helen Sweaton/ Anne Hawke Niall Devlin/Sarah Whitby	CYPS Performance Report 2024-2025 Elective Home Education Revised Policy (pre-decision scrutiny)
16-Sep-25 1 substantive agenda item	Helen Sweaton	CAMHS Update including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual update on children's social, emotional and mental health- updates on all provision for children with SEMH needs, CAMHS services including pathways, interventions and waiting lists, and support children are able to access from wider provisions such as the education and voluntary sector. • Neurodiversity Update- service update, Choice and the Peer Support Service.
04-Nov-25	Stuart Williams Niall Devlin/ Cary- Anne Sykes	Looked After Children and Care Leavers Sufficiency Strategy 2023-2028 Update Revised SEND Sufficiency Strategy- pre-decision scrutiny (Cabinet in February 2026)- will also include a progress update on the SEND Inspection areas for improvement.
28-Nov-25	Scott Matthewman/ Jacqueline Clarke	Unpaid Carers Strategy Workshop (HSC Workshop with ILSC invited due to young carers aspect)
02-Dec-25	Nicola Curley Chris Macdonald/ Darren Downs	Fostering Transformation Programme incorporating the update on the Response to the Prevention of Future Deaths Report Rotherham Safeguarding Childrens Partnership Annual Assurance Report 2024-2025

10-Feb-26	Nicola Curley Niall Devlin	Ofsted Inspection Outcome Educational Attainment Update
17-Mar-26	Kelly White Niall Devlin Niall Devlin	Community Cohesion Projects Update- Building Bridges Together Project and the Together for Tomorrow Project Update Children Not in School Update (including EHE, CME, exclusions, attendance and part time provision). SACRE Annual Report 2024-2025 (for information)
28-Apr-26	Sam Barstow & Niall Devlin Stuart Williams TBC	Safeguarding Children From Radicalisation (Prevent Programme Update and Keeping Children Safe in Education Update) Corporate Parenting Partnership Board Annual Report 2024-2025 Child Exploitation Strategy Update

Substantive Items for Scheduling

Date TBC	TBC	Revised Neglect Strategy- For Information only (2026 onwards)
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Reviews for Scheduling/ on-going

On-going	N/A	Reviewing the impact of secondary school policies on school attendance levels and ensuring an education for vulnerable children and/or trauma experienced children
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Items to be Considered by Other Means (e.g. off-agenda briefing, workshop etc)

Early 2026	RPCF - Jayne Fitzgerald	Rotherham Parent Carers Forum Update - RPCF vision and plans, voice of the community and the impact of the work completed with partners. Visit and workshop.
TBC	Cary-Anne Sykes	SEND Threshold of Needs Document Update - Workshop
Early 2026	TBC	Support available for women who have had one or more child removed, following cessation of PAUSE Project. Potential workshop.
March/April 2026	Polly Hamilton	Childrens Capital of Culture Workshop- Impact and Legacy for Children and Young People.

Items for Future Consideration

TBC (awaiting inspection)	TBC	Ofsted Inspection Outcome (including any action plans/ improvements).
TBC (awaiting inspection)	TBC	Youth Justice Service update/ HMIP Inspection Outcome (including any action plans/ improvements),
October 2026 onwards	TBC	Kinship Local Offer Progress Update.
July 2026 onwards	Sam Barstow	Domestic Abuse Strategy Update.

Appendix 4

Improving Places Select Commission – Work Programme 2025-26

Chair: Cllr Cameron McKiernan
Governance Advisor: Kristianne Thorogood

Vice-Chair: Cllr Adam Tinsley
Link Officer: Andrew Bramidge

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

Establish as a starting point:

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

Agree principles for longlisting:

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

Developing a consistent shortlisting criteria, e.g.

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

Meeting Date	Responsible Officer	Agenda Item
Tuesday 10 June 2025	Chris Willis John Holman, Sarah Watts Governance Advisor Governance Advisor	Independent Review of the Muslim Burial Provision in Rotherham Rotherham Employment and Skills Strategy Housing Strategy 2022-25: Action Plan Update/ Final Report Nominate representative to the Health, Welfare and Safety Panel Work Programme 2025-2026
Tuesday 8 July 2025	John Holman, Luke Chamoun, Levi Karigambe Governance Advisor	Tenant Scrutiny Review on Tenancy Health Checks Work Programme 2025-2026
Tuesday 2 September 2025	John Holman, Sarah Watts, Garry Newton Andrew Bramidge, Emma Ellis Simon Moss, Megan Hinchliff Governance Advisor	Housing Strategy 2025-2030 Review of Selective Licensing 2020-2025 Plan for Neighbourhoods 2025-2035 Work Programme 2025-2026
Wednesday 15 October 2025	Andrew Bramidge, Emma Ellis	Selective Licensing - Joint with OSMB
Friday 17 October 2025	Governance Advisor	School Road Safety Review - initial meeting
Tuesday 21 October 2025	John Holman, Sarah Watts, Garry Newton Simon Moss, Lorna Vertigan Governance Advisor	Housing Strategy 2025-2030 - Draft Action Plan Pride in Place Programme for Rotherham Central (previously Plan for Neighbourhoods) 2025-2035 Work Programme 2025-2026
Thursday 4 December	Paul Walsh/Cllr Beresford	ASB Workshop (Housing/Tenancies) @ Town Hall
Tuesday 16 December 2025	Phil Horsfield / Bal Nahal / Ashleigh Wilford Governance Advisor	Bereavement Services Annual Report Work Programme 2025-2026
Tuesday 27 January 2026	Kyle Heydon, Richard Jackson Martin Hughes	Flooding Alleviation Update Thriving Neighbourhoods Annual Report

2026	Governance Advisor	Work Programme 2025-2026
Tuesday 10 March 2026	Andrew Bramidge / Louise Preston Andrew Bramidge/Chris Siddall Polly Hamilton/Leanne Buchan Governance Advisor	Climate Emergency Annual Report Playing Pitch Strategy Review of Borough-wide Events Work Programme 2025-2026
Tuesday 21 April 2026	Polly Hamilton Simon Moss Governance Advisor	Allotments Annual Update Update on Maltby East Pride in Place Programme Work Programme 2025-2026
Substantive Items for Scheduling		
Jun-26	Sarah Clyde	Update on Housing Stock Survey
Spring 2026	Simon Moss	Town Centre Strategy
TBC	TBC	Nature Recovery Strategy - South Yorkshire Mayor Combined Authority
every July	Sarah Clyde	Housing Strategy Action Plan Annual Report
Late 2026/early 2027	Andrew Bramidge	Rotherham Gateway - Mainline & Tram/Train station
Reviews in Progress		
In Progress	Governance Advisor & Kevin Fisher/Nat Porter	Scrutiny Review - School Road Safety
Potential Off-Agenda Briefings		
Spring 2026	Simon Moss	Update on Our Places Fund projects across the Borough
Autumn 2026	Andrew Bramidge	Street Safe Team - Off-Agenda Briefing (joint with OSMB) providing an update on progress following the implementation of the Street Safe Team.
Autumn 2026	Andrew Bramidge	Waste Service Route Optimisation - Off-Agenda Briefing (joint with OSMB) providing an update on progress following implementation of the programme
TBC	Andrew Bramidge	Briefing/workshop on Bassingthorpe Farm development/lessons from Waverley
Potential Site Visits		
Jan/Feb 2026	Simon Moss, Lorna Vertigan	Market/library redevelopment - see below, joint with OSMB item/visit
Jan/Feb 2026	Andrew Bramidge	Hellaby Depot
Items for Future Consideration		
Late 2026/early 2027	Andrew Bramidge / Sam Barstow	Outcome of waste policy pilot.
Jun-26		Nominate representative to the Health, Welfare and Safety Panel
Cross Commission scrutiny opportunities		
Jan/Feb 2026	Andrew Bramidge	<p>Joint with OSMB - Town Centre Developments (Markets & Library Redevelopments):</p> <p>An initial site visit to be arranged to consider a midterm evaluation of the Market's redevelopment including a briefing detailing information on construction costs, the retention of market traders along with information on the plan for encouraging new businesses. The site visit is to involve Councillor Williams, Councillor Steele, Councillor Bacon, Councillor McKiernan, Councillor Tinsley, Councillor Jones, Councillor Sheppard, Cabinet Members and officers from R&E.</p> <p>Then to be followed by an off-agenda briefing providing a progress update for these projects, indicating if slippages had occurred, if there was underspend or overspend on any of the schemes and the proposed mitigates, if any.</p>
TBC	Ian Spicer / Sarah Clyde	<p>Joint with OSMB - Energy Efficiency:</p> <p>An off-agenda briefing to be provided to members of OSMB and IPSC to provide information on the energy efficiency retrofits in social housing. This should cover aspects such as the feasibility and prioritisation of upgrades to heating systems and insulation across the borough. It would include details on how these retrofits align with the Council's net-zero goals, what potential funding was available to support this and timescales for implementation.</p>

DALTON AND THRYBERGH WARD

Covering East Herringthorpe, Dalton, Dalton Magna and Thrybergh



Councillor Michael
Bennett-Sylvester



Councillor Jodie
Ryalls

January 2026

Report to Full Council

Ward Priorities

Ensure residents have the support they need in relation to the cost-of-living, particularly those most impacted or disproportionately affected.

1. Give young people and their families the support they need so they have the best start in life.
2. Tackle inequalities that lead to poorer health and quality of life; ensuring people can access services and support that will enable them to improve their health.
3. Build safer neighbourhoods that are clean and celebrated, where people are empowered to control their own lives.

How these priorities were agreed

Priorities were agreed following consultation in three geographical areas. In person sessions took place in six community settings including consultation in neighbourhood centres and visits to community groups. A digital questionnaire was distributed through ward channels, ensuring everyone had the opportunity to have their say. Data collected was analysed along with information from services, partners and ward data.

Engaging and listening to people in a meaningful way, through conversations as well as traditional methods, helped us to understand what mattered most to residents.

How these priorities support the Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy

Ward priorities reflect and support the strategy and what it sets out to achieve. We share the ambition of healthier, happier communities where people feel safe and welcome. Ward priorities focus on supporting the most vulnerable/disadvantaged and improving outcomes and quality of life.

Ensuring people of all ages have opportunities and can access appropriate mechanisms of support is fundamental. Awareness of services, social activities and community assets is helping to strengthen and build local infrastructure and capacity.



Partnership working

Partnership working has underpinned work to date. We work with a wide range of organisations from the community/voluntary sector, council services and strategic partners in the locality.

www.rotherham.gov.uk/dalton-and-thrybergh-ward

We have strengthened existing relationships and identified new partners to collaborate with on projects and initiatives. Partners are embedded in core activities and together we have been able to reach more people, solve problems, provide new opportunities, and co-deliver projects that improve people's lives.

Progress so far

Progress across priorities is encouraging. We have achieved some positive outcomes and continue to deliver against plans, investing in improvements and community support. Activities have been cross-cutting.

Supporting, enabling and empowering

Providing information and support to residents remains an overarching priority. We use a range of ways to reach people and provide advice, including surgeries, walkabouts and events. We work collaboratively with services and partners, taking a targeted and compassionate approach.

Activities have included drop-ins and leafleting on issues such as housing, the cost of living, energy, benefits, and food support. We also work with health providers, hubs and schools to identify the most vulnerable, to ensure people have the right support at the point of need.

Future work will focus more on prevention and building resilience.



Investing and improving outcomes

Our Capital budget will contribute to the refurbishment of the Bill Winder play area, delivering improvements for play and socialisation. We have funded equipment and activities for young people, building on previous projects/assets and addressing gaps in provision. We are committed to supporting children and their families, tackling disadvantages/indicators and improving outcomes around health and education.



Bringing people together in social settings/activities is also important for adults, particularly older people. Via ward budgets we have funded projects around Be-friending, crafting and music. Exercise classes in neighbourhood centres are helping to reduce isolation, loneliness and improve mental/physical wellbeing. To address access to green spaces, we have funded planting in housing areas, supported volunteering at Dalton Brook and championed the country park as an accessible space.

Creating safer and celebrated neighbourhoods

Addressing concerns around community safety has been a key focus. Working closely with South Yorkshire Police and partners, we meet monthly to tackle local issues identified. Activities such as pop-up events, which provide information to residents, has increased confidence in reporting and identified hotspot areas for interventions. This has helped to reduce ASB, off-road bike activity and fly tipping. Joint work around road safety has led to solutions such as speed signage, road markings and a new crossing planned for this year.

Celebrating the people, places and heritage that make the ward great has been equally important. We have attended community events marking occasions such as VE Day, Remembrance, religious celebrations and the Centenary of the Cenotaph. We continue to shine a light on the work of local volunteers, paying recognition to them as 'community champions' in the monthly ward e-bulletin.



DINNINGTON WARD

Covering Brookhouse, Carr, Dinnington, Firbeck, Gildingwells, Laughton en le Morthen, Laughton Common, Slade Hooton and Throapham



Councillor Sophie Castledine-Dack



Councillor Amanda Clarke



Councillor Julia Hall

Report to Full Council

January 2026

Ward priorities

1. Develop and improve the local environment
2. Develop and support initiatives around crime and community safety, particularly in hotspot areas
3. Support initiatives to improve the town centre, markets and investment in the local economy
4. Support improvements to highway maintenance
5. Support and develop initiatives to improve wellbeing

How these ward priorities were agreed

Priorities were agreed in a robust way using a range of methods, data and insights. We listened to and engaged with people, partners and communities we serve, ensuring everyone had the opportunity to be involved, were represented and heard.

How these ward priorities support the Thriving Neighbourhoods strategy

Ward priorities align to the Council's vision and support the Thriving Neighbourhoods strategy, by reflecting the guiding principles fundamental to Neighbourhood working and the framework in which they were developed. Priorities centre on 'working with' communities (listening, including, involving), and reframing how we engage with people, placing them at the centre of their own lives.

Partnership Working

Partnership working has been paramount. It underpins our role and has brought people together to solve problems, take community action and celebrate successes. We work with a diverse range of partners including the Town/Parish Councils, Police, local schools, Community Payback, local businesses and community groups.

Progress so far

www.rotherham.gov.uk/dinnington-ward

DINNINGTON WARD

Covering Brookhouse, Carr, Dinnington, Firbeck, Gildingwells, Laughton en le Morthen, Laughton Common, Slade Hooten and Throapham



Councillor Sophie Castledine-Dack



Councillor Amanda Clarke



Councillor Julia Hall

Develop and improve the local environment

- Community Clean-Up Days: Delivered multiple clean-up events, particularly around Leicester Road, in partnership with Community Protection Unit (CPU) and Grounds Maintenance teams. These efforts have improved the visual appeal of the area and have received positive feedback from residents.
- Worked collaboratively with South Yorkshire Police (SYP) and CPU to tackle alcohol misuse in Coronation Park, reducing anti-social behaviour and improving safety for residents and visitors.

Develop and support initiatives around crime and community safety, particularly in hotspot areas

- Strengthened partnership with SYP to encourage reporting of off-road vehicle activity. This has provided the evidence base required to secure support from the Off-Road Bike Team, helping to reduce nuisance and improve safety in affected areas.

Support initiatives to improve the town centre, markets and investment in the local economy

- Continued support for the £12 million regeneration project aimed at transforming the town centre and markets, creating a more vibrant and attractive destination for residents and businesses. Construction is set to begin in 2026.
- Neighbourhood officers have facilitated and supported the launch of a new quarterly meeting for local businesses, improving communication and collaboration to drive economic growth.

Support improvements to highway maintenance

- Worked closely with the Active Travel team to explore enhancements to walking, wheeling, and cycling routes, promoting sustainable travel options.
- Encouraged residents to report damaged roads, particularly potholes.

Support and develop initiatives to improve wellbeing

- Continued support for the Open Arms initiative at Dinnington Library, providing a welcoming space for community engagement and wellbeing.
- Used Ward Budgets to support a range of groups.
- Worked with the 'Our Places' scheme to revitalise the area of 'old Dinnington' around the market cross.
- Supported the development of the new Selective Licensing scheme to improve private sector housing standards.

www.rotherham.gov.uk/dinnington-ward

NOTICE OF MOTION	Date of Council Meeting: 14/01/26
	Mover: Councillor Cusworth
	Seconder: Councillor Monk
	Title of Motion: Restoring Rail and Tram Train Services for Swinton, Rotherham, and Doncaster - Ensuring Reliable Public Transport for Our Communities

Summary/Background:

This Council notes:

- That train timetables serving Swinton Interchange and Rotherham Central to Doncaster and return were halved during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- That despite the lifting of restrictions, these timetables have not been fully restored, leaving communities with fewer, less reliable services.
- That this reduction disproportionately impacts residents who rely on rail for work, education, and leisure, undermining efforts to promote sustainable travel and economic growth.

Impact on Tram Train Services - Prior to the pandemic, Swinton enjoyed three trains per hour, complemented by three tram trains at Rotherham Central, providing a service approximately every ten minutes into Sheffield. Currently, the timetable has been significantly reduced, with just one train from Leeds, one from Doncaster, and two tram trains. This results in a fragmented and inconvenient timetable, making public transport less attractive and reliable for residents.

That this Council believes:

- That Rotherham should not be facing reductions in its public transport provision, and that reliable heavy and light rail services are the minimum that our residents deserve.
- That accessible, dependable public transport is a cornerstone of social and economic inclusion.
- That restoring full services is essential to support local communities, reduce car dependency, and meet climate commitments.

Therefore, this Council resolves to:

1. Call on train operating companies and the Department for Transport to urgently reinstate pre-pandemic service levels between Swinton Interchange, Rotherham Central, and Doncaster, including both heavy rail and tram train services.

2. Work with regional partners, including the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority, to press for investment in rail and tram train services that meet the needs of residents and reflect the importance of frequent, reliable public transport.

THE CABINET
17th November, 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).

67. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

68. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Mr. Ashraf thanked the Council for agreeing to fly the Palestinian Flag on the agreed date but disagreed with the timings. He asked if it could be agreed that the Palestinian Flag would be raised annually without having to raise the question ever year.

The Leader explained that the flag flying timings were subject to the working requirements of staff, which did particularly affect matters on weekends and evenings. In terms of agreeing an annual flag flying process, that was a decision for full Council to make.

69. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Resolved:

That the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 20th October, 2025, be approved as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

70. 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.

71. ROTHERHAM SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-2028

Consideration was given to the report which asked Cabinet to endorse the Rotherham Safeguarding Adults Strategic Plan 2025-28. The Plan was produced by the Rotherham Safeguarding Adults Board (RSAB) who ensured that local safeguarding arrangements and partnerships acted to help and protect adults at risk of or experiencing neglect and/or abuse. The Strategic Plan informed the public about the RSAB's plans and commitment to keeping adults safe.

The previous Strategic Plan was developed in 2022 and covered the period 2022-2025. The Plan had 3 strategic objectives to be delivered during the 3-year period. The objectives were titled Back to Basics; Systems, Processes and Performance; and Strengthen Partnership. Paragraph 1.4 of the report set out the achievements against these objectives. Some of these included providing safeguarding training to the partnership voluntary sector and commissioned services; developing a new Safeguarding Referral Process to ensure the customer's voice was heard throughout the process; and commissioning a Local Government Peer Review to ensure all Board partners worked together to provide the best outcomes.

The Rotherham Safeguarding Adults Board Strategic Plan 2025 -2028 was developed in consultation with Board members, including the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care. A development day was held in January 2025 to bring partners together to agree the safeguarding priorities for the next 3 years. The development session included workshops to understand what the Safeguarding Partnership felt were the areas for development, and where, by working together, it could improve services for the people of Rotherham. Five new strategic priorities, detailed in paragraph 2.1 of the report, had been agreed:

- Strategic Priority 1 – Communication, Engagement and Voice.
- Strategic Priority 2 – Prevention and Early Intervention.
- Strategic Priority 3 – Leadership and Partnership
- Strategic Priority 4 – Making Safeguarding Personal
- Strategic Priority 5 – Learning and Development

There were 4 sub-groups that sat under the Board and Executive Group and each group had a work plan to support delivery of the Strategic Plan. A new sub-group, Voice, was to be developed to bring the customer voice and experience to the Board. A business plan would track the progress made on each of the priorities, and the SAB Executive would monitor all actions quarterly.

The Independent Chair of the RSAB, Moira Wilson, was present at the meeting and spoke in support of the Plan. She stated that there was strong, multi-agency working in Rotherham and the Board received excellent support from its partners. It was reiterated that this was a 3 year plan which would be regularly monitored by the Board. A report would also go to the Health Select Commission for scrutiny. The Chair of RSAB informed the meeting that the week commencing 17th November was Safeguarding Awareness Week and there were a range of training opportunities available.

It was agreed that the recommendation be changed from Cabinet noting the Plan to Cabinet endorsing the Plan.

The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board agreed that Members of the Improving Lives Select Commission should be invited to scrutinise the Plan along with the Health Select Commission and asked that those arrangements be put in place.

Resolved:

1. That Cabinet endorse the development of the Rotherham Safeguarding Adults Board Strategic Plan 2025 – 2028.

72. FAMILIES FIRST PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to the report which provided an update on the progress to date of the Families First Partnership Programme in Rotherham, including the expenditure of the Children's Social Care Prevention Grant. In February 2025, the Government published the grant determination for the Children's Social Care Prevention Grant for 2025-26 (Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council (RMBC) allocation £2.083m). This new grant was specifically for direct investment in additional prevention activity for children and families through the implementation of Family Help and Child Protection reforms. It was intended to fund local authorities to deliver against the planned new legislative duties. This was in addition to the Children and Families Grant, which was now mainstreamed funding, initially for the Supporting Families programme and intended to enable continuation of existing Prevention Services.

Following Cabinet approval on 9th June 2025, to establish the governance structure for the management, oversight, and scrutiny of the Families First Partnership Transformation Programme, progress had been made by the Council in realising the ambition of the Programme and initiating a partnership approach to delivery. The inaugural meeting of the Families First Programme Delivery Group was held in September 2025. This meeting had good representation from key officers across the Partnership including South Yorkshire Police, Health, and Education, along with Council Service areas.

On 9th June 2025, Cabinet received confirmation of the intended enabling workstreams which would be accountable to the Families First Partnership Programme Delivery Group, for mobilising and driving forward some of the key changes and opportunities within the Programme. These were the Family Help Partnership Group, Workforce Group, Practice Development Group, Statutory Children's Service Multi-Agency Steering Group, ICT Development Group and Voice Steering Group. Further details on the workstreams were set out in paragraph 2.4 of the report.

In addition to the Programme, governance arrangements being established, a number of key appointments had been made. These additional resources would form a transformation team providing dedicated capacity to enable the Programme to accelerate delivery. These included the Strategic Programme Lead; Participation Lead; Communication and Marketing Manager and Family Help Navigators.

The Cabinet report dated 9th June 2025 confirmed that Rotherham had been allocated £2.083 million for the financial year 2025/26 through the Children's Social Care Prevention Grant. This funding was ringfenced for direct investment in enhanced prevention activities for children and families, delivered through the implementation of the Family First Partnership Programme (FFPP). Subsequently, the Government had awarded an additional £0.127 million to support further transformation initiatives. This brought the total funding allocated to Rotherham for 2025/26 to £2.210 million.

In addition to confirming the funding allocation, the Cabinet report of June 2025 set out the intended use of the Children's Social Care Prevention Grant in line with the conditions outlined in the Grant Determination Letter. The funding would be used to support the following: to deliver transformation activity; increased direct delivery of Family Help; practice development, workforce development and ICT development; and children and family voice. The table at paragraph 6.4 of the report set out the planned expenditure and commitments to date for 2025/26.

It was agreed that a further update would be presented to Cabinet in March 2026.

Resolved:

That Cabinet:

1. Notes the progress made since the last update on 9th June 2025.
2. Notes the expenditure of the Children's Social Care Prevention Grant since the last update on 9th June 2025.
3. Agrees to receive a further update in March 2026.

73.

SEPTEMBER 2025-26 FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT

Consideration was given to the report which set out the financial position as at the end of September 2025 and forecast for the remainder of the financial year, based on actual costs and income for the first half of 2025/26. As of September 2025, the Council's financial position for 2025/26 remained positive. Whilst there was still a forecast overspend of £0.9m, this was an improvement of £1.5m since the reported position in July, as positive management activity took effect. The forecast position was made up of a Directorate overspend of £6.2m, 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 further during the year and return to a balanced position following mitigating actions.

As of September 2025, the Council estimated an overspend against the Directorates of £6.2m for the financial year 2025/26. This was largely due to demand and market pressures in relation to Children's residential placements and placement types. Market prices were 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 Council's Treasury Management Strategy continued to perform well, with the Council's approach to borrowing adapted to minimise the level of borrowing and to borrow short term to ultimately minimise interest costs. It was estimated that this approach should see the Council generate savings to support Council-wide pressures. 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.

Paragraph 2.16 of the report set out the Capital Programme Update. The revised Capital Programme was £211.687m split between the General Fund (£138.907m) and Housing Revenue Account (£72.780m). This was an increase of £2.208m from the position reported to Cabinet on 15th September 2025, the majority of which related to revised grant and funding estimates. The movement was based on the latest profiles of expenditure against schemes, including slippage re-profiles and corrections of £879k and new grant funding added to the programme of £3.086m.

The report also provided an update on Local Authority Better Care Fund 2025/26 - Discharge Grant Commitments. As part of the Financial Settlement 2025/26 the Discharge Grant was combined into the Local Authority Better Care Fund from 2025/26 onwards. As such, the Discharge Grant of £3.4m ceased to exist from the outset of 2025/26. However, as this was confirmed by Government late in the Budget setting process for 2025/26, the Council had needed to fund some of the activity that was already underway to ensure key projects and programmes could be completed and allow time to assess what areas of activity the Council needed to continue. The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy could not accommodate the continuation of £3m of activity but could accommodate a phased reduction of the Discharge Grant activity.

Resolved:

That Cabinet:

1. Note the current General Fund Revenue Budget forecast overspend of £0.9m.
2. Note that 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.
4. Note the update on the Local Authority Better Care Fund 2025/26 - Discharge Grant Commitments.

74. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY UPDATE

Consideration was given to the report which set out an update of the Council's Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to 2028/29, including the standard technical updates required, recognition of financial pressures impacting the delivery of services and the ongoing impact on the Council's base costs of inflation.

The technical adjustments also included the Council's assessment of the potential impact of the Government's Fair Funding Review 2.0 (FFR) which looked to make a significant change to the way Local Authority funding was distributed. The FFR 2.0 would provide a significant change in the formulas used for funding distribution as it looked to direct more funding to areas of greater need. To manage the impact on the local authorities that would see reduced resources as a result of the new methodology, there was a tapering of the impact over 3 years. However, the Council still estimated a positive impact that would see a £20m increase in its base funding by the end of the Spending Review period 2026/27 to 2028/29. It was expected that the Government's Budget on the 26 November 2025 will provide further clarity about the impact of the FFR 2.0.

The MTFS position could change as the Council gained greater clarity on the impact of the FFR 2.0, the Government's Budget and the impact of management actions taken to ensure that the 2025/26 financial outturn was balanced by year end. The FFR 2.0 was the biggest change in the approach to Local Authority funding methods for many years and as such it presented a degree of uncertainty. The Government's Budget and outcome of the FFR 2.0 consultation would help, but none of these would provide a definitive outcome for the Council. The Provisional Financial Settlement was set to be released in mid to late December 2025; until then the Council would not have specific allocations.

The current MTFS forecasts presented small surpluses ahead of a large budget gap in 2028/29. The Council would need to utilise its positive short term position to plan for the 2028/29 challenge. As this pressure was far enough into the future, it would not necessarily be required to be resolved as part of setting the 2026/27 Budget.

The report was considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB) who advised that the recommendations be supported. Discussions at OSMB had focussed on the Children and Young People's Services overspends, the winding-up order made against Specialty Steel (the Council's single biggest rate payer at £2.8m a year) and the South Yorkshire Pensions revaluation process.

Resolved:

1. That Cabinet note the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025/26 to 2028/29 update.

75. NEW APPLICATION FOR BUSINESS RATES RELIEF FOR THE ROTHERHAM HOSPICE TRUST

Consideration was given to the report which detailed the application for Discretionary Business Rates Relief from the Rotherham Hospice Trust. The Rotherham Hospice Trust was a registered Charity and was the only adult hospice serving the people of Rotherham. The Hospice offered specialist palliative care through a range of holistic services aimed at supporting patients to live life as fully as they could to the end of their life.

The Charity ran retail and cafe outlets throughout the Borough which were operated with the sole purpose of generating income to help fund the running costs of the Hospice. There were currently 10 outlets operating which were staffed and supported by a team of volunteers which reduced overhead costs and maximised the income to go into care services.

The Charity had benefited from an award for discretionary rate relief at their main hospice premises since 1st April 2005 and was now seeking additional support for the retail and cafe outlets which operated throughout the Borough.

Paragraph 6.3 of the report set out the 10 outlets that were seeking the award and the amount of award sought. A full application had been completed for each of the premises in accordance with the Council's criteria. In total, the amount of relief was £22,678.69 with the cost to the Council totalling £11,112.56.

The applications for the award of discretionary relief were in line with the Council's qualifying criteria as set out in its Policy. The Charity provided access to facilities which were open to all sections of the community and worked to reflect the diversity of local communities in service delivery, volunteering, and staffing.

Resolved:

1. That Cabinet approve the applications for Discretionary Business Rates Relief for The Rotherham Hospice Trust in accordance with the details set out in Section 6 to this report for the 2025/26 financial year.

76. CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING PROTOCOL

Consideration was given to the report which presented the updated Corporate Safeguarding Protocol for approval. The Protocol acted as a framework for the Council to ensure that safeguarding was embedded across all services and that staff, contractors, Elected Members and volunteers understood their responsibilities and the different forms that abuse can take.

The Council had a duty to make appropriate arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and adults. The Council believed that every child, young person and adult, regardless of their background, age, culture, sexual orientation, gender identity or religious belief should be able to live and participate in safe society without any fear, violence, abuse, bullying, discrimination or exploration. The Protocol acted as a framework to ensure that safeguarding was embedded across all services. This included staff, contractors, Elected Members and volunteers being aware of their roles and responsibilities for safeguarding and ensuring that support was in place to develop and maintain this understanding in the evolution of safeguarding responsibilities, legislative alignment, and operational improvements.

The Corporate Safeguarding Protocol was last approved by Cabinet in November 2022. The proposed updates were set out in paragraphs 2.3 to 2.6 of the report and included changes to: Section 1 Foreword; Section 4 Legislative Context – Adults and Children’s Types of Abuse and Neglect; Section 5 Safeguarding Children and Young People – Children’s Participation; and Section 6 Adults Safeguarding Board (SAB).

Resolved:

1. That Cabinet approve the updated Corporate Safeguarding Protocol.

77. GENERAL ENFORCEMENT POLICY

Consideration was given to the report which asked Cabinet to approve a period of consultation with stakeholders to be undertaken in respect of the General Enforcement Policy. The Council was required by statutory guidance to have in place mechanisms to engage those they regulate, residents, businesses, and others to offer views and contribute to the development of their policies. A review of the Council’s General Enforcement Policy is an opportunity to ensure that stakeholders are

engaged and consulted in relation to policy development and to identify if there should be any amendments to the Policy. The Policy had to be reviewed at regular intervals and the last review was in May 2023.

The General Enforcement Policy set out Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council's approach to regulatory compliance and enforcement, aiming to protect the public, support businesses, and safeguard the environment. The Policy emphasised transparency, consistency, proportionality, and accountability in all enforcement actions, ensuring that resources were targeted at the highest risks and that advice and support were prioritised to encourage compliance. It outlined the conduct of investigations, decision-making processes for enforcement actions, and the importance of fairness, confidentiality, and feedback. The Policy also detailed the range of enforcement actions available, from advice and voluntary undertakings to prosecution and licence revocation, and highlighted the Council's commitment to working with partners, adhering to relevant legislation and codes of practice, and regularly reviewing its approach to ensure effectiveness and public trust. The Policy set out the principles of transparency, consistency and proportionality to which the Council would adhere to in its discharge of enforcement and regulatory functions.

The Consultation Plan was provided in Appendix 2. The consultation would take place between 1st December 2025 and 27th February 2026. Following completion of the consultation, a revised Policy would be presented to Cabinet in May 2026 for adoption.

The report was considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB) who advised that the recommendations be supported. Discussions at OSMB had focussed on how enforcement should focus on education and support and on how the consultation should be conducted. Councillor Alam and the Leader agreed that hard-to-reach groups needed to be included in the consultation and asked Elected Members to inform them when this was not being done.

Resolved:

That Cabinet:

1. Approve a period of consultation with stakeholders to be undertaken in respect of the General Enforcement Policy to inform a review.
2. Note that a refreshed Policy will then be presented to Cabinet in May 2026 following the consultation.

78. ROTHERHAM FINANCIAL INCLUSION PLAN 2026-28

Consideration was given to the report which presented the refreshed Financial Inclusion Plan which detailed the support available to Rotherham residents. The aim was to help tenants and residents improve their quality of life by maximising their income, reducing debt, increasing

levels of educational attainment, and improving their potential to gain employment. The Plan 2026-28 would be implemented by the Financial Inclusion Team within the Housing Service with involvement from all Directorates. It was intended, therefore, to align resources and offer services, to all residents of the Borough whether they were RMBC tenants, privately renting or homeowners, as appropriate.

The Council first developed a Housing Financial Inclusion Plan which covered the period 2017-2020. This was then updated for 2022-25 and its focus expanded to include all Rotherham residents. The Plan was designed to reflect current support practices and to develop a wider range of operational support, placing the customer at the heart of the service delivery model. The objectives were to promote financial responsibility, offer practical help with maintaining access to housing regardless of housing status and protect the most vulnerable and provide comprehensive support and advice. Paragraph 1.2 of the report set out some examples of this work.

The Plan aimed to financially empower residents, and this was to be achieved through a combination of interventions:

- Education - Multi-point education covering essential life skills such as budgeting, cooking and home management delivered from childhood into adulthood.
- Money Advice: Specialised bespoke budgeting advice with a focus on money saving techniques where there was no additional entitlement to benefits.
- Holistic Support: Client centred, holistic support which identified and took steps to address the underlying issues that could exacerbate financial difficulties such as mental health issues/drug/alcohol addiction etc to facilitate tenancy sustainment.
- Employment and Training: Educating, upskilling, and supporting people into economically beneficial and sustainable employment opportunities.

The Council recognised that supporting its residents remained important. In line with the Council's Year Ahead Delivery Plan, the focus would be on reaching the people impacted by financial hardship that might have never needed to access support services before. As such, the framework was focused on tackling those issues. Further, the Council had continued to embed financial inclusion activity across services and external grants had been managed to ensure that residents accessed the support that was available. A number of activities in the plan were delivered through external grants and this would be kept under review.

Resolved:

1. That Cabinet approves the Financial Inclusion Plan 2026-28.

79.

CATCLIFFE AND TREETON FLOOD ALLEVIATION SCHEME

Consideration was given to the report which detailed the preferred proposal for the Catcliffe and Treeton Flood Alleviation Scheme. As a result of the heavy rainfall in October 2023 (Storm Babet), Catcliffe and Treeton Villages suffered severe flooding from the River Rother. As part of the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) duties, a Section 19 flood investigation was carried out by the Council. Contained in the Section 19 report were "Catcliffe and Treeton next steps" which identified 3 options the Council could investigate to help reduce the risk of future flooding in this area.

Whilst flood risk management of main rivers was the responsibility of the Environment Agency (EA), the Council recognised the devastation and hardship experienced by residents affected by flooding and had engaged its staff in evaluating these 3 options. Following the initial evaluation, there was a key area of focus emerging for the Council in relation to seeking to alter the existing bridge on Treeton Lane to improve the flow path of the River Rother, which had been supported by a Capital investment commitment by the Council of £6m. In parallel to progressing further work on this option, the Council would continue to explore the development of upstream storage of storm water through working with the Environment Agency and neighbouring local authorities.

Initial hydraulic modelling of the Bridge alteration showed that a reduction in the thickness of the existing bridge deck at Treeton Lane could improve conveyance in the River Rother. This proposal would see the existing bridge removed and replaced with a new one built to modern design standards, allowing a greater distance between the bridge deck and the river.

To mitigate this risk and maintain momentum within the programme, the Council was prioritising early contractor engagement. Securing a design and build contractor at the earliest opportunity would be critical to ensuring continuity between the design and construction phases, enabling more efficient planning, risk management, and co-ordination with regulatory bodies such as the Environment Agency.

Early engagement would also allow the contractor to contribute valuable insights during the design development stage, helping to refine construction methodologies, identify potential constraints, and optimise the programme for delivery. Subject to approvals, the procurement process was expected to conclude with contract award in Quarter 3 of the 2025/26 financial year, positioning the project for a timely transition into detailed design and mobilisation. In order to continue to progress at pace, the report sought a delegation to the Strategic Director for Regeneration

and Environment to award the contract, following a procurement process, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Street Scene and Green Spaces and the Section 151 Officer.

Further technical detail on the proposal was set out in Section 3 of the report. Paragraph 3.12 noted that the Council was ambitious in aiming to deliver the Scheme within 3 years to seek to protect residents and properties as quickly as possible, but experience suggested that a 5 year timeline may be more realistic.

Section 4 of the report set out the consultation that had been undertaken. The Council held 2 public meetings that were chaired by the local Member of Parliament; both were very well attended. The bridge scheme was discussed at the meeting and received widespread support from the local community. Further to these events, 2 community drop-in sessions had been held with the Council in attendance to allow residents the opportunity to discuss the Scheme or any concerns in a one-to-one environment. Consultation with the Environment Agency was ongoing and early engagement had laid a strong foundation for ongoing collaboration.

Resolved:

That Cabinet:

1. Note the progress to date and the next steps in the Catcliffe and Treeton Flood Alleviation Scheme.
2. Delegate authority to the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment to enter into contract with a design and build partner, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Street Scene and Green Spaces and the Section 151 Officer.

80. PRIDE IN PLACE

Consideration was given to the report which sought approval from Cabinet to submit Rotherham's Pride in Place Phase 1 Regeneration Plan, a high-level indicative plan comprising a 10 year vision and 4 year funding profile, as detailed in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 by 28 November 2025.

Pride in Place (PiP) was originally announced in March 2025 and named the Plan for Neighbourhoods. It was part of a wider strategy to ensure that nowhere was left behind. It was intended to "help revitalise local areas and fight deprivation at root cause by zeroing in on 3 goals: creating thriving places, building stronger communities, and empowering people to thrive". Rotherham was one of 75 places in the UK to benefit from a £20m fund to be made available over 10 years.

A key stipulation of the funding was that MHCLG determined the area of focus. The boundary chosen by Government was Rotherham's 'Built Up Area' (BUA) as defined by the Office for National Statistics. At the heart of

Rotherham's BUA was the town centre and it was surrounded by a concentration of the most deprived areas of the Borough. While £20m was a significant sum, the funding was spread over a large geography with a population of 71,627, and a long period of time; it was essential, therefore, that the allocation was carefully considered and concentrated to ensure it had impact. The list of places included in the boundary and a map were included in paragraphs 1.2.4 and 1.2.5 of the report.

Rotherham's Pride in Place Phase 1 approach was born from the principles that:

- A strong, well performing town centre provided for its local and extended communities by being attractive with a strong service provision and was well-maintained and accessible.
- A strong and resilient community was one in which people felt a sense of belonging and mutual respect, with the ability to connect to opportunities, services and each other.

There were 6 investment themes, as detailed in paragraph 2.3 of the report:

1. Regeneration, High Streets and Heritage
2. Safety and Security
3. Education and Opportunity
4. Cohesion
5. Health and Wellbeing
6. Work, Productivity and Skills

Further, Government had allocated a revenue capacity budget to Pride in Place in order to support the development of Rotherham's Regeneration Plan, as well as to build capacity in communities and prepare for the investment programme. The breakdown of the funding was set out in paragraph 3.3 of the report. A total of £415,103 had been allocated for this Fund.

Additionally, the Government had allocated £1.5m through the new Impact Fund to Rotherham Council, as one of 95 local authorities across the country, to deliver some short term capital interventions. £750,000 had been allocated in 2025/26 and a further £750,000 in 2026/27 to be spent within each financial year on improvements to community spaces, public spaces and high streets across the Borough. Delegated authority was sought to allocate this funding to be spent on projects that met the Government's criteria within the timescales.

A requirement of the PiP funding was that a Neighbourhood Board must be established and it should bring together those with a deep connection to the local area. As encouraged by Government, Rotherham's Neighbourhood Board originated from the established Town Board but had been adapted to ensure it was representative of the BUA geography

and equipped to undertake its responsibilities within the PiP programme. Since the Fund was established, Rotherham's Phase 1 Neighbourhood Board had been transitioning and its membership was expected to continue evolving up until the commencement of the programme in April 2026, so that representation was reflective of the geography and the investment themes. Presently the Neighbourhood Board was made up of representatives from the public, private and voluntary sectors, as well as statutory involvement from South Yorkshire Police, the MP for Rotherham Central and 2 Ward Councillors - the Cabinet Member for Transport, Jobs and the Local Economy (Councillor John Williams) and Councillor Thorp, Councillor for Sitwell Ward. The process of appointing a new Chair was underway.

Resolved:

That Cabinet:

1. Delegate authority to the Strategic Director for Regeneration and Environment in consultation with S151 Officer and the Leader of the Council to submit Rotherham's PiP Phase 1 Regeneration Plan in line with the Government's Pride in Place programme.
2. Delegate authority to the Strategic Director for Regeneration and Environment in consultation with S151 Officer, the Leader of the Council and the Neighbourhood Board Chair to approve the delivery of Rotherham's interventions (as detailed in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2).
3. Delegate authority to the Strategic Director for Regeneration and Environment in consultation with S151 Officer, the Leader of the Council and the Neighbourhood Board Chair to re-allocate funding and add, amend or replace a scheme or intervention should it become unfeasible or undeliverable.
4. Delegate authority to the Assistant Director for Planning, Regeneration and Transport, to draw down the 2025/26 allocation of £415,103 capacity funding, in line with the details provided at Section 2.
5. Delegate authority to the Strategic Director for Regeneration and Environment in consultation with S151 Officer and the Leader of the Council to approve allocations from the Pride in Place Impact Fund as outlined in section 3.4.

81. 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.

82. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Resolved:

The next meeting would take place on Monday, 15th December, 2025.

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THE CABINET
15th December, 2025

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

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

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Alam.

83. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Cusworth and Councillor Williams declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute No. 90 (HRA Business Plan, Rent Setting and Service Charges 2026-27) on the grounds that family members were Council tenants. Both remained in the Chamber and voted on the matter.

84. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no members of the public present at the meeting and no questions submitted in writing.

85. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Resolved:-

That the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 17th November, 2025, be approved as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

86. 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.

87. ADULT SOCIAL CARE MENTAL HEALTH STRATEGY 2026-2029

Consideration was given to the report which outlined the outcomes of the consultation on the future vision, themes and priorities for mental health and presented the first Rotherham Council Adult Social Care Mental Health Strategy 2026-2029. Cabinet had approved a new operating model for the Council's Mental Health Service in December 2023, which included a recommendation to develop a co-designed Adult Mental Health Strategy for Rotherham, once the new model was operational.

The consultation took place from 8th May 2025 to 27th July 2025 to seek the views of people with lived experience of mental ill health, their families, carers, and professionals on the future vision, values, and priorities for mental health provision in Rotherham.

The most valued areas, as identified through multiple-choice responses, were:

- Empowering you, by receiving the right support, at the right time
- Everyone has the same opportunities to access support, regardless of their background and need
- People can improve their overall mental health and wellbeing
- Access to help, advice and services which are closer to home

The Strategy acknowledged and built on Rotherham's Four Cornerstones, developed in partnership with people with lived experience, partners, and support organisations. These principles were widely recognised as essential for good practice:

- Welcome and Care
- Value and Include
- Communicate
- Work in Partnership

The Service priorities identified as being most important were:

- Reducing wait times for assessments and services
- Clear crisis support and contact points
- Easier access to information, advice, and support
- Consistent access to services across Rotherham

The outcomes from the consultation had shaped the Strategy which was attached at Appendix 1. Further details and analysis on the consultation were attached at Appendix 2 with the Strategy Delivery Plan attached at Appendix 3.

The report was considered by the Health Select Commission who advised that the recommendations be supported. Discussions at Health Select had focussed on increased depression rates, transition pathways, partner integration and alignment with other Council strategies, the proposed Mental Health Partnership Board, support for under-represented minority groups, loneliness and isolation, male suicide rates and success measures.

Resolved:

That Cabinet approve publication of the new Rotherham Council Adult Social Care Mental Health Strategy 2026-2029.

88. UNPAID CARERS STRATEGY 2026-2031

Consideration was given to the report which sought approval of the Borough that Cares All-Age Carers Strategy 2026-2031. In July 2022, the Rotherham Health and Wellbeing Board approved the Borough That Cares Strategic Framework 2022-2025. The strategic framework created a foundation of support, improved information and advice, established a carers network and introduced a co-production programme with communities to build a carer friendly borough. In addition, it established the Borough That Cares Network, which had facilitated several engagement opportunities, including the development of the Council's carers webpages and a proposed new 'The Borough that Cares All-Age Carers Strategy 2026-2031'.

There were approximately 26,313 carers living in Rotherham. This represented just over 10% of Rotherham's population. A carer was anyone who cared, unpaid, for a friend or family member who could not cope without support. This could be because of ageing, illness, disability, poor mental health, or an addiction.

There had been a number of key achievements over the 2022-2025 Strategy which included:

- The stabilisation of voluntary sector carer groups/services.
- The Borough That Cares Strategic Network provided a well-attended regular forum for organisations and groups supporting carers and carers.
- The establishment of a voice, influence and engagement task group with a focus on the health and wellbeing of Carers known as the Unpaid Carers Multi-Agency Strategic Group.
- Refreshed and improved information, advice and guidance available to carers.
- Embedded an integrated approach to identifying and supporting carer health and wellbeing through the partnership working of the Borough That Cares Network which represents social care, health and the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS).
- The introduction of a co-production programme with communities to build a carer friendly borough via The Borough That Cares Network, utilised to facilitate a number of opportunities including the development of the Council's carers webpages and the vision, priorities and commitments for the new strategy to 2031.

During April to August 2025, engagement had been undertaken with carers, Adult Social Care, Health and other key stakeholders to reflect on progress and gather feedback on achievements between 2022-2025, and to co-design the vision, priorities and commitments for the next five years to 2031. Twenty engagement sessions took place involving 399 participants and further details were set out in Section 4 of the report.

The feedback from the engagement sessions had shaped the detail of the Strategy for the next 5 years and was focussed around 5 key commitments:

- Commitment 1 – Identification and Early Intervention (paragraph 2.4)
- Commitment 2 – Support Carers and Ensure Their Voice is Heard (paragraph 2.5)
- Commitment 3 – Support Carers Through Times of Change (paragraph 2.6)
- Commitment 4 – Work in Partnership (paragraph 2.7)
- Commitment 5 – Co-Design a Responsive Support Offer for Carers (paragraph 2.8)

The report was considered by a joint meeting of the Health Select and Improving Lives Select Commissions who advised that the recommendations be supported with additions. Discussions focussed on the challenges faced by young carers, inconsistencies in information sharing, systemic barriers, financial support including limitation and means testing, and development of the underpinning action plan. The Commissions also requested that specific local data be included, where possible on page 6 of the Strategy and, under the 'Identification and Early Intervention' commitment on page 11, include specific reference to improving the partnership approach and associated processes to identifying young carers, given the acknowledged existing shortcomings and challenges in the context of the potential lifelong implications of failing to provide timely and appropriate support. Cabinet accepted these recommendations.

Resolved:

That Cabinet approves the Borough that Cares All-Age Carers Strategy 2026- 2031 which is due to be launched in April 2026, with the addition of:

- a) Specific local data, where possible, is added to page 6 of the Strategy.
- b) Under the 'Identification and Early Intervention' commitment on page 11, include specific reference to improving the partnership approach and associated processes to identifying young carers, given the acknowledged existing shortcomings and challenges in the context of the potential lifelong implications of failing to provide timely and appropriate support.

89. ADULT SOCIAL CARE CHARGING POLICY

Consideration was given to the report which set out the basis for the proposal to amend the Council's Charging Policy and provided an update on the Adult Social Care Charging Policy consultation which sought views on a new combined charging policy for residential and non-residential

care. The report also outlined the outcomes of the consultation, recommended specific areas for inclusion within the new consolidated charging policy and sought approval from Cabinet to implement the new Policy from 1st April 2026.

The Council had a duty to provide or arrange services that helped to prevent or delay people from developing eligible needs for care and support, as defined in the Care Act 2014, which focused on improving people's independence and wellbeing. The Care Act 2014 required that, where an individual was provided with residential/nursing care services to meet their eligible needs, a financial assessment had to be undertaken to determine whether they had sufficient resources to pay part or all of the cost of the care or required financial assistance from the local authority. The local authority was required to follow a set process in determining the level of financial contribution which should be made. Where care was provided in the community, the local authority had a discretion whether to charge or not for that service. Where a local authority decided that a charge would be made, depending on the income of the individual, a standardised set process could be used in which the local authority could decide whether certain sources of income would, or would not, be considered.

A person who received care and support in their own home would need to pay their daily living costs including rent, food and utilities, and therefore must have enough money to meet these costs. The charge must not reduce a person's income below a certain amount. This amount was known as a Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG). MIG rates were set each year by the Department of Health and Social Care and were reviewed annually and adjusted for inflation. The MIG amount depended on a person's age, marital status, disability status and whether they had dependent children.

The Budget and Financial Strategy for 2025/26 was approved at Council on the 5th March 2025. It included, as part of the revenue savings proposals, a review of the current Non-Residential Charging Policy for Adult Social Care. The review had led to a recommendation to combine the Non-Residential Charging Policy with the Residential Charging Framework into one overarching Adult Social Care Charging Policy. This would enable greater transparency and align with expectations within the Care Act 2014.

The consultation was undertaken on the 2 proposals of:

1. The removal of the maximum charge for non-residential care, while maintaining the minimum charge of £1, for people who fund their own care.
2. The introduction of an administrative charge for organising care for people who fund their own care.

The full consultation analysis was attached at Appendix 1. For Proposal 1 'Removal of the maximum weekly charge', a total of 97 responses were received. The majority of respondents opposed the change, with 49% strongly disagreeing and 31% disagreeing. A smaller proportion supported the proposal, with 11% agreeing and only 2% strongly agreeing. Additionally, 7% were unsure about the proposal.

For Proposal 2 'Introducing an annual fee for self-funders where the Council facilitates the care package', there was a total of 97 responses. The majority of respondents opposed the proposal, with 56% strongly disagreeing and 26% disagreeing, indicating significant resistance to the introduction of this charge. Only a small proportion supported the change, with 14% agreeing and 2% strongly agreeing, while 2% were unsure. Overall, feedback showed strong opposition to adding an administrative fee for self-funders.

The option to retain the maximum charge but increase the rate so it aligned with the higher rate of a standard dementia nursing placement (rather than a standard residential placement) was recommended. This was because it retained a maximum weekly charge, offering protection for those with the highest care costs while increasing the cap to better reflect the costs of the care being provided. This ensured contributions remained affordable for most people but fairer overall, as more individuals paid closer to the true cost of their care.

In relation to the administration fee, the option to introduce an administrative charge of £350 as a one-off charge to reflect that most of the work involved in arranging care for self-funders would be at the start of the process was recommended. This would be a one-off fee, until a person's care changed, requiring a new package of care to be commissioned, at which point they would be charged a further fee.

Resolved:

That Cabinet:

1. Note the outcome of the consultation.
2. Approve implementation of the Adult Social Care – Charging for Care and Support Policy (Appendix 2) from 1st April 2026.
3. Retain a maximum charge for non-residential care, but align it with the standard charge for nursing with dementia support, for those who fund their own care.
4. Introduce a one-off administrative fee for arranging care on behalf of people who fund their own care.

90. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) PLAN, RENT SETTING AND SERVICE CHARGES 2026-27

Consideration was given to the report which presented the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Plan, Rent Setting and Service Changes 2026-27 for endorsement and recommendation to Council. The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) recorded all expenditure and income relating to the provision of Council housing and related services, and the Council was required to produce a HRA Business Plan setting out its investment priorities over a 30-year period.

From the 1st April 2026, the Government would implement a 10 year social rent settlement. This was the Government's Policy on the annual increase for social housing rents. The 10 year settlement set the maximum rent increase at the Consumer Price Index (CPI) as of September the year prior plus 1%. The 10 year rent settlement had given greater certainty on the level of forecast income to fund the HRA Business Plan going forward. It would enable longer term planning for investment, delivery of services and growth. The rent settlement was part of the Government's plan for the future of social housing which promised to enable local authorities and housing associations to deliver thousands of new affordable homes to meet need and drive up the safety and quality of existing homes.

The proposed 2026/27 HRA Business Plan incorporated the Council's commitments to continue and extend the Council's Housing Delivery Programme, alongside significant additional investment to support decency and thermal efficiency in existing council homes. The Plan included provision for £1.329bn investment in the housing stock over 30 years, an increase of £350m compared to the 2025/26 plan. This was alongside continuing to fund day-to-day housing management, repairs and maintenance costs.

£122.9m would be invested to deliver an estimated 500 further Council homes by 2037/38, in addition to the £90.9m that was earmarked to support the current Housing Delivery Programme which was on track to deliver 1,000 homes by summer 2027. The Business Plan would also provide for additional investment benefitting current and future tenants, with:

- Increased investment up to £60k per home over the 30 year plan period.
- £14m in 2026/27 to continue investment in the external elements of homes e.g. renewing roofs, guttering and facias etc.
- £7m in 2026/27 to be invested in internal refurbishment works such as electrical rewires, replacement boilers, kitchens and bathrooms etc.
- An additional £41 million to ensure 9,300 properties reach Energy Performance Certificate band C by 2030.

Alongside providing the draft HRA budget for 2026/27, the report recommended proposed levels for housing rents, non-dwelling rents, District Heating charges and other service charges for 2026/27. It was recommended to Council that dwelling rents be increased by 4.8% and up to £2 per week (equivalent to CPI+1% and up to £2 per week rent convergence). This was dependent upon a Government decision expected in January 2026, which would clarify the approach to social rent convergence. The 2026/27 average weekly rent based on an increase of 4.8% + £2 per week would be £101.07, an average increase of £6.17 per week.

There were approximately 15,000 tenancies in receipt of Housing Benefit or Universal Credit (UC) who would not be directly affected by an increase in rent and approximately 4,500 tenancies that would be affected as they would pay rent from their household income. The tenants in receipt of benefits (Housing Benefit or UC) who would see their benefit entitlement adjusted to meet an increase in rent were:

- c10,969 households who are on Universal Credit
- 2,559 households who are on full Housing Benefit entitlement
- 1,404 households who are on part Housing Benefit entitlement

It was noted that rent convergence would only be applied to properties that were not currently at Formula Rent. Formula Rent for social housing was a calculation based on property value and size (number of bedrooms) and local affordability (earnings). The additional income generated from convergence would ensure the viability of the HRA Business plan, particularly in the early years of the plan where there was a significant amount of investment required to ensure compliance with increasing regulatory standards. In the absence of an announcement from Government confirming the availability of convergence as an option, the proposed rent increase would be the current rent settlement level of CPI+1% (4.8%).

Cabinet was fully supportive of the proposals. The Leader specifically noted the investments in existing stock, the investments in new builds and the investments in energy efficiency. He stated that it was good to be able to propose a HRA business plan under a Government that supported Council Homes. The Leader also reiterated that the rent increase would not impact all Council tenants and some would be paying less than the average increase.

The report was considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board who advised that the recommendations be supported. Discussions focussed on damp and mould, robustness of reserve levels, the convergence, cost rise, advice services, risk, shared ownership, government assistance and bill delays.

Resolved:

That Cabinet recommends to Council to:

1. Approve the proposed 2026/27 HRA Business Plan.
2. Note that the Business Plan will be reviewed annually to provide an updated financial position.
3. Agree that Council dwelling rents are increased by 4.8% and, dependent upon the Government announcement in January 2026, implement a policy of rent convergence. Allowing rents for social housing properties that are currently below the Government-calculated formula rent to increase by an additional £2 per week in 2026/27. If convergence is capped below £2 that will be the level applied.
4. Agree that the Council should retain the policy of realigning rents on properties at below formula rent to the formula rent level when the property is re-let to a new tenant.
5. Agree that affordable rents are calculated at relet, based on an individual property valuation.
6. Agree that affordable rents are increased by 4.8% in 2026/27.
7. Agree that shared ownership rents are increased by 5% in 2026/27.
8. Agree that charges for communal facilities, parking spaces, cooking gas and use of laundry facilities are increased by 3% in 2026/27.
9. Agree that charges for garages are increased by 10% in 2026/27.
10. Agree that the District Heating unit charge per kWh remains at 13.09 pence per kWh.
11. Agree that the decision to reduce the price of District Heating Charges during 2026/27 be delegated to the Assistant Director of Housing in conjunction with the Assistant Director of Financial Services following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing. The delegation would only be used to respond to a change in Government policy or a significant change in the Ofgem price cap that has the effect of a lower unit price.
12. Approve the draft Housing Revenue Account budget for 2026/27 as shown in Appendix 8.

Councillor Cusworth and Councillor Williams declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute No. 90 (HRA Business Plan, Rent Setting and Service Charges 2026-27) on the grounds that family members were Council tenants. Both remained in the Chamber and voted on the matter.

91. HOUSING FIRST RECOMMISSIONING

Consideration was given to the report which set out recommendations for the future commissioning of Housing First provision in Rotherham. Housing First was a non-statutory, established approach to supporting residents to move away from long term homelessness. It provided intensive support where the provider also sourced suitable accommodation for the client. It was reserved for the most complex and disengaged people within the homeless population, complementing the Council's offer to alleviate and prevent homelessness. Housing First had been delivered in Rotherham since 2018 by South Yorkshire Housing Association (SYHA) following a direct award.

Housing First was an established approach to successfully reducing long-term homelessness for the most complex and disengaged people within the homeless population. People accessing the service were not required to meet specific conditions beyond a willingness to maintain a tenancy, as they would be with more traditional approaches. Support services were offered but were not mandatory, allowing individuals to choose when and how they engaged with them. Support was individualised to meet the specific needs of each person, empowering them to take control of their lives. According to research published by Homeless Link in November 2024, Housing First reduced anti-social and offending behaviours. 84% of participants were involved in ASB or offending at entry, dropping to 45% by the end of year 3.

Housing First in Rotherham was approved as a pilot project by Cabinet on 16th October 2017 (Background Papers Agenda item 11. Rotherham Side by Side - Housing Related Support Review Pages 124 - 160) and had been operational for over 6 years. This followed a recommendation that a pathway be created for people with complex needs based on a Housing First model to support 20–30 clients. The current contract was delivered by South Yorkshire Housing Association (SYHA) which sub-contracted part of the service to Target Housing Ltd, with a total capacity for 35 service users, following an increase of 10 units from 25 units in 2021. This contract would end on the 31st May 2026.

As Housing First had proved a successful solution for some of the most complex people experiencing homelessness, it was recommended that this service continue. Due to the principle of the service offering a longer-term housing option, compared with more traditional models, a longer-term contract would be most suited to the project. The current service had delivered approximately 90% occupancy (based on the last full year figures for 2024/25). This meant that of the 35 units commissioned, around 32 were being delivered at any one time. The slight undercapacity allowed for the contractor to make changes and repairs to the property as required. The tender process would require a minimum of 30 units but providers might be able to provide more with the increase in budget.

The total current annual contract value was £229,189 (for 35 people this was equivalent to £6,548 per person, per annum). These costs had not increased since 2018 and, for the financial year 2023/24, the lead provider reported making a significant deficit which would suggest these costings were no longer viable. Benchmarking had shown that it was difficult to determine a cost per unit as it was dependent on usage and service model and therefore fluctuated. However, Housing First project costs on average were between £7,000 and £9,000 per person, per annum. The uplift to the contract value would be included when the tender was advertised and would bring the service in line with other Housing First programmes. This would be more attractive to the market when undertaking the procurement and would allow for the provider to source properties outside of their existing portfolio as it would be less reliant on rental income to supplement the income of the project.

Research conducted by Homeless Link on the approach showed that the effectiveness of services is linked to how closely they adhered to the set of key principles underpinning delivery. The separation of the provider for the housing and support elements was a core principle of the Housing First model. The Rotherham model was not fully aligned with principle 3 because, in many cases, the support was being provided by the same organisation as the landlord. Providers reported that this created a conflict of interest when housing management issues occurred, which could lead to a breakdown in relationships and support with the client.

Separating the landlord from the support provider would adhere to the evidence base as support relationships could remain in place regardless of tenancy issues and would allow support to continue should the person leave their tenancy. In the re-commissioned service, support providers would be required to offer assistance in sourcing a suitable tenancy that could become a long-term solution. The proposed model would focus on identifying suitably sized and located properties for each customer moving away from allocated housing stock. The successful provider would need to demonstrate their ability to do this and manage any risk. This early engagement and support to find the most suitable property would also ensure greater choice and control to individuals (and align closer to the Housing First principles).

Resolved:

That Cabinet:

1. Approves the recommissioning and procurement of Housing First for a five-year contract term on a 3 year plus up to 2 year basis.
2. Note the intention through the recommission to align more closely to the principles of Housing First, recognising that this is key to driving sustainable change and securing long-term impact for residents.

92.

HOUSING REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

Consideration was given to the report which provided an update on the continued work to scope the future delivery model for Repairs and Maintenance Services in Rotherham. The Council's Housing Repairs and Maintenance Service, contracted out since 2010, continued to deliver strong performance and value for money. The current contracts with Mears and Equans had been extended to March 2027, allowing time to assess future delivery options while keeping tenant needs central to decision-making.

This report outlined the work undertaken in 2025 to evaluate long-term delivery models, including an options appraisal and performance review. The findings supported maintaining current arrangements while exploring future possibilities, ensuring continuity and alignment with strategic goals. The intention, therefore, was to extend the contracts to 2030 as permitted within the existing contractual agreements. A further Cabinet report on options for arrangements post-2030 would come be submitted in the spring of 2027, allowing 3 years to implement Cabinet's preferred option.

In early 2025, Housing Property Services commissioned Lumensol, a multi-disciplinary consultancy specialising in social housing repairs and maintenance, to complete an Options Appraisal on the current repairs, maintenance and investment delivery model to assess its ability to meet service users' and the Council's needs in both the medium (2027-2030) and long term (2030+). It concluded that the current partnerships with Equans and Mears worked well in all available cost and quality metrics, performed more positively than most contracts and services in the current market that they had assessed, and should be extended to full term. The Options Appraisal also recommended several improvements to support investment planning, service delivery, value for money and assurance. These included considering the future of the capital investment programme and its delivery, the delivery of the Caretaking Service and modernising the Repairs and Maintenance Service through improved performance, assurance and governance mechanisms. It also explored options for the longer-term delivery of the Repairs and Maintenance Service. These would continue to be investigated in more detail, with updates provided as more information became available.

Awaab's Law was implemented in October 2025 which placed new legal duties for social landlords to respond swiftly and effectively to health hazards in tenants' homes particularly damp and mould, with further hazards being introduced in 2026 and 2027. The implementation of any new delivery model in the medium term could impact the Council's performance and preparation for the legislative changes set out in the report. Therefore, it was imperative that the next steps were considered carefully and with wider reforms of the Housing Service in mind.

Resolved:

That Cabinet:

1. Note the outcome of the review work undertaken to date.
2. Note the intention to complete a viability study on future models of delivery and report back to Cabinet in Spring 2027, for a decision post-2030.
3. Approve the extension of the Repairs and Maintenance contracts to 2030.
4. Delegate authority to the Assistant Director of Housing to undertake a 12 week public consultation on the outcomes of the feasibility study.

93. LIBRARY STRATEGY

Consideration was given to the report which provided a review of performance against the 2021–2026 Library Strategy and its associated objectives and performance targets. It established that the majority of actions and objectives set out within the Strategy had been achieved, contributing to the Council's wider ambitions for thriving neighbourhoods, cultural engagement, health and wellbeing, and improved digital access. The report also sought approval to undertake a public consultation on a new Library Strategy for the period 2027–2032 and a future service delivery model for the Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs Service. The consultation would ensure that the new Strategy remained relevant, continued to meet community needs, and aligned with the Council's priorities and national library frameworks, and also met the statutory service requirements.

The current Library Strategy was developed following a comprehensive analysis of local need and significant public consultation. It was approved by Cabinet in October 2020 and adopted by Council in November 2020, providing the framework for modernising library services across the Borough. It set out an ambitious plan to improve library buildings and facilities, strengthen community partnerships, increase digital inclusion, and deliver cultural and learning opportunities for residents.

Section 2.1.2 of the report set out the progress made against the seven key objectives. Highlights included libraries evolving into cultural hubs; increases in the number of young people reading for pleasure; upgraded ICT infrastructure; delivering coding clubs, homework support and employability programmes; creating autism-friendly spaces in multiple libraries; investing more than £1.5m in refurbishments and the beginning of construction on the new Central Library.

The 2021–2026 Library Strategy established a set of measurable targets to ensure progress could be tracked and evaluated throughout the 5 year period. These targets were designed to reflect the Service's priorities and demonstrate the value and impact of libraries across Rotherham. Progress was monitored via monthly dashboards in collaboration with the Performance and Improvement Team. 7 out of 10 targets had been met. Appendix 3 - Library Strategy Performance Against Objectives and Targets provided further detail, outlining performance to date against the key objectives and targets as set out in the Strategy.

Approval was sought to undertake a Borough-wide public consultation to inform the development of a new Library Strategy for 2027–2032 and a future service delivery model for Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs. This consultation would ensure that the next Strategy reflected community priorities, addressed areas of underperformance, and continued to align with statutory obligations and Council objectives. It would also provide an opportunity to consider how libraries could best support thriving neighbourhoods, digital inclusion, cultural engagement, and health and wellbeing in a sustainable way.

The report was considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board who advised that the recommendations be supported. The Cabinet Member reminded all Members to assist with the consultation and ensure hard to reach groups were included.

Resolved:

That Cabinet:

1. Note the review of performance against the 2021–2026 Library Strategy, including key achievements and challenges identified during the Strategy period.
2. Approve the undertaking of a period of consultation with the public, partners, stakeholders and interested parties on the development of a new Library Strategy for the period 2027–2032 and a future service delivery model for the Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs Service.
3. Agree that a further report be submitted to Cabinet following the consultation to present a draft Library Strategy 2027–2032, which will identify potential service improvements and efficiencies.
4. Authorise the Assistant Director of Culture, Sport and Tourism to notify the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) of the intention to consult on the Library Strategy and any potential changes to service provision.

94. ROTHERHAM EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS STRATEGY

Consideration was given to the report which presented the Rotherham Employment and Skills Strategy for endorsement. The current Rotherham Employment and Skills Strategy was adopted in 2019. Since the adoption of the Strategy the social, economic and policy contexts have changed significantly, including changes in the work, health and skills landscape following the pandemic, changes in Government policy, and the development of a new South Yorkshire Skills Strategy.

Reflecting these changes, a proposed new Employment and Skills Strategy, covering the period 2026-31, had been produced for the Rotherham Together Partnership. The new Strategy would contribute to the delivery of the South Yorkshire Skills Strategy but also identified the key challenges and priorities that were specific to Rotherham and proposed a new focus for the co-ordination of activity in Rotherham.

The Rotherham Employment and Skills Strategy contained 3 Missions, as set out in paragraph 2.3 of the report, which responded to the local priorities emerging from the analysis and reflected Rotherham's particular opportunities and challenges. There were key roles to be played by a range of partners to address these missions, particularly for employers who had a central role to play not only as the beneficiaries of a skilled workforce but as active investors in the development of their employees.

For each Mission, the Strategy highlighted a range of existing and planned activities (including those relating to employment support which the Pathways to Work approach will bring together as a single system) to ensure that these continued to deliver for Rotherham residents and businesses. These included:

- The Economic Inactivity Trailblazer and the Health Growth Accelerator
- Adult Skills Fund
- Employment Solutions, Ambition and Advance
- Workwell, Working Win and Connect to Work
- South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) Apprenticeship Hub Skills Bank funding to support employers with the cost of training their workforce

It was noted that endorsing the proposed Employment and Skills Strategy (2026–2031) would provide an up-to-date, evidence-based framework to guide collective action on employment and skills across Rotherham that linked to the South Yorkshire Strategy and the main policies of the Get Britain Working White Paper. The Strategy had been developed through a robust process, including detailed analysis of current and projected labour market data, and engagement with partners. It reflected shared priorities and set out a clear direction for collaborative delivery. As a key partner in the Rotherham Together Partnership, the Council's endorsement demonstrated leadership and commitment, helping to secure buy-in from

other stakeholders and ensuring the Strategy had the credibility and momentum needed for successful implementation.

The report was considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board who advised that the recommendations be supported. The Board also requested an update in September 2026 on performance against targets, including costings for activities undertaken.

Resolved:

That Cabinet:

1. Endorses the formal adoption of the Rotherham Employment and Skills Strategy 2026-31.
2. Notes that the Rotherham Employment and Skills Board is tasked with overseeing the delivery and monitoring of the Strategy and with reporting on progress to Cabinet and the Rotherham Together Partnership (RTP) on an annual basis.

95. ROTHERHAM (SYMCA) LOCAL ELECTRIC VEHICLE INFRASTRUCTURE (LEVI) FUND

Consideration was given to the report which provided detail on the proposal that Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council participate in the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Fund programme. This initiative, supported by Government funding, aimed to accelerate the deployment of public electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure in the South Yorkshire region. This would see the identification of Council land and property, both off street and on street, for the provision and installation of EV Chargers.

Based on a concession contract, the Scheme and Fund would be procured and managed by SYMCA but the day-to-day management of the contractor/concessionaire within Rotherham would be the responsibility of the Council to deliver, which included review and identification of Council land and property with the contractor. It was expected that this Scheme would provide between 500 and 1,500 additional charge points throughout Rotherham subject to site suitability and other dependencies.

It was anticipated that the Rotherham Borough would receive approximately 20% (£1.6M) of the allocation in the provision of infrastructure (i.e. not monies given to the Council, but the value of works carried out by the Contractor and funded by SYMCA), subject to final agreement and SYMCA's retention. The allocation was designed to enable EV Infrastructure (EVI) installations, whilst supporting less commercially attractive locations ahead of demand. A procurement approach was being designed to attract a contractor/concessionaire for 15 years to deliver the programme at no cost to the Council. The Contractor would also look to directly fund more commercially opportune areas,

between 20% – 100% of the programme value, giving a total capital investment value of between £1.9M to £3.2M for the Rotherham Borough.

The aim was to establish broad working principles across a wide range of sites in the initial phase, whilst providing an acceptable level of geographic and Ward coverage and, therefore, visibility for the Programme to promote interest and engagement. This would then lead to an accelerated programme to secure minimum provision across all Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA's – groups of between 400 and 1,200 households) and meet estimated demand across the Borough in the main phase. The concession would then become self-managed by the contractor/concessionaire with little likelihood of further grant support required to finalise installations in the least commercial or feasibly difficult sites. Once grant funding was exhausted, the concession would be self-reliant for expansion as demand for charging increased.

An initial one year and 5 year plan, with annual refresh, would be provided by the contractor/concessionaire, allowing annual review of progress and expected outcomes. This would be reviewed by Rotherham Council and then agreed. The contractor/concessionaire would be responsible, in collaboration with the delivery Officer(s), for carrying out comprehensive stakeholder consultation and communication exercises. This would also provide an opportunity for Councillor consultations to be undertaken. An update would be included as part of the Climate Emergency Annual Cabinet report, looking backwards at the success of delivery and also looking forwards to the future years' plan.

Resolved:

That Cabinet:

1. Approve the inclusion of the Rotherham Borough within the regional South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) funded programme and Rotherham Council's role in its procurement and delivery.
2. Delegate authority to the Assistant Director, Property and Facilities Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transport, Jobs and the Local Economy and relevant Ward Members for the approval of any contracts or conditions (including for the use of Council land and property) as well as the delivery, monitoring and site approvals in relation to the SYMCA LEVI Fund.

96. 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.

97. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Resolved:-

That the next meeting of the Cabinet be held on Monday, 19th January, 2026, commencing at 10.00 a.m.

AUDIT COMMITTEE
25th November, 2025

Present:- Councillor Baggaley (in the Chair); Councillors Blackham, Elliott and McKiernan and Michael Olugbenga-Babalola (Independent Member).

Michael Green and Greg Charnley (External Auditor – Grant Thornton) were also present.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Allen and Alison Hutchinson (Independent Member).

44. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest made at the meeting.

45. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC OR THE PRESS

No questions had been received in advance of the meeting nor were there any members of the public or press in attendance.

46. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved:- That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for Minute No. 54 (Risk Management Directorate Presentation – Regeneration and Environment) as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)).

47. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 25TH SEPTEMBER, 2025

Consideration was given to the minutes of the previous meeting of the Audit Committee held on 25th September, 2025.

Resolved:- That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Audit Committee be approved as a correct record of proceedings.

Further to Minute No. 36(4) (Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy, Strategy and Self-Assessment against fighting fraud and corruption locally checklist), the following information has been received:-

“ The counter fraud training will be mandatory for all staff in Finance and Customer Services, HR and Payroll and managers at M3 level and above.”

Further to Minute No. 37(4) (Internal Audit Progress Report for the period 1st May to 31st July 2025 and Draft Audit Strategy 2025-28), the following information had been received:-

“Fleet were now proactively gathering and recording drivers’ CPC information within Jaama. Random checks were made by compliance officers to ensure drivers had a valid CPC card in their possession. CPC records were now logged and checked on the waste training matrix. Drivers went into the office to log into their CPC records so the Service and Fleet could update the data into the Fleet and Service training matrix. This would ensure all previous and current records were up to date.

Driver Training and Compliance Officers (assessors) had been instructed to record all driving licence and drivers CPC details on every driving assessment form. All boxes must be populated and not left blank. Information collated would then be uploaded to Jaama. A training session had been held with training fleet officers to ensure all forms were filled in correctly. Compliance officers were to spot check sheets on a weekly basis and take corrective action if not complete.”

48. AUDITED FINAL STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS/EXTERNAL AUDIT FINDINGS (ISA 260)

Natalia Govourkhina, Head of Corporate Finance, and Michael Green, on behalf of Grant Thornton, presented the Audited Final Statement of Accounts and the ISA 260 report.

The Committee noted that under the Accounts and Audit (amendment) Regulations 2022, local authorities were required to publish their unaudited accounts no later than 30th June, 2025, for the financial year 2024/25, accompanied by a Narrative Report and draft Annual Governance Statement. The deadline for the publication of final audited accounts was 27th February, 2026.

The draft unaudited accounts had been presented to the Audit Committee on 17th June 2025 (Minute No. 6 refers) and published before the 30th June 2025 deadline.

Michael Green, External Auditor (Grant Thornton), acknowledged the early publication of the draft unaudited accounts ahead of the deadline which was earlier than the majority of their other clients and reflective of the excellent performance of the Finance Team particularly given the introduction of IFRS16 which was challenging across the sector.

The audit was substantially complete and Grant Thornton were expected to issue an unqualified opinion on the statements by 5th December, 2025. Some adjustments had been identified, largely of a technical and classification nature. The audit had also identified some unadjusted misstatements which were again very technical in nature around IFRS16, however, management had decided not to adjust.

The ISA260 set out Grant Thornton's overall conclusions from the 2024/25 audit in relation to their statutory objectives to give an opinion on the Council's financial statements. A number of changes had been recommended by Grant Thornton and accepted by the Council with adjustments made to the Council's accounts. The key points were set out in detail as part of Appendix 4 with attention drawn to the following:-

- Impairment of newly purchased Council dwellings down to their existing use value – social house, the valuation methodology as prescribed by the CIPFA Code
- Understatement of fees and charges income
- Accounting for re-valuation losses identified on subsequent recognition of IFRS16 leases accounting standard (new standard implemented in 2023-24)

There were 2 recommendations both of which were "green" i.e. low priority:-

- Presentation of short-term debtors in the notes to the accounts
Management response – the Council will update the presentation of the short-term debtors note in 2025-26 financial statements to ensure the note is disaggregated and presented on the nature of the short-term debtors
- Calculation of accumulate absences accrual
Management response – the Council will consider options on how to better demonstrate the basis for the accumulated absences accrual in the financial statements in 2025-26

The Value for Money work had also been concluded; findings and recommendations were contained within the Auditor's Annual Report (Minute No. 51 refers).

Discussion ensued with the following issues raised/clarified:-

- Valuation of new social housing – the adjustment did not reflect any change in what the dwellings could sell for on the open market but reflected the impact of adopting the Code-prescribed valuation methodology for Council dwellings
- The Local Government Financial Settlement for 2025/26 was only a one year allocation making it challenging to plan longer term. In terms of the Fair Funding Review 2.0 for 2026/27 the current assumption was a projected £20M increase over 3 years

Resolved:- That, having taken due regard of the external audit findings detailed within the ISA 260 report, the 2024/25 Statement of Accounts, attached as Appendix 1, be approved for publication as final together with the 2024/25 Narrative Report attached as Appendix 2.

49. FINAL ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2024/25

Louise Ivens, Head of Internal Audit, presented the Council's draft Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for the 2024/25 financial year. The draft AGS was published alongside the Council's draft financial statements on 9th June, 2025.

Minor amendments had been made to the draft version submitted to the Committee in June (Minute No. 7). Each Directorate had returned the required Statements of Assurance and supporting documents with the Corporate Governance Group having reviewed the evidence contained therein. The Group had also considered which issues were of sufficient significance to require reports in the AGS. The document presented to the Committee had been reviewed by the Monitoring Officer, Strategic Director of Finance and Customer Services, the Chief Executive and the Leader.

The AGS outlined the governance arrangements in place throughout the year and how their effectiveness was monitored recognising the improvements made in the Council throughout the financial year. It also highlighted areas for further developments in 2025/26.

The full Annual Governance Statement was attached as Appendix A of the report submitted with attention drawn to the following points:-

- The Council had put in place various mitigations to avoid any further Health and Safety Executive prosecutions
- Correspondence had taken place with the Health and Safety Executive to address another issue raised with them by a member of the public. The Council would continue to engage positively with regulators to ensure that robust arrangements were in place both for securing safety for the public and employees and for ensuring that the arrangements put in place to secure safety were fully implemented
- Several claims had been made against the Council that may give rise to an Equal Pay liability, however, the validity of the claims and any associated impact remained unknown at the present time. This was in line with local authorities nationally and regionally
- The previous Chief Executive had left the Authority on 22nd June with the new postholder commencing on 23rd June, 2025. The Assistant Chief Executive had left on 31st July; the services within that Department were temporarily reporting to the Strategic Director of Finance and Customer Services
- On 15th July, 2025, the Care Quality Commission had commenced their inspection of Local Authority Adult Social Care Service. The outcome rating was awaited
- Between 28th October-7th November, 2025, Ofsted had undertaken their Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services. The report and outcome rating had not yet been received

Resolved:- That the 2024/25 Annual Governance Statement be approved.

50. INTERIM AUDITOR'S ANNUAL REPORT YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2025

Consideration was given to the report presented by Michael Green, Grant Thornton, which detailed the External Auditor's 2024-25 annual report for Value for Money (VFM). Under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, External Auditors were required to be satisfied whether the Council had made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. The National Audit Office Code of Practice required External Auditors to assess arrangements under 3 areas i.e. financial sustainability, governance and improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness. The new Code required auditors to share a draft Auditor's Annual Report (AAR) with those charged with governance by a nationally set deadline each year and for the audited body to publish the AAR thereafter. This new deadline requirement was introduced from November 2025.

It was a really positive report reflective of a strong and stable Council. Whilst there were challenges around Children and Young People's Services and the Dedicated Schools Grant, the Council had managed the challenges much better than many of its peers across the country.

Grant Thornton reported on the 3 specified criteria in their Value for Money review and confirmed:-

Financial Sustainability – No significant weaknesses in arrangements identified. 2 Improvement Recommendations made to support the Council with further strengthening arrangements for financial sustainability based on its current risks and priorities

– Improvement Recommendation 1 - Ongoing pressures that could impact financial sustainability including the Dedicated Schools Grant deficit and delivery of planned savings in Children and Young People's Services

Recommendation:- The Council should ensure financial sustainability by fully addressing pressures faced in the short and medium term including:-

- Placing an emphasis on delivering its agreed financial trajectory in line with the Safety Valve Agreement and consider alternative arrangements to lower its forecasted deficit for 2025/26
- Fully delivering its Children and Young People's Services savings targets in 2025/26

- Improvement Recommendation 2 – An opportunity to ensure the Council's approach to performance reporting on performance and benefit realisation of major projects reflected the strategic importance of key capital projects

Recommendation:- The Council should ensure that regular reports to Cabinet included specific performance updates on major capital projects against planned expectations. At the appropriate stage, this should include assessments of both economic benefits delivered and financial returns compared to original projections. Insights from these evaluations should be used to inform the planning and delivery of future major capital investments

Governance – No significant weaknesses in arrangements identified.
2 Improvement Recommendations retained from 2023/24 and one further Improvement Recommendation raised surrounding waiver reporting to Members

- Improvement Recommendation 3 (recommendation retained from 2023/24)
The Council should strengthen its risk policy by including risk escalation and de-escalation arrangements between the tiers of risk registers and including risk types and applying risk appetite to each type
- Improvement Recommendation 4 (retained from 2023/24)
The Council should continue to strengthen its counter-fraud controls by developing a Corporate counter-fraud risk register and ensuring counter-fraud risks in Departmental risk registers were updated
- Improvement Recommendation 5 (retained from 2023/24)
The Council should develop and publish a Procurement Strategy. This should set procurement strategic priorities that aligned with the Council's priorities such as net zero and capture changes to procurement following the Procurement Act (2023) and the national Procurement Policy Statement (2024). It should include measurable actions and indicators with clear accountabilities and an annual review process. The Strategy should be widely communicated to staff and members to raise awareness of their responsibilities

Improving Economy, Efficiency and Effectiveness – One significant weakness in arrangements continued to be identified though with substantial progress on the key recommendations from 2023/24 which were updated. Two Improvement Recommendations retained from 2023/24 and one Improvement Recommendation raised to strengthen contract management arrangements

- Key Recommendation 1 – The Council should continue to build on improvements and ensure that the stock condition survey progressed as planned. Stock condition data should be used to inform asset management and capital investment plans and should also be kept updated to manage the Council's housing stock effectively

- Key Recommendation 2 – The Council should continue to strengthen arrangements and ensure that stock condition surveys progress sufficiently. Once it was ready to do so, it should seek independent assurance over compliance with relevant standards
- Improvement Recommendation 6 (Retained from 2023/24) – The Council develop a corporate data quality policy and ensure this was used to inform a data quality review
- Improvement Recommendation 7 (Retained from 2023/24) – Consideration be given, as part of ongoing improvements in contract management, introduction of contract tiering (gold/silver/bronze), managing contracts based on risk, seeking further assurance that new arrangements in place were embedded and effective and introduced reporting on waiver activity and SFI breaches to a relevant Member-led committee

Discussion ensued with the following issues raised/clarified:-

- There had been a lot of recent changes in relation to procurement and the new Legislation that had come into force. It was an opportunity for the Council to demonstrate it prioritised a Procurement Strategy
- Grant Thornton had no concerns with regard to the progress of the stock condition survey
- Implementation of the new CAF system was not in place as yet as further work was being undertaken as to what exactly was wanted and needed and then the necessary procurement process progressed. It was not an issue of concern at the present time. Regular compliance reports were submitted to the Directorate Leadership Team and Strategic Leadership Team on compliance arrangements
- The majority of the improvement recommendations would be completed within the current financial year. However, consideration was required around the timeframes of the Data Quality Policy and how it would be delivered

Resolved:- That the update be received and the contents noted.

51. MID-YEAR TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT AND QUARTERLY UPDATE

Consideration was given to the report presented by Natalia Govorukhina, Head of Corporate Finance, which detailed how the regulatory framework of Treasury Management required the Council to produce a mid-year treasury review, in addition to the forward looking annual Treasury Strategy and backward looking annual treasury outturn report. It was also a requirement that any proposed changes to the 2025/25 Prudential Indicators were approved by Council.

This mid-year review for 2024/25 incorporated the needs of the Prudential Code to ensure adequate monitoring of the capital expenditure plans and the Council's Prudential Indicators (PIs). It was also a requirement that any proposed changes to the 2024/25 Prudential Indicators were approved by Council.

The monitoring as set out in the Appendix to the report was structured to highlight the key changes to the Council's capital activity (the PIs) and the actual and proposed Treasury Management activity (borrowing and investment).

Reference was made to the key messages for investments, borrowing and governance.

With regard to investments, the primary governing principle remained security over return and the criteria for selecting counterparties continued to reflect this. With regard to borrowing, the Council will maintain its strategy of being under-borrowed against the capital financing requirement. The current strategy was to delay all new borrowing as late as possible and to only enter into short term borrowing in order to minimise the interest cost to the Council. There was a discounted rate with the PWLB for borrowing long term funds specifically for HRA purposes which was available until March 2026. The borrowing position would remain under review and an update of the Strategy would be submitted to Members within the Budget and Council Tax 2026/27 report to Council in March 2026.

The Council's approach to Treasury Management in recent years, utilising short term borrowing in particular, had generated significant savings for the Council, essential to achieving balanced budgets, however, the future outlook remained challenging. The Bank of England had started to cut Base Rate and the cost of short term borrowing had reduced as a result with further reductions expected in the near future. The costs for long term borrowing, however, remained high reflecting the yield on UK gilts.

The continuing approach to Treasury Management had been discussed with the Council's external Treasury Management Advisers, MUFG, who had confirmed that it was a prudent approach given the current market conditions. MUFG would continue to monitor borrowing rates and inform the Council if there were opportunities to borrow at advantageous rates.

The current strategy was to maintain the Council's position of being under-borrowed against the Capital Financing Requirement. The Council was forecast to require additional borrowing before the end of 2025/26 financial year. This borrowing would be taken on a short term basis to avoid exposure to currently high interest rates in anticipation of lower rates in future years. There was a possibility of taking some long term borrowing from the PWLB at the discounted HRA rate. A further update would be provided as part of the Council's Treasury Management Strategy for 2026/27.

Discussion ensued with the following issues raised/clarified:-

- Work was taking place with the Procurement Team with regard to the appointment of Treasury Management advice as the contract held by MUFG (formerly Link Asset Services Treasury Solutions) ended in January, 2026. Tenders were currently being evaluated
- Regular meetings were held with the Treasury Management Team and the cash flow forecast reviewed, timing of when the Authority needed to borrow considered and the best value rates on the market at that point discussed. It could be that a local authority may not be able to lend the full amount desired so consideration was given to borrowing from other lenders at the same time
- The budget reflected what needed to be taken into account for the requirement for the Capital Programme. Savings could be made in-year if a project slipped and the allocated budget not required allowing the funds to be invested and no interest costs payable

Resolved:- That the report be received and the contents noted.

52. RISK MANAGEMENT GUIDE REFRESH 2025

Further to Minute No. 40 of the meeting held on 28th November, 2023, Fiona Boden, Head of Policy, Performance and Intelligence, presented the refreshed Risk Management Guide.

There had been no significant changes to the Guide this year. The only substantive update related to improved clarity of the escalation and de-escalation arrangements between risk registers following recommendation IR2 from the 2023/24 Value for Money arrangements. All other changes were minor aimed at enhancing readability including updated links and revised terminology.

Over the coming year, work would continue to ensure the Council's approach to risk management was well embedded across all projects and all staff, by providing training, clear guidance, supporting the Risk Champions and reporting according to agreed timelines.

The Strategic Risk Register was reviewed quarterly at the Strategic Leadership Team and the Directorate Risk Registers were reviewed monthly at Directorate Leadership Team meetings, with risk owners monitoring risks on an ongoing basis. The Risk Management Group, which included the Risk Champions, continued to meet bi-monthly to co-ordinate and drive risk management development throughout the Council.

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

- (2) That the refreshed Risk Management Guide be approved.
- (3) That risk management training for all Elected Members be arranged as soon as possible.

53. INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 1ST AUGUST TO 31ST OCTOBER 2025

Consideration was given to a report presented by Louise Ivens, Head of Internal Audit, which provided a summary of Internal Audit work completed during 1st August to 31st October, 2025, and the key issues that had arisen.

The plan attached as part of the report showed the position up to the end of October 2025, the progress of the 2025/26 audit plan, the reports finalised between August and October 2025 and Performance Indicators for the Team.

Internal Audit provided an opinion on the control environment for all systems or services which were subject to audit review. The report detailed the audit opinions and a summary of all audit work concluded in the last quarter. 5 audits had been finalised since the last Audit Committee, 3 of which received Reasonable Assurance opinion and 2 Partial Assurance.

A review of the current performance indicators was detailed in Appendix D, post-audit questionnaires and results included at Appendix E and the Quality Assurance and Improvement Plan at Appendix F.

As from 1st April, 2025, the requirements of the Global Internal Audit Standards, the Application Note "Global Internal Audit Standards in the UK Public Sector" and the Code of Practice for the Governance of Internal Audit in UK Local Government applied to work on internal audit engagements commenced on or after this date. CIPFA had stated that internal audit teams would not be expected to demonstrate full conformance on this date, however, they must work in accordance with the new standards and by doing so would build up their conformance.

The Internal Audit Standards were a standing item on Internal Audit's fortnightly team meetings with a further self-assessment against the standards having been undertaken. Evidence had been collated ahead of the External Quality Assessment by CIPFA (17th November-5th December). CIPFA's report would be shared with the Committee as soon as it was available.

A recruitment process was underway due to a member of the Internal Audit Team retiring in the New Year. As a result there may be some slippage in the plan but a better indication would be known in January, 2026.

Resolved:- (1) That the Internal Audit work undertaken since the last Audit Committee, 1st August to 31st October, 2025, and the key issues that have arisen from it be noted.

(2) That the performance objectives of Internal Audit and the actions being taken by audit management in respect of meeting the performance objectives be noted.

54. RISK MANAGEMENT DIRECTORATE PRESENTATION - REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT

Andrew Bramidge, Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment, presented a report providing details of the Risk Register and risk management activity within the Regeneration and Environment Directorate.

The Committee was advised that the risk register currently had 22 risks listed, 3 of which were also included on the Strategic Risk Register. One risk had been removed in July 2025, one had been merged into another risk and 5 had been added.

A regular scheduled programme of reviewing and updating Service area and Directorate level risk registers had been implemented across the Directorate. Risks were regularly discussed and reviewed at Senior Management Team and Directorate Leadership Team meetings and, where necessary, risks were escalated to the next strategic level for inclusion on the risk register.

As part of the programme to embed risk management into the culture of the Council, managers from Regeneration and Environment had attended the mandatory Risk Management Training for Managers workshops. In addition all staff were required to complete a mandatory e-learning module on risk management. A dedicated presentation on risk management was delivered at the Regeneration and Environment Manager Forum on 12th September 2025 and several managers, along with the Directorate's Risk Champion, had successfully completed the 'Essentials of Enterprise Risk Management trading' accredited by the Institute of Risk Management. Risk Champions had attended individual service area Senior Management Teams to provide an overview to support and advise managers in relation to risk register development and maintenance.

It was noted that an Internal Audit of the Regeneration and Environment Risk Register was conducted in May 2025 and confirmed as Reasonable Assurance.

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Resolved:- That the progress and current position in relation to risk management activity in the Regeneration and Environment Directorate be noted.

(Appendix 1 was Exempt under Paragraph 3 (information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime, of Part 1 of Schedule 12A))

55. AUDIT COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PLAN

Consideration was given to the proposed forward work plan for the Audit Committee for January to November 2026. The plan showed how the agenda items related to the objectives of the Committee. It was presented for review and amendment as necessary.

Resolved: That the Audit Committee forward work plan, as now submitted, be approved.

56. ITEMS FOR REFERRAL FOR SCRUTINY

There were no issues for referral to Scrutiny.

57. URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business to discuss.

**HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD
26th November, 2025****Present:-**

Jason Page	Medical Director, Rotherham Place NHS SYICB In the Chair
Chief Inspector K. Bradley	South Yorkshire Police (representing Chief Supt. Andy Wright)
Andrew Bramidge	Strategic Director, Regeneration and Environment
Councillor Cusworth	Cabinet Member, Children and Young People's Services
John Edwards	Chief Executive, RMBC
Kym Gleeson	Healthwatch Rotherham
Tina Hohn	Virtual School Leader for Children in Care (representing Nicola Curley)
Shafiq Hussain	Chief Executive, Voluntary Action Rotherham
Bob Kirton	Managing Director, The Rotherham Foundation Trust
Emily Parry-Harris	Director of Public Health
Claire Smith	Director of Partnerships, Rotherham Place, NHS SYICB
Ian Spicer	Strategic Director, Adults, Housing and Social Care

Report Presenters:-

Alexandra Hart	Public Health Practitioner, RMBC
Denise Littlewood	Health Protection Principal, RMBC
Joanne Martin	Transformation and Delivery, NHS SY
Lorna Quinn	Public Health Intelligence, RMBC
Hannah Thornton	Director of Services (Projects), Voluntary Action Rotherham
Steph Watt	Urgent and Community Care, NHS SYICB

Also Present:-

Councillor Brent	
Gilly Brenner	Public Health Consultant, RMBC
Millie Dales	Public Health Intelligence Practitioner, RMBC
Alex Hawley	Public Health Consultant, Public Health
Oscar Holden	Corporate Improvement Officer, RMBC
Dawn Mitchell	Governance Advisor, RMBC

Apologies for absence were received from The Mayor (Councillor Ismail), Councillor Baker-Rogers, Nicola Curley (RMBC), Chris Edwards (NHS SYICB) , Nicola Ellis, Toby Lewis (RDaSH) and Joanne McDonough (RDaSH).

26. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest to report.

27. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

No questions had been received in advance of the meeting and there were no members of the public or press in attendance at the meeting.

28. COMMUNICATIONS

There were no communications to report.

29. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Consideration was given to the minutes of the previous meeting held on 24th September, 2025.

Resolved:- That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 24th September, 2025, be approved as a true record.

30. 2025/26 WINTER PLAN

Steph Watt, Portfolio Lead Urgent and Community Care, presented a report on the 2025/26 Rotherham Winter Plan together with the following powerpoint:-

Winter 2024/25

- Urgent and Emergency Care Programme focussed on increasing out of hospital pathways as alternatives to avoidable conveyances and admissions and reducing discharge delays
- Additional monies were invested across Place to support system flow over winter utilising Section 75 Better Care monies and the national Discharge Fund together with organisational investment by The Rotherham Foundation Trust (TRFT) and Council

Winter Schedules 2024/25

- Comprehensive vaccination programme co-ordinated across Primary Care, TRFT and the Council supporting vulnerable citizens, care homes and health and care staff
- Increased GP appointments including acute respiratory hub
- ‘PUSH’ Community Health and Social Care Teams responding to non-critical 999 calls to reduce ambulance conveyances, including new respiratory and mental health pathways
- Increased capacity on the virtual ward
- Additional staffing resource including Consultant and resident doctor medical cover, therapy, Social Worker, enablement and portering resource
- Extended opening hours for Community Ready Unit with support to ensure timely medicines
- Extension of patient transport
- Home from Hospital Pathway to reduce waiting times
- Priority services identified for children with plans for temporary reductions elsewhere to support peak pressures
- Reduce in out of area mental health placement
- Robust mental health digital offer

- Rotherham safe space provided additional out-of-hours support for individuals in crisis
- Voluntary sector support through Age UK Hospital Aftercare Service, Urgent and Emergency Social Prescribers and NHS Responders providing post-discharge medicine delivery service

Going into Winter 2025/26

Post Winter/Summer Period

- Successful winter schemes embedded into business as usual
- £7M investment in new medical SDEC and ways of working
- Transfer of Care Hub co-located in the community setting
- High impact work/pro-active care
- Increased capacity virtual ward including remote tech
- Enablement waiting lists reduced from high of 66 to record low of 9 as of 13th August 2025
- Impact of system flow roles
- 4 hour performance improving – 70%+
- NCTR metric improved, metrics for 7, 14 and 21 day delays and discharges pre-5.00 p.m. all compared favourably with the region and those with lower NCTR
- Understanding ED demand work to target and promote alternative pathways

Challenges

- Demand still high in community and ED
- High levels of acuity and complexity reflecting Rotherham's ageing population and demographic
- New ED attendance normal 300+ compared to c270s previously
- Playing out through system flow and pressure on discharge care co-ordination and community pathways
- Record high of 391 attendances as at 20th October 2025
- Escalation beds remained open over the summer
- 30 surge beds open in October
- High levels of scrutiny

National Performance Metrics 2025/26

- Reduce ambulance wait times for Cat 2 (stroke, heart attacks, sepsis and major trauma) from 35 minutes to 30
- Eradicate ambulance handover delays – maximum 45 minutes
- Ensure 78% of people who attend ED were admitted, transferred or discharged within 4 hours
- Reduce number of patients waiting over 12 hours for admission or discharge
- Reduce the number of people waiting over 24 hours in ED for mental health care
- Tackle discharge delays initially focussing on those over 21 days (14 and 7 days). Aim for complex discharge within 48 hours
- Increase the number of children seen within 4 hours

National Learning re Vaccinations 2024/25

- Importance of vaccination uptake to reduce attendances/staff sickness
- Plan for peaks based on southern hemisphere and monitor actual impact with flexibility to adapt plans
- Need to build annual leave/staff sickness into plans
- Review IPC what has and has not worked and how connects with overarching plan
- Consider how staff vaccination programme can be incentivised

National Priorities for 2025/26/Rotherham Plans

- Improve vaccination uptake and reduce sickness
Targeted plans to increase citizen/staff vaccination rates in Primary Care, Public Health and TRFT. TRFT aiming for 5% increase
Joint working to target areas of high foot fall for over 75s/immunosuppressed
Staffing/resources based on southern hemisphere – peak from New Year/February and national data
Staff wellbeing support and targeted rotas to cover annual leave/sickness
- Improve access to Primary Care
High impact respiratory, diabetes and proactive care pathways including highly complex frail patients
Community-based multi-disciplinary co-located Transfer of Care Hub to reduce avoidable conveyances, admissions and discharge delays through referral, triage and allocation to community pathways
Investment in enablement to embed D2A pathway and release capacity for UCR and virtual ward
Expansion of the virtual ward including remote tech to support 'amber' acuity including SDEC hypertension
Community X-ray pilot for care homes
Enhanced mental health offer – safe space, crisis support, on-line/text support
- Increase the number of people receiving urgent care in Primary, Community and Mental Health settings including UCR and virtual ward
- Meet the 45 minute ambulance handover standard - W45 live from September
- Improve flow through hospitals including meeting 4 hour performance and ambulance standards, reduce 12 hour and discharge waits
ACT/RMBC service re-design service improvements – releasing capacity
Additional medical, clinical staff and porters to support periods of high demand
Increased capacity for care co-ordination/timely decision making via TOCH
New single referral form to streamline processes and reduce delays
Improved process for out-of-area discharges

- Extended transport hours
- Reduced TTOs and Age UK TTO delivery service
- Set local target to improve discharge times
- Discharge trajectory across pathways. Review of system flow in community bed base. New dashboard and system escalation process
- Reduce lengths of stay for those requiring overnight emergency admissions
- Understanding demand in ED targeted action plan
- Medical SDEC opened July 2025 reducing need for overnight admission, new paperless processing
- Extended/consistent SDEC opening

Organisation Development, Communications and Engagement

- Whole system working together to support right care, time, place and reduce pressure on individuals/teams
- Targeted organisational development work
- Champion roles
- Communications and engagement plan with national, SY ICB and local plans aligned
- Local communications informed by understanding ED demand analysis

Discussion ensued with the following issues raised/clarified:-

- The virtual ward was currently focussed on those patients with hypertension and allowed them to be monitored at home and not brought into hospital for monitoring
- Section 25 monies had been used to “grow” enablement
- Ongoing high demand seen particularly as move into the winter with a lot of poorly patients in hospital. Delayed discharges were checked on a daily basis. The Out of Hospital Pathways were working but these were people who needed to be in hospital
- There were additional appointments in practices and also through the Respiratory Infection Hub
- The Yorkshire Ambulance Service had worked hard with the Trust to introduce a new pathway around mobile x-rays which was being piloted in care homes. Good feedback was being received from the homes
- W45 was a national initiative where if an ambulance had been waiting for more than 45 minutes the crew handed over the patient regardless of what the position was in ED. A whole new process had been put in place in the acute hospital to manage that situation and had been used as a national exemplar
- A number of schemes were in place to support the health and wellbeing of staff together with organisational development support and training around the changes being implemented
- The Emergency Department Care Hub provided an alternative to ED. Some patients were directed straight there from Primary Care

- A key part of the Winter Plan was the communication plan. Members of the public complained that they could not get an appointment; they could but may not be at the time and place they wanted. Work was being undertaken around understanding ED demand and why people attended when they did

Resolved:- That the information provided be noted.

31. WORKING WITH THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR TO PROVIDE A MORE INTEGRATED APPROACH TO CARE

Hannah Thornton, Director of Services, Voluntary Action Rotherham, presented a report on the work being undertaken to further understand the role of the Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise Sector (VCSE) in contributing to the health, wellbeing and care across the Borough.

The following powerpoint presentation was given:-

Rotherham VCSE – State of the sector 2024

- 1,399 organisations – the majority of which were small (£10,000-£100,000) or micro (under £10,000 income)
- 3,388 employees worked in charities in Rotherham
- £120M estimated contribution of employees to the economy per annum
- 6,017 people volunteered in charities in Rotherham
- £17M estimated contribution of volunteers to the economy per annum
- 1,774 people were trustees in charities in Rotherham
- Overall income of charities in Rotherham - £97M
- Many organisations had a focus on diversity, equity and inclusion. Some were specifically dedicated to serving particular groups including:-
 - Older people (26%)
 - Disabled people (21%)
 - People who were educationally or economically disadvantaged (14%)
 - Communities experiencing racial inequity (13%)
 - Young people (13%)

Connecting with People's Health

- Specialist and condition-specific
 - Condition-specific peer support, Domiciliary Care, Specialist Carers support, Palliative Care, Counselling and Therapy
- Health creation and maintenance
 - Physical and mental wellbeing, family support, creative health, faith and spirituality, support for older people, nature connection, local community hubs, social connection
- Addressing wider determinants
 - Learning skills and digital inclusion, information, advocacy and benefits advice

Connection with people where they are

- Social-economic groups and deprivation
- Inclusion health and vulnerable groups
- Protected characteristics in the Equality Duty
- Geography

Funding

- Grants from Trust and foundations (31%)
- Fees and earned income (22%)
- Grants from the public sector (18%)
- Contracts of service agreements (11%)

Primary Care – Proactive Care

- Risk stratification of patients
 - Moderate to severe frailty patients with 2+ hospital admissions in the last 12 months
 - Diabetes and high risk of admission
 - Respiratory and high risk of admission
- Rotherham Social Prescribing Service
- Dementia Carers Resilience Service
- Micro-Commissioned Support

Urgent and Emergency Care Centre

- Identification of patients on/awaiting discharge
 - Integrated Discharge Team
 - Urgent Therapy Team
 - Reablement Team
 - Healthy Hospitals Programme
 - Community Hospital Admission Avoidance Team

Social Prescribing Community Hub Network

- Cortonwood Comeback Centre
- High Street Centre, Rawmarsh
- Unity Centre, Town Centre
- Kimberworth Park Community Partnership
- Dinnington Area Regeneration Trust
- The Learning Community, Dinnington
- Treeton Village Community and Resource Centre
- Kiveton Community Hub
- Rawmarsh Social Prescribing Hub

Primary Care – Integrated Mental Health Hubs

- Care Provision for people living with SMI
- In the context of the CMHT this included psychosis, bipolar disorder, personality disorder diagnosis, eating disorders, severe depression and mental health rehabilitation needs
- May be co-existing with other conditions such as frailty, cognitive impairment, neurodevelopmental conditions or substance use

Social Prescribing – Return on Investment

- Sheffield Hallam University's 4 year evaluation of the Service (published August 2024) identified
 - Reduced in-patient admissions for all patients who had been admitted to hospital more than twice in the 12 months prior to RESPS support
 - Reduced attendances at A&E for patients below the age of 80 during the 12 months following RSPS support

Discussion ensued with the following issues raised/clarified:-

- It had helped individuals secure £1.3M in additional benefits
- Somehow in the label "health and wellbeing" there was a need to fit in Primary Care
- The need to include LGBTQ+
- Need to reflect the increasing male suicide rate
- Important to engage with the public in a non-medicalised way and in a language they would understand
- The emphasis on the person and their journey/pathway made a big difference to service-led response
- Collaboration was vitally important to strengthen available resources

Resolved:- That the examples of partnership, integration and voluntary, community and social enterprise infrastructure be noted.

32. SCHOOL SURVEY ANALYSIS

Lorna Quinn, Public Health Intelligence Specialist, presented an analysis of the health and wellbeing related questions of the Rotherham School Survey and trend analysis.

The following powerpoint presentation was given:-

Participation Overview

- All 16 Rotherham secondary schools responded
- Feedback was also received from the Pupil Referral Unit in Rotherham and students who were elective home educated
- A total of 4,602 students participated in the 2025 survey
- 2025 participation rate – 62.4% of eligible students took part. Total survey participants – combined = 4,602 Year 7 = 2,519 and Year 10 = 2,083

Overall Positive Trend

- Decrease in alcohol consumption, decrease in regular smoking (below 2% regular), decrease in 'poor' physical health (-20% fair and poor) and a decrease in students who do not eat breakfast (1 in 6)

Overall Negative Trend

- Increase of Year 10's regularly vaping, increase in poor mental health and an increase in bullying

Health and Wellbeing

- 4 in 5 young people reported their physical health as excellent or good
- 4 in 5 young people exercised at least twice a week
- 90% of young people had been to a dentist in the last 12 months
- 63% of young people reported their mental health as good or excellent
- 40% of young people had been bullied in the last 6 months but this was higher in younger years and girls

Factors to consider

- Those who did regular physical activity were less likely to have poor mental health
- Young people who engaged in culture were less likely to experience poor mental health and there were positive associations with physical activity

Next Steps

- To promote and refer to the results when considering the needs of our children and young people
- Opportunities to support the physical activity and culture element
- Document to be published alongside the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- Further work with CYPs
- Colleagues could request bespoke analysis

Discussion ensued with the following issues raised/clarified:-

- The survey was circulated in July/August. Pupils were given dedicated time to complete it
- The outcome of the survey was sent to all school leaders for them to consider the results for their particular school
- The survey included Year 7 and 10 pupils in alternative provision and special schools. There was likely to be a difference in the responses but that would be within the indepth analysis
- Work was to take place shortly with children and young people working with the School Games Organisation in schools to facilitate inschool engagement
- A real emphasis of the Sport England work was to give children and young people an opportunity to try different activities and have fun
- Elected Members each had small funding pots and may wish to use it to fund activities in their area – Ward specific data would be helpful

Resolved:- That the findings of the 2025 School Survey be noted.

33. HEALTH AND WELLBEING PRIORITIES UPDATE

Oscar Holden, Corporate Improvement Officer, presented an update on the Health and Wellbeing Priorities. The Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy 2025-30 was agreed at the Board's meeting in June and endorsed by Cabinet on 15th September, 2025 (Minute No. 40 refers). The priorities, agreed in principle, were:-

- Priority 1: We will reduce the prevalence of smoking in Rotherham to 5% by 2030
- Priority 2: We will increase the wellbeing of the people of Rotherham to above national average by 2030
- Priority 3: We will increase the proportion of people who feel they have the support and resources they need to manage their own health
- Priority 4: We will promote environments which support and enhance wellbeing

The finalised wording and metrics for the priorities had been further discussed at a meeting on 24th November, 2025:-

Priority 1 "We will reduce the prevalence of smoking in Rotherham by 5% by 2030"

Metrics

- Smoking rate (from existing Public Health metrics)
- Another metric that potentially measured smoking prevalence by areas of deprivation

Priority 2 "We will increase the good mental health of the people of Rotherham towards the national average by 2030"

Metrics

- Happiness measure for adults and a similar source for children and young people (from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment)
- Life satisfaction question (Office of National Statistics)

Priority 3 "We will increase the proportion of people who feel they have the care and resources they need to support their own health"

Metrics

- Measure for soft services access
- Measure for families and wider support

Priority 4 "People in Rotherham have access to environments that promote their health and wellbeing and they understand why this matters"

Metrics

- Community Safety measure (from existing Safer Rotherham Partnership metrics)
- One other metric that will include one of the following: access to healthy food, adults take recommended exercise, air quality, public transport

Action Plan

Meeting	Priority focus at Board meeting	Report/Strategy focus at Board meeting	Other significant item
2026			
June	Priority 1	Integrated Care Board Forward Plan	Integrated Care Strategy
September	Priority 2	Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy	Other Special Interest Groups System Plans
November	Priority 3	Joint Strategic Needs Assessment	Better Care Fund
2027			
January	Priority 4	Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment	Review of system pressure for winter
March	Review of year	Director of Public Health report	Forward plan

Oscar also reported on the following feedback from the Children and Young People's Partnership Board as follows:-

- Consider the suggestions for smokefree zones, mental health support and family-friendly initiatives
- Explore ways to promote services and activities such as through social media and in community spaces
- Continue to involve children, young people and families in shaping and renewing the strategy priorities.

Councillor Baker-Rogers had been invited to the next Partnership Board meeting in January to continue to involve children and young people in the Health and Wellbeing Board. These would be considered further once the new action plan was in place.

Discussion ensued with the following issues raised/clarified:-

- Healthwatch UK had put together a detailed consultation and feedback on the 4 priorities. These would be discussed at the January Board meeting
- Some of the measures were easier to measure than others. Metrics were needed that would give sufficient confidence that they were improving
- Children and young people had been rarely mentioned in the past but were now feeding their views into the priorities/discussions taking place

Resolved:- (1) That the 4 Rotherham Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2025-30 Priorities be agreed.

(2) That a further discussion take place at the January meeting on the specific metrics for the corresponding Priorities.

(3) That the feedback on the suggested priorities provided by the Children and Young People's Partnership Board in October 2025 be noted.

(4) That the new approach to the Health and Wellbeing action plan be agreed.

34. HEALTH PROTECTION ANNUAL REPORT

Denise Littlewood, Health Protection Principal, presented a summary of the assurance functions of the Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council Health Protection Committee.

Denise gave the following powerpoint presentation:-

Assurance Overview

- Collaborative Multi-Agency Efforts
Multiple agencies in Rotherham worked together to safeguard Public Health through co-ordinated health protection arrangements
- Health Protection Domains
The report covered infectious disease control, screening, immunisation, emergency preparedness and infection prevention
- Stakeholder Assurance and Reporting

Screening Programmes

- Improved Screening Uptake – screening programmes in Rotherham had increased participation especially in breast, bowel and cervical cancer screenings
- Accessibility for Learning Disabilities – collaborative efforts had improved screening accessibility for individuals with learning disabilities
- Diabetic Eye Screening Progress – Diabetic Eye Screening Programme addressed backlog and maintained compliance with national invite interval standards
- Bowel Screening Age Extension – bowel screening programme expanded age coverage supporting early detection and national policy compliance

Immunisation Programmes

- MMR Vaccination Coverage – MMR dose 1 coverage by age 2 remained above 90%, aiming for 95% for effective community protection

- Adolescent Immunisation Challenges – Post-pandemic decline in adolescent vaccinations led to targeted interventions to improve school-based uptake
- HPV Vaccination Focus - HPV vaccination aligned with national cervical cancer elimination strategies to reduce disease incidence
- RSV Vaccination Introduction - RSV vaccine launched in 2024 for pregnant women and older adults to protect vulnerable groups
- Pertussis Vaccination for Pregnant Women – vaccination update amongst pregnant women remained above the 60% optimal threshold amid rising national cases and infant deaths
- Targeted Seasonal Flu Vaccination - seasonal flu vaccination targeted high-risk groups including young children, pregnant women and immunocompromised individuals through focused initiatives
- Focus on Vulnerable Populations - efforts prioritised individuals with chronic respiratory conditions, learning disabilities or severe mental illness to reduce infectious disease impact
- Healthcare Associated Infections - pathogen Surveillance – Monitoring key pathogens like MRSA, MSSA, C.Difficile and E.Coli was essential to control infection spread in healthcare settings
- Effective MRSA Control - cases decreased significantly reflecting success of targeted infection control measures and protocols
- Antimicrobial Stewardship - increased cases of C.Difficile were addressed by improved antimicrobial stewardship and staff interventions
- Care Home Hydration Project - initiatives in care homes supported infection control by improving patient health and reducing complications
- Low TB Incident in Rotherham - Rotherham maintained a low TB incidence despite rising national rates through effective local health strategies
- Enhanced Case Management - complex TB cases required enhanced case management to ensure proper treatment and thorough follow-up
- Collaborative Health Protection - regional collaboration and cohort reviews promoted best practices in TB screening and management

- Support for Underserved Populations - proactive TB management included ensuring care and support for underserved and vulnerable populations
- Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) - leadership and Co-ordination – Senior Public Health Practitioner led IPC initiatives ensuring focused and organised infection control efforts across the community
- IPC Audits and Outbreak Management - regular audits and outbreak management support helped identify risks early and enabled rapid response to infection incidents
- Community Engagement Training - engaging care homes and co-ordinating the IPC Champions Network strengthened infection prevention practices and staff competencies
- Strategic Integration - embedding IPC within local authority structures ensued sustainable and cohesive infection control to protect public health
- Emergency Planning and Response - Rotherham managed 33 emergency incidents in 2024/25 showing strong operational readiness and resilience
- Training Exercises - participation in Exercise Solaris and preparations for Exercise Pegasus had improved emergency response capabilities
- Regional Co-ordination - the upcoming South Yorkshire-wide rest centre plan enhanced co-ordinated support during emergencies
- Preparedness and Improvement - continuous updates to planning and response frameworks emphasised public health safety during crises

Strategic Priorities for 2025/26

- Community IPC Strengthening – focus on enhancing infection prevention and control through community-based programs for greater health impact
- Vaccination and Screening Uptake – improve vaccination and screening rates specifically in deprived and underserved populations to reduce health disparities
- Preparedness and Surveillance – prepare for adverse weather and pandemics whilst enhancing surveillance systems to detect emerging health threats early
- Addressing Antimicrobial Resistance – tackle antimicrobial resistance with targeted health strategies to protect public health and ensure effective treatments

Discussion ensued with the following issues raised/clarified:-

- Indepth scrutiny required of the MMR vaccination take up as some areas of the Borough had low uptake
- The flu season had started earlier this year
- The country was very close to the threshold of no longer being a low incidence country for TB. However, Rotherham still had cases which were more complex and took more time to manage. Need to understand what the level of TB was in the underserved population
- The changes in the ICB and reorganisation were a high risk as a lot of Health Protection Services sat within it and would remain to do so
- Positive communication about vaccination and the benefits they could bring to an individual and the wider population
- There were to be huge changes to the vaccination programme next year which would have to be worked into the plans
- Strengthen links between Public Health and Neighbourhood working
- The voluntary and community sector knew which areas had low take-up of vaccinations and would be happy to support engagement with residents

Resolved:- (1) That the findings of the annual report be noted.

(2) That the 2025/26 strategic priorities be endorsed.

35. ROTHERHAM FOOD NETWORK

Alexandra Hart, Public Health Practitioner, presented an overview of the Rotherham Food Network including the vision and action plan.

Alexandra gave the following powerpoint presentation:-

Why food matters

- Relevance across policy areas
- 4 of 5 top risk factors related to diet
- $\frac{3}{4}$ of Rotherham adults were overweight/obese
- High rates of overweight/obesity in children and young people
- Inequality driven by poverty

Food insecurity and inequality

- Inequalities in disposable income made healthy options too expensive
- Less healthy food was cheaper per calorie
- Marketing and offers promoted unhealthy options

Update

- Refresh of the action plan to cover the next 5 years
- Interest in working groups for Youth Cabinet and food growing
- Continuation of Food in Crisis Partnership
- Food Works project created 10 Just Meals freezer locations across Rotherham

Food Works Project

- £60,000 over 2 years from March 2025
- Installing 10 freezers within local community spaces
- Provided healthy surplus food derived ready meals for minimum £1
- Evaluation to follow and inform year 2

Risks and issues

- Food governance and strategy
- Good Food movement
- Healthy food for all
- Sustainable food economy
- Catering and procurement
- Sustainable food environment

Shafiq Hussain offered to support the Public Health Team to implement their work further. It was noted that David from VAR had been very helpful to progress the work so far.

Resolved:- (1) That the update from the Rotherham Food Network be noted.

(2) That the impact of lack of access to healthy sustainable food in Rotherham on health outcomes be noted.

(3) That the challenges that arose from the tensions of poverty, regeneration, economic growth, climate change and the accessibility of healthy sustainable food be noted.

(4) That the Board consider how Board Members could commit to driving forward any elements of the action plan.

36. NEIGHBOURHOOD WORKING

Joanne Martin, Programme Lead, Transformation and Delivery, NHS South Yorkshire, presented an update on the Neighbourhood Working programme.

Rotherham had been accepted onto the National Neighbourhood Health Implementation Programme (NNHIP), a national initiative aimed at accelerating neighbourhood working and strengthening proactive care.

Addressing health inequalities through the Programme went beyond improving outcomes for individuals; it strengthened the entire health and care system. By focusing on proactive care and targeted prevention, the aim was to reduce the disproportionate burden of disease in deprived communities and among minority groups. This approach ensured that those most at risk received timely, co-ordinated support which not only improved quality of life but also prevented escalation to acute care.

The programme supported a cultural shift towards prevention and community-based care, building resilience and equity across the system.

The Programme's collective role was to create the conditions for NbH to flourish:-

The Project

- Building on existing mechanisms
- Focussing on a defined cohort
 - Adults with long term conditions and rising risk
 - Local prioritisation, existing pilot schemes
 - Most likely to have highest impact
- Refine, adapt, generate new ideas
- Rapid cycle testing driven by data
- Shared learning

The People

- Working towards a shared purpose
- Building on relationships across the system
- Taking collective action and shared accountability
- Being curious and open-minded
- Not being afraid of 'failure'
- Being action and delivery focussed

Suggested Neighbourhood Programme

- National Neighbourhood Programme – Proactive Care – Enhance Current Model
 - Meets national cohort request
 - Rotherham Place approach based on PCN footprint
 - Involves all stakeholder participation
 - Baseline established
 - Data drive via Eclipse and judgement
- Local Neighbourhood Programme – Place wide
 - Focus on prevention of diabetes and heart health
 - Suggest focus on key drivers on long term conditions i.e. smoking, obesity and hypertension
 - Target focus – Eastwood Village

The presentation also set out the proposed governance structure.

Discussion ensued with the following issues raised/clarified:-

- 18 identified people who attended the sessions including patients
- It was a 12 month programme and insufficient time to re-look at structure and re-organise teams but focus on what the function was of all the teams and the outcome could follow

- Ensure providing consistent universal provision of services but sufficiently flexible to be able to target communities across the Borough. It would be data driven as to where the resources needed to be focussed
- The workshops had extended beyond the national ask i.e. adults with 2 or more LTC and wanted to tackle prevention, support children, getting people fitter, tackle frailty and end of life care and getting people back to work
- It was not a new model for Rotherham but about enhancing the existing model
- The Operational Group had been set up and met once. It was currently feeding into the Place Board which had agreed to sponsor this as a programme
- How could Elected Members and Neighbourhood Co-ordinators support the Programme?
- It was a national Programme that was already 3 months into the 12 months. Undertaking a massive restructure across Rotherham to shape the way Social Care worked and Community Teams were provided into bespoke neighbourhoods would detract from getting the positive patient outcomes

Resolved:- (1) That the programme of the National Neighbourhood Health Implementation Programme (NNHIP) and the alignment of national requirements with Rotherham's local priorities be noted.

(2) That the proposed governance structure, including the establishment of the Operational Group reporting to the Place Leadership Team, and onward reporting to the Health and Wellbeing Board as required, be approved.

37. ITEMS ESCALATED FROM THE PLACE BOARD

There were no issues to report.

38. BETTER CARE FUND

a) Better Care Fund (BCG) Quarter 1 Reporting Template and Call-Off Partnership/Work Order 2025/26

It was noted that the BCF Q1 Reporting Template, covering the period 1st April to 30th June, 2025, had been submitted to NHS England on 15th August, 2025.

At the end of Quarter 1, Rotherham was 40 over target resulting in a population rate of 227.74 (per 100,000) against a Quarter 1 target population rate of 153.07. Based on previous learning, it was anticipated that the figures would reduce following data validation and mitigation activity.

It was further noted that the BCF Call-Off Partnership/Work Order 2025/26 had been fully signed by both partner organisations and in place by 30th September, 2025.

(b) BCF Quarter 2 Template

It was noted that the BCF Q2 Reporting Template, covering the period 1st July to 30th September, 2025, had been submitted to NHS England on 11th November, 2025.

During Q2 there had been 116 new admissions against a target of 82 although this was expected to be revised downward in the coming months.

Resolved:- (1) That the submission of the BCF Quarter 1 and 2 documentation to NHS England by respective deadlines, be noted.

(2) That the submitted of the Better Care Fund Call-Off Partnership/Work Order for 2025/26 be approved.

39. ROTHERHAM PLACE BOARD ICB BUSINESS

The minutes of the Rotherham Place Board ICB Business meeting held on 16th July, 2025, were noted.

40. ROTHERHAM PLACE BOARD MINUTES - PARTNERSHIP BUSINESS

The minutes of the Rotherham Place Board Partnership Business meetings held on 16th July, 2025, were noted.

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**LICENSING BOARD SUB-COMMITTEE
27th October, 2025**

Present:- Councillor Hughes (in the Chair); Councillors Adair, Bennett-Sylvester and Steele.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Ball.

17. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest made at the meeting.

18. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved:- That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the Police Act 1997 and Paragraphs 3 and 7 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (business affairs and prevention of crime).

19. APPLICATIONS FOR THE GRANT/RENEWAL/REVIEW OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE/PRIVATE HIRE DRIVERS' LICENCES

The Sub-Committee considered a report of the Licensing Manager relating to three applications for the grant of hackney carriage/private hire drivers' licences in respect of Messrs. M.A., M.J. and F.K.

Messrs. M.A., M.J. and F.K. were in attendance at the hearing.

Resolved:- (1) The application for the grant of a hackney carriage/private hire driver's licence for Mr. M.A. be granted.

(2) That the applications for the grant of hackney carriage/private hire drivers' licences for Messrs. M.J. and F.K. be refused.

20. APPLICATION FOR THE GRANT/RENEWAL/REVIEW OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE/PRIVATE HIRE DRIVERS' LICENCE

The Sub-Committee considered a report of the Licensing Manager relating to an application for the grant of hackney carriage/private hire driver's licence in respect of Mr. N.A.A.

Mr. N.A.A. was in attendance at the hearing together with his supporter.

Resolved:- The application for the grant of a hackney carriage/private hire driver's licence for Mr. N.A.A. be granted.

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**LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE
1st December, 2025**

Present:- Councillor Hughes (in the Chair); Councillors Garnett and Steele.

CONSIDERATION OF AN APPLICATION (MADE IN ACCORDANCE WITH S.34 OF THE LICENSING ACT 2003) FOR THE VARIATION OF THE PREMISES LICENCE IN RESPECT OF THE PREMISES KNOWN AS THE LONGBAR, UNIT 2 BRAITHWELL ROAD, RAVENFIELD, ROTHERHAM, S65 4LH

Consideration was given to an application (made in accordance with Section 34 of the Licensing Act 2003) by Mr. David Marshall for the variation of the Premises Licence currently in force in respect of The Longbar, Unit 2 Braithwell Road, Ravenfield, Rotherham S65 4LH.

The applicant was seeking:-

- To extend the latest permitted hours for the sale of alcohol. For consumption on and off the premises, on Sundays from 17:30 hours (5.30 p.m.) to 22:30 hours (10.30 p.m.)
- Amend condition 18 of Annex 2 of the Premises Licence which currently says:-

“There shall be no outdoor consumption of alcohol. Alcohol shall only be permitted to be taken off the premises in sealed containers.”

To read as follows:-

“The consumption of alcohol is permitted by customers in the designated seating area and permitted to be taken off the premises in sealed containers.”

The management controls offered in the application, all of which would be made further conditions of Annex 2 of the Premises Licence if the variation was granted, were set out in the report submitted.

Mr. David Marshall (Designed Premises Holder) and Mrs. Marshall were present at the meeting.

Consultation on the application had been carried out in accordance with all statutory requirements and the Council procedure. During the consultation period 3 representations had been received from “other persons” (2 local residents and Ravenfield Parish Council) all of whom were opposed to the granting of the application.

The 2 residents who had made the representations to the application had been invited to attend the hearing but had not attended. Mrs. G. Needes, Clerk to Ravenfield Parish Council, was in attendance.

The Panel took into account the issues raised by the local residents which centred around:-

- The proposed outdoor seating area (already in place) was positioned directly on the pavement and encroached into the adjacent parking area
- The outdoor seating area created obstruction for pedestrians using the path to access nearby shops and neighbouring premises/shops
- Serious concerns with regard to full and future compliance with the existing licence conditions
- Granting of the variation could set a precedent for extended outdoor alcohol use along the parade increasing cumulative noise, littering and anti-social behaviour in the area

Mrs. Needes presented on behalf of Ravenfield Parish Council:-

- Concern that the allowing of outdoor consumption of alcohol would increase noise and disturbance
- Servicing alcohol in a confined area where pedestrians must pass directly through patrons presented significant safety risks
- Children frequently visited neighbouring businesses. The serving of alcohol in close proximity to these premises may expose children to inappropriate behaviour and/or environments associated with alcohol consumption
- The Parish Council acknowledged that The Longbar was a community asset with a lot of positive comments, however, the issue was with the outside area and serving of alcohol
- The image supplied demonstrating a pedestrian with a disability walking through the seating area, believed to demonstrate sufficient space, did not take into account other scenarios such as people with prams, dogs, shopping bags etc.
- The possible rolling forward of parked vehicles was a great concern, however, the installation of permanent bollards would resolve these concerns
- Complaints had been received from the neighbouring shops in relation to the outside seating area

No representations had been made by the Responsible Authorities.

Photographs had been supplied by Mr. Marshall prior to the meeting and circulated to the Sub-Committee. At the meeting Mr. Marshall provided 4 letters of support and a petition containing 55 signatures in support of the variation to the licensing condition.

LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE – 01/12/25

All parties present agreed to the submission of the late letters of support for consideration.

The Sub-Committee adjourned for 15 minutes to enable all present to consider the submissions.

In response to questions, the applicant provided the following information:-

- There were 5 tables in the designated outdoor seating area providing seating for a maximum of 10 people
- The Longbar was a wine bar not a pub or a micro bar
- Temporary barriers had been erected. The landlord had visited and wanted to put permanent barriers in to secure the walkway and car parking making it safer
- A Planning Officer had made a site visit and said that as long as there was a 1.5m walkthrough they could not see an issue; there was a 2m walkthrough
- The bar had been open a year and there had been no problems and operated strict guidelines regarding children and the sale of alcohol age regulations
- Children were only allowed into the bar until 21:00 hours (9.00 p.m.) and only with an adult
- Currently non-alcoholic only were served outside

It was noted that the Planning Service had not objected to the application for the consumption of alcohol in the designated outdoor seating area.

The Sub-Committee considered the application for the variation of the Premises Licence and the representations made specifically in the light of the following Licensing objectives (as defined in the 2003 Act):-

- The prevention of crime and disorder.
- Public safety
- The prevention of public nuisance.
- The protection of children from harm

Resolved:- That the application for the variation of the Premises Licence, under the provisions of the Licensing Act 2003, in respect of The Longbar, Unit 2 Braithwell Road, Ravenfield, Rotherham S65 4LH, be granted as follows:-

- (1) Extension of the latest permitted hours for the sale of alcohol, for consumption on and off the premises, on Sundays from 17:30 hours (5.30 p.m.) to 22:30 hours (10.30 p.m.)

(2) Condition 18 of Annex 2 of the Premises Licence be amended to read “the consumption of alcohol is permitted by customers in the designated seating area and permitted to be taken off the premises in sealed containers”.

(3) That the following management controls be added to the existing conditions of Annex 2 of the Premises Licence i.e.

- (i) The premises CCTV system shall cover the outdoor area and CCTV recordings shall be retained for a period of not less than 31 days;
- (ii) the outdoor area shall be clearly defined and furnished with safe and stable furniture;
- (iii) access and exit route in the outdoor area shall be kept clear at all times;
- (iv) children shall only be permitted in the outdoor area if accompanied by an adult;
- (v) alcohol shall only be consumed in the outdoor area by seated customers;
- (vi) no customer shall exit the outdoor area with an open container;
- (vii) no amplified music shall be provided in the outdoor area;
- (viii) signage shall be displayed in the outdoor area asking people to respect nearby residents and
- (ix) staff will regularly monitor noise levels in the outdoor area together with compliance of the conditions of the Licence.

PLANNING BOARD
27th November, 2025

Present:- Councillor Mault (in the Chair); Councillors Adair, Ahmed, Allen, Bacon, Currie, Duncan, Elliott, Jackson, Tarmey and Thorp.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Cowen, Fisher, Hussain and Sutton.

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

39. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

There were no items on the agenda to warrant exclusion of the press and public.

40. MATTERS OF URGENCY

There were no matters of urgency for consideration.

41. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest to report.

42. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 25TH SEPTEMBER, 2025

Resolved:- That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Planning Regulatory Board held on Thursday, 25th September, 2025, be approved as a correct record of the meeting and signed by the Chair.

43. DEFERMENTS/SITE VISITS

There were no site visits or deferments recommended.

44. DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

Resolved:- (1) That, on the development proposal now considered, the requisite notice be issued and be made available on the Council's website and that the time limits specified in Sections 91 and 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 apply.

In accordance with the right to speak procedure the following people attended the meeting and spoke about the application below:-

PLANNING BOARD - 27/11/25

- Change of use of land to dog walking paddocks and training facility including extended car parking area at 4 Blackamoor Road Swinton for Invictus Squad (RB2023/0283)

Mr. D. Malone (Applicant)
Mr. D. Foss (Objector)

A statement was also read out on behalf of Ms. D. Williams (Supporter).

- (2) That application RB2023/0283 be granted for the reasons adopted by Members at the meeting and subject to the relevant conditions listed in the submitted report.

45. REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF PLANNING, REGENERATION AND TRANSPORTATION SERVICE

Consideration was given to the report which outlined proposals for the large-scale Solar Farm, designated as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP), known as Whitestone.

The Whitestone Solar Farm was primarily located within the administrative boundaries of both the City of Doncaster Council (CDC) and Rotherham Borough Council. As such, both Councils were considered host authorities and statutory consultees. Under the Act, a host authority was defined as a local authority within whose area the application land was wholly or partly situated.

Further information was provided on NSIPs and how they were developments of specific types and scales that the Government considered to be of such national importance that consent for their construction was granted at the national level.

On this basis instead of seeking planning permission from the Local Authority, developers must apply to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) for a Development Consent Order (DCO).

PINS, the Government agency responsible for managing NSIP applications, appointed the Examining Authority (ExA) with the agreement of the relevant Secretary of State to assess the proposal and make a recommendation to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. Under the Act, the final decision on the application rested with the Secretary of State. If approved, the Secretary of State would issue the DCO. The relevant Local Authority (or Authorities, in the case of cross-boundary applications) would then be responsible for discharging and monitoring the requirements of the DCO and any associated legal agreements.

By way of a presentation the Planning Board were advised:-

- The NSIP Process.
 - . NSIP Overview.
 - . Governing Bodies and Roles.
 - . Six Stage Process.
- Whitestone Proposals.
 - . Project Scope and Location.
 - . Energy Generation Capacity.
 - . Grid Connection and Infrastructure.
 - . Community Environmental Considerations.
- Rotherham Borough Council's Progress to Date.
 - . Active Pre-Application Engagement.
 - . Delegated Decision Making.
 - . Environmental and Consultation Feedback.
 - . Dedicated Page on Website.
 - . Member Briefing Session.
 - . Cumulative Impact – Legal Advice.
- Next Steps.
 - . Stakeholder Engagement.
 - . Awaiting Key Documents.
 - . Drafting Critical Reports.
 - . Transparency and Oversight.

It was further pointed out that to date the Council had actively engaged in the pre-application phase, providing detailed feedback on environmental and technical aspects. The Council had also taken proactive steps to ensure governance arrangements were in place to meet the demanding timelines set by the Planning Inspectorate, including the delegation of responsibilities and the establishment of quarterly reporting to Planning Board.

While the project had evolved in response to initial consultation feedback, concerns remained regarding biodiversity, landscape impact and cultural heritage. The Council would continue to advocate for improvements and safeguards through its contributions to the Local Impact Report (LIR), Statement of Common Ground (SoCG), and ongoing dialogue with the applicant.

As the project progressed towards formal application submission in Spring 2026, the Council remained committed to ensuring that environmental standards were represented, and the development aligned with both national policy and local priorities.

On this basis further reports on progress would be presented to Planning Board on a quarterly basis.

The Chair invited questions which drew attention to:-

- Adequacy of the consultation by Whitestone and whether further evidence was required to confirm the threshold had not been met. Officers were keen to receive any feedback and suggested this be done by residents through their Ward Members for ease of collation.
- Access to the NSIP webpage on the website and inclusion of the details within the Members' Portal. Further information to be shared via the Members' Briefing.
- Complaints by residents of the dates/times of the drop-in sessions and the lack of quality interaction.
- Highway infrastructure and impact on smaller communities such as Treeton who were likely to be affected by three major developments.
- Lobbying Members of Parliament and interested party registration once the application had been accepted.

Officers outlined their ongoing involvement in the technical process particularly around highway infrastructure.

The applicant had also indicated their intention to issue a newsletter once they had evaluated the consultation responses and any changes along with a further newsletter once the application had been accepted.

Resolved:- That the update report and presentation be received and the contents noted.

46. UPDATES

The following update information was provided:-

1. Battery Storage Appeals (RB2024/0063 and RB2024/0321) – Moat Lane, Wickersley

Further to Minute No. 7 of the meeting of the Planning Board held on 12th June, 2025 where it was agreed the Council could effectively only defend the highways reason for refusal at appeal for both planning applications, an update was provided on the outcome of both appeals.

Whilst submitted together, the appeals were heard separately, the first by way of written representations and the second by public hearing. Both appeals were allowed thus granting planning permission.

The Planning Inspector's conclusions were consistent for both applications and indicated with a scheme for the proposed improvements to the Moat Lane/Green Lane Junction and pedestrian refuge facilities on Green Lane with a plan for construction traffic, there would be no unacceptable impact on safe use of Green Lane. This would be controlled by way of a condition for the applicant to provide a pedestrian refuge.

The requirement of such conditions could embrace the local concerns of residents and the Planning Inspector concluded that the Council failed to provide evidence to substantiate the highway reason for refusal on appeal and that the concerns in relation to construction traffic were capable of being dealt with by conditions.

On this basis an application for costs had been submitted by the applicant. The amount was not yet known, but the Council had the opportunity to challenge the sum should it be deemed unreasonable.

The Planning Board, whilst being disappointed with the decisions, believed there would be some learning from this and where they may be technical considerations for an application this may be overcome by conditions. It was for this reason a costs award had been made.

It was, therefore, suggested that in any similar situations consideration be given to enlisting an independent consultant to assist the Council in defending controversial applications.

Upon reflection and further research, it became clear that the national demand for battery storage had created a stronger presumption in favour of supporting renewable energy projects, increasing the likelihood of success on appeal.

Furthermore it was also noted that, although permission had now been granted, the developer would need to enter into legal agreements with the Highways Authority. At this stage, the Council would carry out road safety audits and review more detailed swept path analysis. The site would be revisited with Highways to assess how the scheme could be managed, whether it was workable and to examine the finer details. These details were not yet fully agreed.

Members welcomed this further update and how the legalities around the public highway would be managed and approved to industry standards.

PLANNING BOARD - 27/11/25

2. Planning Board Date Change – January, 2026

Consideration was given to a request for the January, 2026 Planning Board meeting to move on one week from the 15th to 22nd January, 2026. This would give officers more time in the submitting of applications for the agenda.

This was approved.

STAFFING COMMITTEE
Wednesday, 17th December 2025

Present:- Councillor Alam (in the Chair); Councillors Read, Cusworth and Jones.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Z. Collingham.

28. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19 MAY 2025

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting held on 19 May 2025 be approved as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

29. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest to report.

30. 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.

31. RECRUITMENT OF DIRECTOR OF POLICY, STRATEGY AND ENGAGEMENT

Consideration was given to the report which set out the proposals to appoint to the post of Director of Policy, Strategy and Engagement and other associated changes. The Assistant Chief Executive resigned from their post on 31st July, 2025. Since this date responsibilities of the post had been covered by the Strategic Director of Finance and Customer Services and temporary line management arrangements had been put in place through the Assistant Director of Legal Services and the Assistant Director of Human Resources.

The Assistant Chief Executive role covered the functions of Policy, Performance and Intelligence, Democratic Services, Neighbourhoods, Marketing and Communications, Organisational Development and Change, and Human Resources. The resignation of the Assistant Chief Executive provided the opportunity for the incumbent Chief Executive to take some time to review the effective operation of the Assistant Chief Executive's Directorate in accordance with the new Council Plan, ensuring structures were designed to deliver outcomes for residents and deliver against the new Council Plan.

Postholders within the Assistant Chief Executive's Directorate, alongside Strategic Directors, had been engaged in this process. Following this review, the Chief Executive had determined that significant strategic capacity was required to support Policy and Strategy and had re-designated the title of the Assistant Chief Executive role to reflect this. This had resulted in the request to retitle the Assistant Chief Executive

role to Director of Policy, Strategy and Engagement. The role continued to report directly to the Chief Executive post and formed part of the Council's Strategic Leadership Team.

The functions of Human Resources and Organisational Development would transfer under the leadership of the Strategic Director Finance and Customer Services (with the Head of Organisational Development reporting to the Assistant Director of Human Resources and their title expanded to reflect this) to create a cohesive Corporate Services function. On this basis it was proposed to retitle the Strategic Director, Finance and Customer Services, to Executive Director of Corporate Services, and for this role to continue to have formal deputy responsibilities for the Chief Executive in accordance with the terms of the Constitution.

As part of the opportunity to modernise the Council's infrastructure and to support recruitment and retention of staff, in accordance with the Council's ambitions as an employer of choice, it was proposed that all Assistant Directors be renamed 'Service Director' and Strategic Directors be renamed 'Executive Director'. The exception to this was that the Director of Public Health would retain their existing title to reflect the national recognition for this title, and the new post reflected in this document (to demonstrate its direct alignment to the Chief Executive) will be titled 'Director of'.

As per the Officer Employment Procedure Rules and Code of Conduct, Staffing Committee were asked to agree plans to immediately begin the selection process for the Director of Policy, Strategy and Engagement and refer the matter to the Senior Officer Appointments Panel. The salary for the post remained unchanged.

During the meeting the Chief Executive placed on record his thanks to Judith Badger, Strategic Director of Finance and Customer Services, Phil Horsfield, Assistant Director of Legal Services and Lynsey Linton, Assistant Director of Human Resources, for the additional responsibilities they had undertaken since the Assistant Chief Executive's resignation.

Members asked questions relating to the change in name of the post and the salary. Members were supportive of the changes and the Leader specifically referenced the need to be proactive in terms of policy and data collection, in order to best serve residents.

Resolved:

That Staffing Committee:

1. Note that the post of Assistant Chief Executive will be retitled to Director of Policy, Strategy and Engagement;

2. Approve the request to fill the vacant post and refer the process to the Senior Officer Appointments Panel to undertake the recruitment process;
3. Note the intention to fill the post of Director of Policy, Strategy and Engagement on an interim basis to provide appropriate capacity during the recruitment process for the substantive post;
4. Note that the post of the Strategic Director, Finance and Customer Services will be retitled to Executive Director of Corporate Services; and
5. Note that the posts of Assistant Director will be retitled to 'Service Director', and Strategic Directors will be retitled to 'Executive Director'.

32. URGENT BUSINESS

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

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