

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

- Date and Time:-** Wednesday 6 May 2026 at 10.00 a.m.
- Venue:-** Rotherham Town Hall, The Crofts, Moorgate Street, Rotherham. S60 2TH
- Membership:-** Councillors Steele (Chair), Bacon (Vice-Chair), Allen, Baggaley, Blackham, Brent, A. Carter, Keenan, McKiernan, Monk, Tinsley and Yasseen.

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

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

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

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

2. Minutes of meeting Wednesday 8 April 2026 of Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (Pages 5 - 33)

To consider the minutes of the previous meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board held on Wednesday 8 April 2026 and to approve them as a true and correct record of the proceedings and to be signed by the Chair.

3. Declarations of Interest

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

4. Questions from Members of the Public and the Press

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

5. Exclusion of the Press and Public

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

Items for Pre-Decision Scrutiny

In accordance with the outcome of the Governance Review in 2016, the following items are submitted for pre-scrutiny ahead of the Cabinet meeting on Monday 11 May 2026. Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board are invited to comment and make recommendations on the proposals contained within the report.

6. Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2026-2031 (Pages 35 - 111)

Report from the Executive Director of Adult Care, Housing and Public Health.

Recommendations:

That Cabinet:

1. Notes the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy consultation summary report.
2. Approves the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2026-31.
3. Delegates authority to the Executive Director of Adult Care, Housing and Public Health to approve:
 - a) Any minor data amendments to the Strategy prior to publication.
 - b) The Action Plan, following its development, including any amendments arising from annual reviews.

7. Selective Licensing Update (Pages 113 - 140)

Report from the Executive Director of Regeneration and Environment.

Recommendations:

That Cabinet:

1. Note the report and progress to date.
2. Approve the approach to the community liaison roles and stakeholder panels.
3. Approve the approach to establishing the capital programme, with stakeholder groups identifying local priorities and delegate agreement for the final governance arrangement to the Executive Director of Regeneration and Environment in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Service Director for Legal Services.

8. Rotherham Markets and Libraries

Report to follow.

For Discussion/Decision:-

9. Rothercare - Update Report (Pages 141 - 159)

This report provides members with an update on progress, early outcomes, and next steps following the redesign of the Rothercare telecare and assistive technology service. The service was reviewed in 2024 in response to demographic pressures and the UK-wide analogue to digital switchover, with a new model implemented from April 2025 and digital migration progressing ahead of national timescales.

For Information/Monitoring:-

10. Work Programme 2025-2026 (Pages 161 - 163)

To consider the Board's Work Programme.

11. Work in Progress - Select Commissions (Pages 165 - 170)

To receive updates from the Chairs of the Select Commission on work undertaken and planned for the future:

- Health Select Commission
- Improving Lives Select Commission
- Improving Places Select Commission

12. Forward Plan of Key Decisions

To review and identify items for pre-decision scrutiny from the Forward Plan of Key Decisions.

Link to: [Browse plans - Forward Plan of Key Decisions, 2025 - Rotherham Council](#)

13. South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee

As part of their role the Chair and Vice Chair of OSMB are appointed to the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Chair of OSMB is the Vice Chair on this committee.

This committee holds the MCA to account and ensure that all aspects of the decision-making process are transparent, inclusive and fair. The Committee are responsible for checking that the MCA is delivering its objectives and that the decisions made in policies, strategies and plans have been made in the best interests of the residents and workers of South Yorkshire.

The published agenda packs and minutes can be accessed via: [South Yorkshire MCA](#).

Members who have comments and queries regarding any item on any agenda should refer this to the Chair of OSMB and the Governance Manager at the earliest opportunity to ensure they're reflected in debate during the relevant public meeting.

14. Call-in Issues

To consider any issues referred for call-in from recent Cabinet meetings.

15. Urgent Business

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

The next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board will be held on Wednesday 3 June 2026 commencing at 10.00 a.m. in Rotherham Town Hall.



John Edwards,
Chief Executive.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD
Wednesday 8 April 2026

Present:- Councillor Steele (in the Chair); Councillors Allen, Blackham, Brent, A. Carter, Garnett (substitute for Councillor Keenan), McKiernan, Monk, Thorp (substitute for Councillor Bacon), Tinsley and Yasseen.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bacon (Vice-Chair), Baggaley and Councillor Keenan.

The webcast of the Council Meeting can be viewed at:-

<https://rotherham.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

126. MINUTES OF MEETING WEDNESDAY 11 MARCH 2026 OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board held on 11 March 2026 be approved as a true record.

127. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

128. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

No questions were received.

129. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

There were no reasons to exclude the press or public.

130. COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

At the Chair's invitation the Cabinet Member for Finance and Community Safety, Councillor Alam OBE, advised that the report sought approval to recommend a Community Governance Review to Cabinet. It was noted that the Council had a statutory duty to undertake such reviews approximately every 10-15 years, with the last review completed in 2008. It was explained that the review process required consultation with local residents and other interested parties, including parish councils, elected members and MPs. An initial consultation on current arrangements and potential changes would be undertaken, followed by a further consultation on draft recommendations, prior to Cabinet considering final proposals for submission to Full Council.

Members were advised by the Council's Monitoring Officer, Phillip Horsfield, that the Community Governance Review was an administrative process, with the formal political decision-making at its conclusion. It was noted that the criteria for the review were prescribed by legislation and set

out in the agreed terms of reference. Subject to consideration by the Board and approval by Cabinet, the review would take account of representations received from residents and other stakeholders. The draft recommendations would then be prepared for consideration, which would be subject to further consultation process before final proposals were presented for Council determination.

The Chair invited members of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB) to raise questions and queries.

Councillor Blackham noted that the presentation focused on outlining the process but provided limited detail on the criteria to be applied when evaluating parish councils and parish boundaries. He asked for further clarification on the assessment criteria, including how National Association of Local Councils (NALC) requirements and recommendations were considered, and whether the ratio of electors to councillors was a key factor.

In response the Monitoring Officer, Phillip Horsfield explained that boundary considerations included elector-to-councillor ratios and overall workability but also depended on the nature of each area and how residents identified with it. It was noted that there were no fixed minimum or maximum sizes for parishes, as circumstances varied between large towns and small villages. This area-specific approach was given as the reason why criteria were not defined rigidly at this stage, with consultation and feedback from local ward members and parish councils highlighted as essential. It was further emphasised that resident identification with an area was a key consideration, and that failing to take this into account often caused difficulties in boundary reviews.

In a follow up question, Councillor Blackham requested that, given the level of judgement involved due to significant differences across the borough in settlement size and representation, proposals should return to the committee for consideration before being submitted to Cabinet. It was agreed that this could be accommodated if the committee wished, enabling members to review and comment on the judgements applied prior to Cabinet consideration.

In response it was explained that there were no expectation of a wholesale review or widespread changes to all parishes in the borough, based on current indications from engagement with parish councils and previous discussions. It was noted that not all parishes would necessarily be affected; however, if strong representations were to be received from all parishes, this position would be reconsidered. Any such revised position would be presented to members for consideration.

It was noted by Councillor Brent, that respondents to the consultation might raise a wide range of issues beyond the specific questions asked, reflecting differing motivations and concerns. While consultation was supported as a means of gaining a better understanding of parishioner

views, concern was expressed about the timing and sensitivity of issues relating to the parish precept, particularly given emerging public dissatisfaction. It was suggested that, if the precept was to be addressed, questions should be framed positively, and caution was urged to avoid prompting debate on matters where clear or constructive responses might not be possible.

The Monitoring Officer explained that the parish precept was not a boundary matter and that decisions on the precept were the responsibility of parish councils. It was stated that dissatisfaction with such decisions should be addressed through the electoral process rather than by altering administrative arrangements. It was further noted that this distinction would be made clear. Councillor Brent acknowledged this position but expressed concern that the public might not widely understand it.

Councillor Yasseen sought clarification on the variation in councillor-to-elector ratios across parish areas, citing examples where one parish had a significantly lower ratio compared to another. Clarification was sought on why such differences existed between parishes. In response to this, it was explained that there was no fixed councillor-to-elector ratio and that representation was based more on community identity than purely numerical thresholds. It was noted that factors such as population change and growth were considered, but variations between parishes were expected. Emphasis was placed on whether parish arrangements were effective in representing their communities and enabling decision-making, rather than on individual decisions or mathematical calculations. It was confirmed that numerical ratios would be taken into account but would not be the deciding factor.

In a second question, Councillor Yasseen queried the use of a uniform 1.25% population growth assumption and asked how this figure was derived, drawing comparisons with similar assumptions used in education planning that had previously proved inaccurate. Concern was expressed that applying a standard growth rate could create uneven impacts across areas. Councillor Yasseen asked whether this approach might lead to similar issues and whether more localised demographic data should be considered through the consultation and review process.

It was explained that population growth assumptions were based on statistics from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and reviewed as part of a local process over a 10–15-year cycle. It was noted that growth data could lag behind new developments, but this allowed time for residents to identify with the parish or council they felt best represented their area. It was stated that this would be addressed through the consultation, including engagement with residents of new developments. Regular reviews were highlighted as a way of managing timing differences, and it was confirmed that planning officers would be involved in the review process to ensure alignment with the adopted local plan.

Councillor Allen asked what would happen to any accumulated parish

precept if a parish council were to be abolished as a result of the review, and whether funds would be returned to residents or absorbed elsewhere. The Monitoring Officer stated that there was no current proposal to abolish any parish council, although members could consider this. Based on previous experience, it was understood that any remaining funds would transfer to the principal authority, as returning them directly to residents was generally impractical. It was noted that this position would be confirmed to ensure accuracy.

In a further question Councillor Allen queried whether the reorganisation of community governance order would be shared with NALC as a matter of courtesy. It was confirmed that this could be done.

Councillor Monk asked whether there were plans to engage young people as part of the consultation, particularly in light of recent changes to the voting age. It was confirmed that liaison with children's services would take place to support youth engagement, and that a communications plan was being developed to ensure all demographic groups were reached. It was also noted that a further report on the voting age changes would be brought forward once timings were clearer, and that members would be briefed on arrangements being made through elections services and the wider council to ensure eligible voters were informed and supported.

Councillor McKiernan asked whether potential future changes to parish council powers would be considered as part of the consultation and raised concerns about the capacity of the parish council liaison officer to support the process. In response, it was confirmed that responsibility for the consultation would not rest with a single officer, with the elections team leading the work in close collaboration with neighbourhoods' officers and relevant Cabinet portfolio holders to ensure effective engagement with parish and town councils. It was further stated that potential future changes to parish council powers would not be factored into the current review, as any such changes were uncertain and unlikely to align with the timescale of this process.

Councillor Thorp sought clarification that, following consultation, parish boundaries could be amended where parts of an area no longer identified with a parish or where areas strongly identified with a neighbouring parish. A further question was raised about how disputes would be resolved where views were divided.

The Monitoring Officer confirmed that boundary changes were possible but would need to be justified by geography and consultation responses. Decisions would be based on an area's practical ability to function as a parish and its identification with the wider locality, rather than dissatisfaction with representation or voting outcomes. Disputes would be determined by the council, taking into account officer recommendations, consultation feedback and geographic considerations, noting that it was rare for these factors not to lead to a clear recommendation.

The Chair asked if assurances could be provided to ensure that the consultation would be meaningful. In response the Monitoring Officer confirmed this assurance, explaining that the outcomes would be reported transparently to the committee, cabinet and council. It was emphasised that the process would be open to challenge, subject to scrutiny, and robust, with members able to hold officers to account where necessary.

Councillor A Carter asked whether the review would consider the number of councillors on parish councils, noting that high numbers often led to vacancies, co-options and uncontested elections. It was suggested that fewer councillors could result in more effective parish councils and more robust elections. In a further question clarification was also sought on whether the review would allow for the abolition of existing parish councils or the removal of areas from a parish, and conversely whether currently unparished areas could be included within a parish boundary if consultation supported this.

The Monitoring Officer responded that the review could consider changes to the number of parish councillors, including reductions, increases or no change, depending on what was effective for each area. It was noted that fewer councillors did not necessarily result in more contested elections, and that evidence on election outcomes would be presented to members to support informed decision-making.

It was confirmed that the abolition of a parish council was possible but would be considered only as a last resort and would require strong supporting evidence and consultation support. It was also confirmed that the review could consider incorporating currently unparished areas into parishes, subject to consultation with affected residents, with any proposals brought forward for Council consideration at the conclusion of the review.

The Chair asked whether the abolition of a parish council would require a petition supported by a specified proportion of local residents before it could be considered. The response provided confirmed that legislation provided a mechanism for residents to trigger consideration of boundary changes or abolition through a petition, based on a defined proportion of the electorate. It was emphasised that abolition would require a significant and sustained level of local support, normally demonstrated over an extended period. It was noted that only in exceptional circumstances, such as prolonged inactivity and a complete absence of engagement, might abolition be considered without such petitioning, in line with statutory guidance.

Councillor Tinsley asked whether the reference to petitions triggering a community governance review was effectively part of, or a precursor to, the consultation process. In response the Monitoring Officer explained that petitions meeting the required thresholds could be incorporated into the current review rather than requiring a separate, standalone review. This approach was intended to ensure flexibility and efficiency, allowing

any qualifying petitions arising during the process to be considered within the scope of the ongoing review.

Resolved: That the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board supported the recommendations to Cabinet.

Further actions that arose from discussions were that:

- It was agreed that the final Community Governance Review report would be presented to OSMB as part of its pre-decision scrutiny work ahead of its consideration by Cabinet.

131. COUNCIL PLAN UPDATE - YEAR AHEAD PLAN 2026/27

At the Chair's invitation the Leader of the Council introduced the annual delivery plan, explaining that it set out actions for the year within the context of the wider Council Plan and longer-term objectives. It was noted that the plan had been brought forward ahead of end-of-year performance figures, which would be reported later in the municipal year.

The plan included 81 priority actions aligned with existing decision-making frameworks, 35 corporate performance measures, and a small number of annual social care measures to ensure service-level performance remained visible within corporate reporting. Members were advised that the overall structure and thematic approach were consistent with the previous year.

A correction was highlighted relating to a performance measure on enforcement activity, clarifying that it applied specifically to the Street Safe Team. It was explained that the measure was intended to provide an indication of overall activity for the newly established service, recognising that its role extended beyond enforcement to include softer support and creating welcoming environments. The measure would be reviewed over the year to assess its suitability.

The Chair invited members of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB) to raise questions and queries.

Councillor Allen raised concerns about the wording of Social Care Measure SC5, which referred to safeguarding outcomes being "at least partially met." It was queried whether this reflected a lack of ambition to fully meet personal outcomes, whether it implied acceptance of falling short of full potential, and whether such wording could risk encouraging complacency among staff in meeting individuals' needs.

The Leader responded that the social care measure referenced was a nationally recognised performance measure rather than one developed locally. It was emphasised that the measure was not intended to suggest that partially meeting outcomes was acceptable, nor to lower expectations for practice. Instead, it was designed to focus on the lived experiences and perceptions of adults involved in safeguarding processes, rather than

solely on activity-based or output measures, ensuring service user experience remained central to performance reporting.

The Executive Director, Adult Care, Housing and Public Health, Ian Spicer, explained that, in safeguarding cases, it was not always possible to fully resolve every outcome a person might wish to achieve, due to the complexity and limits of intervention. It was emphasised that the measure focused on ensuring individuals had as positive an experience as possible during safeguarding processes, recognising that the circumstances prompting those interventions were often challenging. While the wording might appear unambitious when read in isolation, it reflected a nationally set measure and acknowledged that not all desired outcomes could realistically be delivered in every case.

In a further question, Councillor Allen queried why actions relating to reference P31, 'Increase the proportion of waste sent for reuse' and reference 16 'Plant at least 500 trees across the borough', were allocated to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Community Safety, and sought clarification on whether this was intentional. The Leader suggested that the allocation may have been an administrative error and that the portfolio attribution would be checked and corrected if necessary.

Councillor Yasseen made two general observations. The first related to ongoing challenges with engagement, particularly the under-representation of young people and ethnic minority communities in consultations. Concern was expressed about a perceived disconnect between strategic plans and neighbourhood working, with a view that such plans should be more clearly translated to ward-level relevance and discussed within neighbourhood structures to support effective implementation.

The second observation related to the quality of equality analysis. It was noted that while the Council was aware of deprivation, health inequalities and demographic differences across wards, equality impact assessments often suggested there were no barriers. The member questioned how this aligned with known inequalities and whether the analysis sufficiently acknowledged structural and practical barriers, citing examples such as unmet needs impacting adult social care demand and budgets.

In response, the Leader explained that the delivery plan represented a borough-wide set of corporate priorities intended to complement, rather than replace, neighbourhood working. It was acknowledged that stronger links between neighbourhood engagement and corporate planning were needed, and that work was underway to better align neighbourhood services, policy development, communications and governance to achieve a more holistic approach to engagement and decision-making.

On equality analysis, it was acknowledged that barriers did exist within society and that the equality section of the report provided a high-level assessment of the overall impact of the plan. It was emphasised that

individual actions and projects would be supported by more detailed equality work as they were delivered. The challenges of engaging under-represented groups, particularly younger people, were recognised as ongoing and requiring targeted effort. It was confirmed that addressing inequality remained a priority, although it was accepted that progress was complex and incremental.

Adding to the response the Director of Policy, Strategy and Engagement, Chris Paddock stated that equality remained a recognised and ongoing challenge, closely linked to neighbourhood engagement. Members were advised that a forthcoming Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy would seek to better translate Council Plan objectives at neighbourhood level, taking account of geography as well as factors such as diversity, age and different community groups.

Reference was made to the ward prioritisation process, which used data analysis aligned to Council Plan themes to identify specific geographic and community-level issues, and to the development of a Neighbourhood Leadership Strategy aimed at strengthening the role of ward councillors in these processes. It was noted that these approaches were intended to improve inclusion, equitable involvement and councillor input where issues were identified.

The Head of Policy, Performance and Intelligence, Fiona Boden, clarified the reference within the equality analysis, noting that earlier sections of the document set out significant detail on existing barriers faced by residents, particularly those who were most vulnerable. It was highlighted that the plan brought together existing actions and mitigations already underway across services, rather than proposing new initiatives.

It was acknowledged that wording within the equality analysis could have been clearer and better aligned with the broader narrative, which recognised the presence of structural and practical barriers. The member emphasised that these barriers were addressed through existing activity and that more detailed, individual equality assessments would be undertaken at the relevant decision-making stages for specific actions contained within the plan.

A further question was asked by Councillor Yasseen who emphasised the need for clearer linkage between the delivery plan and neighbourhood-level activity. Concern was expressed that wards were contributing to the plan's outcomes without having structured discussions about implementation or oversight at neighbourhood meetings. By way of example, reference was made to youth provision, including the Healthy Holidays programme, where opportunities existed to better align planned provision with identified local issues. It was suggested that stronger cohesion was needed to ensure neighbourhoods were aware of initiatives coming forward, could monitor progress, and support effective local delivery.

Councillor Monk sought clarification on the presentation of social care performance measures, noting that some indicators were marked as non-applicable. While this was understood in relation to measures such as children at risk of exploitation, questions were raised about adult measures. In particular, clarification was requested as to why the proportion of adults with social care support remaining at home was listed as non-applicable, while a low number of new admissions to residential care was treated as a positive outcome, given that residential care may be the appropriate and necessary response to meet individuals' needs.

Following upon the original question, Councillor Monk sought clarification on adult social care performance measures, particularly the distinction between measures relating to adults remaining at home and those relating to admissions to residential care. Concern was expressed about how these measures were assessed where residential care was the appropriate outcome to meet individuals' needs.

The Executive Director, Adult Care, Housing and Public Health, Ian Spicer, explained that the measure relating to adults remaining at home, reference SC1, referred to the length of time an individual continued to live at home following a social care intervention, and was intended to demonstrate the effectiveness of support in preventing readmission to hospital or residential care. It was noted that this measure was difficult to report on consistently, as the duration could only be confirmed once a subsequent episode occurred, which explained why figures were sometimes recorded as non-applicable.

Further clarification was provided that the measure was based on the period an individual remained at home post-intervention, which could vary significantly and, in some cases, be indefinite, making real-time measurement challenging.

Councillor McKiernan sought clarification on a recruitment-related action within the plan, specifically the reference to a "flexible" recruitment approach to reflect communities and support delivery of the inclusion strategy. Clarification was requested as to whether this referred to any specific intended changes or current review of HR recruitment processes, or whether the wording was intended to be more general.

The Leader explained that HR was undertaking a significant review of recruitment processes following concerns that the existing online-only system was outdated, lengthy, and creating barriers for potential applicants, with evidence of incomplete applications and under-representation from some communities. Initial work had focussed on improving the accessibility and functionality of the system, alongside wider activity aimed at improving engagement within communities and promoting the Council as an attractive employer. It was noted that this was an evolving area of work and that the action within the plan was intended to set a point at which progress could be assessed, rather than to prescribe a fixed or finalised solution.

Following up on the question Councillor McKiernan welcomed the update on recruitment work, referring to a recent scrutiny visit where recruitment difficulties had been identified, including trials of accepting physical CVs rather than requiring online applications. Particular concern was raised about requirements such as providing three years of employment references, which could present barriers for young people and first-time job applicants. It was suggested that similar challenges could also affect progress towards apprenticeship targets. In response, it was acknowledged that the point about reference requirements had been noted and would be taken away for consideration. It was also reported that progress on apprenticeships was generally positive and would be reflected in future performance reporting.

Councillor Thorp raised concerns about the consistency of enforcement-related performance indicators within the plan, particularly where some measures set numerical targets and others set percentage thresholds. It was suggested that this approach could inadvertently encourage inconsistent enforcement practices over the year, with officers potentially delaying action to meet percentage targets later. It was also questioned whether clearer thresholds for when enforcement action should be taken would be more appropriate, and argued that certain issues, such as fly-tipping, should be subject to a consistent and robust enforcement approach wherever possible.

In response to concerns about the consistency of enforcement-related performance indicators, it was explained that the measures reflected different aspects of enforcement activity and should be viewed collectively rather than sequentially. It was clarified that some measures such as reference P4, 'Deliver at least 50 enforcement interventions, including formal warnings, FPNs and notices', related specifically to the Street Safe service and that wording errors would be corrected where necessary.

It was emphasised that the intention of the measures was to demonstrate both a commitment to enforcement and the effectiveness of that enforcement. Members were advised that simply issuing high numbers of penalties did not necessarily lead to better outcomes, particularly where fines were unlikely to be paid or enforcement action failed to address underlying behaviours.

It was noted that, while certain issues such as fly-tipping often warranted direct enforcement action, other matters, including hate crime-related behaviour, could require a more nuanced approach focused on engagement and behaviour change. The suite of measures was therefore intended to balance visible enforcement activity with proportionality and effectiveness, rather than incentivising enforcement solely to meet numerical targets.

Councillor Blackham raised two points. Firstly, concern was expressed about the effectiveness of several business support performance

indicators, noting that the measures, E3-E6, appeared process-focused rather than outcome-focused. It was suggested that targets such as the number of businesses contacted or supported could be met without necessarily delivering meaningful economic impact, and that greater emphasis should be placed on tangible outcomes such as investment, growth or long-term benefit rather than activity alone.

Secondly, concern was raised about the progress of the Dinnington project, which had been in development for several years. It was noted that the plan indicated a contractor would not be appointed until later in the year, giving the impression that the project was not being prioritised. While acknowledging previous land acquisition issues, Councillor Blackham emphasised the importance of maintaining momentum and visibility, given the significance of the project to surrounding communities.

A follow-up question was raised by the Chair seeking assurance that sufficient capital, capacity and commitment existed across Council services, contractors and partners to deliver all actions within the proposed timescales.

The Executive Director, Regeneration and Environment, Andrew Bramidge responded that the business support indicators were intended to be meaningful and outcome-focused. It was clarified that key account management involved sustained, structured engagement with businesses over the course of the year rather than one-off contact, and that the impact of this support would be demonstrable by year end.

In relation to the Dinnington project, it was confirmed that contractor procurement would take place within the year, with demolition works commencing and the main contract works to follow. Confidence was expressed that progress would be made during the year.

Addressing the wider question of capacity and funding, it was confirmed that all actions contained within the annual delivery plan were fully funded and deliverable within the agreed timescales. While some longer-term projects would require additional funding in future years, sufficient resources were available to deliver the actions scheduled for the current year.

Following up on the earlier question, Councillor Blackham, clarified that earlier comments on business support performance measures were intended to emphasise the importance of outcomes rather than activity alone. It was reiterated that the expectation was for future reporting to demonstrate tangible achievements and added value, rather than simply confirming that numerical targets had been met.

The Chair asked the Leader whether the high-risk actions within the plan had been identified, what specific mitigations were in place to address potential delays or failures, and sought assurance that appropriate oversight and controls were in place to manage delivery risks at a leadership level. In response to questions about delivery risk, it was

explained that a detailed risk ranking of actions was not held at that moment, though officers could undertake further analysis if required. It was noted that timescales had been set with appropriate contingency where possible and that actions included within the plan were based on available funding and capacity at the time of drafting.

Members were advised that progress against the plan was monitored internally through regular service reporting, with quarterly performance reports provided to Cabinet to identify areas on track and areas requiring intervention. Updates were also reported to members on a six-monthly basis. It was stated that these arrangements provided appropriate opportunities for leadership oversight and corrective action where delivery challenges arose. It was further noted that, based on previous experience, the majority of planned actions were typically delivered each year, while maintaining a sufficiently stretching programme to drive improvement and avoid complacency.

Resolved: That the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board supported the recommendations to Cabinet.

132. CRISIS AND RESILIENCE FUND

At the Chair's invitation, the Leader of the Council introduced the report, reminding members of the former Household Support Fund, which had provided grant funding for cost-of-living measures, including council tax support top ups and free school meal holiday vouchers. This funding had been replaced by the Government's Crisis and Resilience Fund (CRF), with a modest increase in funding but clearer requirements on how it had to be used.

The CRF required four elements. First, year-round crisis payments had to be available for residents experiencing financial emergencies, including energy costs. Given previous demand, £1m had been allocated to this element. Second, discretionary housing payments had to be included, with a similar level of funding allocated. Third, a small amount of funding had been set aside for community coordination to support oversight, engagement and promotion of schemes. Fourth, a significant proportion of the fund had to be used for "resilience", defined as advice and advocacy services. Existing provision had been expanded, including the Open Arms scheme and additional support for care leavers.

Commitments for council tax support top up payments were to continue to be funded through the CRF. In relation to free school meal holiday vouchers, recent changes in Government guidance now allowed provision, but limited resources meant the scheme could not continue in the previous form. Instead, a single voucher payment would be made during the summer holidays to target support at a peak period of financial pressure for families. This would replace regular holiday payments. Other support, including Healthy Holidays food and activity provision, remained in place and was being expanded.

Overall, the approach aimed to balance proactive support for those most vulnerable to financial shocks, compliance with Government requirements on resilience services, and the availability of crisis support throughout the year.

The Interim Director of Policy, Strategy and Engagement, Chris Paddock noted that paragraph 2.10 of the report set out the outcomes used to define resilience services, and members were encouraged to refer to this section, as it underpinned the distinction between resilience and crisis support and reflected the concerns raised about how resilience was defined.

The Chair invited members of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB) to raise questions and queries.

A question was raised by Councillor Allen about whether spend under this fund would be reported separately or included within general financial monitoring. It was confirmed that expenditure would be closely monitored through existing financial reporting arrangements, with specific oversight and reporting in place where required by the grant conditions.

Councillor Allen suggested that, given the importance of the issues addressed by the fund, a separate programme report might be helpful to track progress, while recognising that the overall level of funding was relatively small. It was asked whether information could be brought back to scrutiny and Cabinet through existing processes. In response, it was noted that more detailed updates could be incorporated into quarterly financial monitoring, providing specific information on spend and any reallocation between elements. However, it was highlighted that such reporting would be retrospective and potentially time-lagged. It was confirmed that the fund was closely monitored internally, with delegated authority in place to allow adjustments to allocations where necessary, and that no more effective or proportionate public reporting mechanism during the year was identified beyond existing arrangements.

In response, the Leader explained that discretionary housing payment arrangements had been in place for many years and that clarification would be provided on whether payments were made directly to tenants or to landlords, including when the council was the landlord. It was noted that previous experience, particularly during energy crisis payments, showed that direct payments to providers were not always practical, for example where residents used prepayment meters, which required cash support to purchase credit.

It was confirmed that Government guidance required a “cash-first” approach, which was considered to support dignity and choice. Experience indicated that recipients overwhelmingly used payments for intended purposes. The scheme was designed on the basis that individuals would normally receive only one crisis payment per year, to

avoid creating ongoing dependency, with flexibility to make exceptions in exceptional or life-critical circumstances. This approach was intended to balance individual responsibility and autonomy with safeguards against repeated reliance on crisis funding.

Councillor Yasseen welcomed the range of activities and interventions set out in the report and noted the value of the evaluation work undertaken, particularly given its targeted and different approach compared with previous funding arrangements. It was highlighted that strengthening existing infrastructure reflected lessons learned from earlier crises, where this had been a key strength locally.

The importance of establishing baselines and measurable outcomes was emphasised, with a suggestion that clearer measures would help demonstrate the difference being made. It was also noted that the fund should be understood within the context of wider support provision, with recognition that families may be accessing multiple forms of support simultaneously and that a layered approach was often necessary.

Questions were raised about coordination arrangements and whether the resources allocated were sufficient, while acknowledging that close working across council teams and community partners could mitigate this. Overall, it was stated that the ambition was for the scheme to align effectively with existing provision and to demonstrate, in a measurable way, that it was delivering tangible benefits for residents.

In response, the Leader acknowledged that these were fair challenges. It was noted that, with greater medium-term certainty over the funding, there was now an opportunity to move away from short-term decision-making and take a more strategic approach.

It was outlined that the intention was to use the funding to put cash directly into the hands of those most in need, while also strengthening longer-term support through joined-up, place-based services. This included better integration between crisis support, social supermarkets, food banks, voluntary sector provision, advice services, libraries and other community venues.

Reference was made to improved links with employability support, following the first year of the Pathways to Work programme, and to closer alignment with children's social care and other frontline services that routinely support families facing financial hardship. The aim was to ensure services worked in a complementary and coordinated way, with a stronger presence in communities.

Overall, it was emphasised that the approach sought to provide a continuum of support that enabled residents not only to move out of crisis but to achieve greater independence and choice, with services working together horizontally to deliver practical and tangible outcomes.

A question was raised by Councillor Tinsley BEM, regarding the eligibility of home-educated children for free school meals and whether they could be considered within the policy, particularly given increases in home education and the financial pressures faced by some low-income families.

In response, it was noted that eligibility was assumed to follow nationally recognised free school meals criteria, but that clarification would be provided in writing. It was explained that free school meals had been used as a proxy means test because it was a well-established and straightforward way of identifying households in need. It was stated that introducing an additional or separate means-testing process would be challenging, as increased administrative costs would reduce the amount of funding available for direct support. While recognising that some families outside the standard eligibility criteria might experience significant need, it was emphasised that the scheme aimed to remain lean to maximise the funds reaching residents.

The Chair asked about how the value of the summer free school meal voucher payment had been determined, particularly in the context of rising inflation and the cost of providing meals for children.

The Leader explained that the figure was based on maximising the amount of support available to eligible families while meeting the wider commitments of the fund. The approach was not to set a fixed voucher value in advance, but to determine how much funding could be allocated to this cohort after other required elements of the scheme had been provided for. It was noted that, as a single payment, this represented more support during the summer period than families received previously, though it was less support across the full year compared to earlier arrangements. This was described as a necessary trade-off given limited resources.

It was confirmed that families experiencing further financial difficulty could still access crisis payments if needed, and that other support, including Healthy Holidays provision, remained available. While acknowledging the challenge for families, it was stated that the council was maintaining support within the available funding at a level comparable to, or better than, many authorities where similar schemes had been withdrawn entirely.

The Chair asked about how the council would monitor and evaluate the impact of reduced family support on child poverty and food insecurity in 2026–27.

In response, it was noted that identifying clear headline impacts would be difficult unless there were significant changes in the number of children accessing services, as wider external factors such as cost-of-living pressures were likely to have a greater influence. However, it was acknowledged that, with greater certainty over funding, there was a need to strengthen evaluation and reporting. This would include gathering

feedback from service users on the impact of support received and reviewing broader indicators, particularly demand and pressures within children's services. It was recognised that any assessment over a 12-month period would provide only a partial and imperfect picture.

It was noted that, as the Policy, Strategy and Engagement directorate developed, greater emphasis would be placed on improving the use of data and evidence to better understand and anticipate financial hardship affecting residents. This included strengthening qualitative insight from frontline and community-level engagement to inform policy development, alongside improved use of data and analysis to support earlier and more informed decision-making.

Reference was made to work linked to the Thriving Neighbourhoods strategy, which aimed to better capture lived experience of financial crisis and feed this into policy and service design. It was also highlighted that scenario planning was underway in relation to known risks, such as the end of energy price protections, to ensure the authority was better prepared for potential impacts on residents. Work was ongoing to identify and invest in appropriate data sources to support timely and effective responses.

A question was raised by Councillor Monk about how the quality of resilience and advice services would be assessed, beyond simply measuring access and usage. Assurance was sought that residents would receive a consistent standard of advice regardless of whether services were accessed through council-run provision, drop-in centres, or voluntary and community sector organisations.

The Leader explained that common standards for advice provision were already in place through existing agreements with voluntary sector organisations, which set clear expectations about the models and quality of advice to be delivered. These standards had been established for some time and would be reinforced through service level agreements linked to the resilience and advice provision.

It was noted that, while provider standards were clear and well embedded, further work was needed to confirm how feedback from residents about their experience of advice services would be captured and assessed. An undertaking was given to provide further information on how service-user feedback and quality assurance would be monitored, alongside existing performance and compliance arrangements.

In a further question Councillor Monk raised concerns about how some resilience outcomes would be measured, particularly reductions in the need for crisis payments and food support. It was noted that food parcels could be accessed from a range of providers beyond this scheme, making attribution difficult. It was also highlighted that a reduction in applications for crisis payments did not necessarily indicate reduced need, given limits on eligibility and the possibility that unmet need might remain hidden.

It was explained that requests for crisis payments would be recorded over time, even where payments were limited, allowing trends in demand to be monitored. It was noted that exceptions could be made in exceptional or severe circumstances.

In relation to food support, it was stated that the council worked with the majority of crisis food providers across the borough and already held good intelligence on levels of demand, referral routes and underlying drivers. It was highlighted that many providers had shifted from emergency food provision towards more sustainable support models, including low-cost food offers and links to wider services. As a result, the number of emergency food parcels issued had reduced compared with previous years, and it was considered possible to track changes in demand for crisis food support with a reasonable degree of confidence.

The Chair asked about how the council would ensure that the most vulnerable residents, including those who were digitally excluded, were made aware of and able to access the fund. In response, the Leader explained that the primary approach was proactive targeting, with a significant proportion of funding automatically provided to households already identified as most financially vulnerable, without the need for an application. It was further noted that access would be supported through a strong place-based approach, working with community-based provision such as social supermarkets and food and crisis partners, so that support was available in locations residents already accessed when experiencing hardship.

In addition, broader promotion would take place, including local awareness activity alongside national communications, recognising that demand could be influenced by the level of central Government promotion. Overall, the combination of automatic payments, community-based access points and targeted promotion was intended to ensure that those most in need, including digitally excluded residents, were able to benefit from the fund.

The Chair noted that two additional actions were proposed: to provide confirmation on whether crisis payments would be made to tenants or directly to landlords, and to clarify free school meal eligibility for home-educated children.

Resolved: That the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board supported the recommendations to Cabinet.

Further actions that arose from discussions were that officers were asked to confirm:

- Whether crisis payments were made to tenants or directly to landlords.
- The free school meal entitlement position for home-educated children.

133. CLIMATE EMERGENCY ANNUAL REPORT

At the Chair's invitation the Executive Director of Regeneration and Environment, Andrew Bramidge, reported that the annual climate change report set out the Council's work to address climate change, including progress against agreed targets for the Council's own emissions to reach net zero by 2030 and for borough-wide emissions to reach net zero by 2040.

The report outlined activity across seven thematic areas: monitoring and measurement, energy, housing, transport, waste, the built and natural environment, and influencing and engagement. Members were asked to note the achievements delivered through the 2025–26 Climate Change Action Plan and to approve the proposed activity for 2026–27.

The report also sought delegated authority for the allocation of funding to specific projects within corporate property and electric vehicle infrastructure, to be exercised jointly by the relevant Cabinet Member and Service Director. In addition, approval was requested to reallocate £1m previously assigned to a renewable energy project that was no longer proceeding, to support the development of rooftop and car-park solar schemes in line with a motion approved by Council in January of the previous year.

The Chair invited members of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB) to raise questions and queries.

Councillor Tinsley began by asking about whether the 2030 target for achieving net zero emissions for the Council remained realistic, particularly given current challenges with decarbonising the vehicle fleet. It was noted that suitable electric technology was not yet available for some larger operational vehicles, such as refuse collection vehicles, and clarification was sought on whether the target should be reviewed.

The Executive Director of Regeneration and Environment acknowledged that the 2030 target for achieving net zero emissions was extremely challenging, due in part to factors outside the Council's control, including slower-than-anticipated decarbonisation of the national electricity grid. It was noted that current indications suggested full grid decarbonisation was more likely to be achieved around 2032–33.

It was explained that, while the Council continued to take action within its control, overall progress was dependent on national developments. During the current financial year, further analysis would be undertaken to assess projected emissions by 2030, alongside accelerated work to support the transition to electric vehicles as part of the procurement plan.

It was stated that a further report would be brought back to Cabinet in the next financial year, setting out a detailed assessment of progress and

proposing whether the current targets remained realistic or required revision.

Councillor McKiernan raised concerns that a number of actions within the climate change action plan had been delayed across several areas, including where delays were not solely attributable to external factors. It was questioned whether the Council was taking delivery of the programme as seriously as required and whether sufficient urgency was being applied given the scale and breadth of the delays identified.

It was stated that the Council was taking climate change action seriously, with strong internal governance through an established Climate Change Board and committed officer involvement. Specific delays, particularly in relation to the vehicle fleet, were attributed in part to recent staffing challenges, including prolonged absence at senior level. It was reported that a new senior appointment had recently been made, with responsibility for progressing electric vehicle procurement and assessing alternative options.

Work was underway to complete procurement of remaining electric vehicles and to carry out cost-benefit analysis on converting parts of the fleet to alternative fuels as a transition away from diesel. Initial trials had indicated potential operational benefits, including reduced breakdowns, although costs were higher. Further analysis was being undertaken to determine whether savings in maintenance and repairs could offset increased fuel costs, with findings expected later in the year and the potential to improve reported carbon outcomes.

Councillor McKiernan welcomed the provision of electric vehicle chargers, noting that the installations would place chargers within three miles of a significant proportion of residents. However, concern was raised that 22kW chargers were described as “fast”, when this was not considered sufficient by many electric vehicle users, for whom higher-capacity chargers were required.

Councillor McKiernan then queried whether the overall strategy included plans to install higher-powered fast chargers across the borough, as the current council installations did not appear to meet this standard and existing fast chargers were limited. It was acknowledged that there were constraints related to the Northern Powergrid, and clarification was sought on whether plans were in place to address these issues through improved charging provision.

Kevin Fisher, the Service Director, Property and Facilities Services reminded Members that a report on the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund had been presented to Cabinet in December of the previous year. It was explained that the fund was government-financed and delivered via the Sheffield City Region Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA), which was in the process of procuring a provider to deliver chargers across South Yorkshire, including Rotherham. It was then advised that the

programme included investment in charging infrastructure, with 22kW chargers installed where appropriate, and higher-capacity chargers provided where greater infrastructure and power provision were required.

The Chair asked how well the proposed EV chargers would be protected against vandalism.

The Service Director, Property and Facilities Services explained that vandalism could not be completely prevented if individuals were determined to cause damage. Early EV charger installations had experienced cable theft due to exposed copper wiring, but newer infrastructure largely used integrated or socket-based chargers, which had significantly reduced theft. Higher-wattage chargers still required attached cables, and officers would work with providers to ensure these were installed in suitable locations to minimise vandalism and theft. Under the new contract, responsibility for theft and damage would sit with the suppliers, meaning there would be no direct financial impact on the Council, aside from potential inconvenience. Officers would continue to work with suppliers to select appropriate charger types and locations to reduce vandalism and theft as far as possible.

Councillor Yasseen reiterated points raised at previous meetings regarding the scale of change required to meet climate objectives and noted that policy decisions were political rather than formal declarations of emergency. It was acknowledged that the magnitude of change required could be difficult to fully comprehend. Appreciation was expressed for the clarity and transparency of the report appendices, particularly the use of graphs, which provided an honest assessment of current performance. Reference was made to the report indicating that only two relevant KPIs were currently being met, highlighting the significant work still required.

Concerns were raised around transport and modal shift, particularly in relation to EV charging infrastructure. It was noted that many residents wishing to reduce emissions by switching to electric vehicles were unable to charge outside their homes due to physical constraints, such as trees or street layout. It was suggested that a more flexible and creative approach could be considered, including balancing environmental trade-offs, such as replacing trees where necessary, to enable home charging access.

It was also noted that around 43% of road transport emissions related to trips outside South Yorkshire, limiting the impact of local measures alone. Concerns were expressed that cycling uptake had declined despite continued investment in cycle lanes, and that not all residents were able or willing to switch to cycling. The importance of enabling residents to actively support emissions reduction through practical and realistic measures was emphasised, as this could make a significant contribution to overall targets.

The Executive Director of Regeneration and Environment noted that the

borough's long-term target was to achieve net zero by 2040 and that recent efforts had primarily focused on reducing the Council's own emissions. It was highlighted that increased engagement with residents and businesses was required. Reference was made to the recently launched South Yorkshire transport strategy, including plans to transition the bus fleet to electric vehicles, which was expected to have a significant impact. It was acknowledged that emissions targets would not be met through cycling alone and that expanding EV charging infrastructure would be an important part of the approach.

The Service Director, Property and Facilities Services acknowledged that addressing behavioural change and modal shift was a complex issue being experienced locally, regionally, and nationally. It was noted that officers continued to engage regularly with communities, regional partners, and the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority. Recent work had focused on the Council's own assets, where relatively straightforward measures had delivered emissions reductions, but a broader review of the climate programme was now underway.

Reference was made to the publication of a new biodiversity report and the Council's approach to biodiversity net gain, including the potential to locally offset environmental impacts where necessary. It was confirmed that work was ongoing with regional partners on transport initiatives, including measures linked to the mainline station. Officers were adopting a programme and portfolio management approach to align climate, transport, biodiversity, and energy security objectives, with a review of targets for 2030 and 2040 to follow, focused on delivering tangible outcomes.

In a further question Councillor Yasseen raised concerns regarding the application of biodiversity net gain and how environmental impacts were balanced. Specific reference was made to cycling infrastructure, noting that the carbon impact of construction itself had not been clearly accounted for, and that low usage raised questions about how long it would take to offset the emissions associated with development. It was highlighted that reports did not clearly set out the timescale required to achieve carbon neutrality from such schemes, unlike approaches typically applied to housing developments. Concerns were also expressed that major infrastructure projects, often led through mayoral or regional bodies, lacked transparency around how biodiversity net gain and carbon impacts were assessed, and clarification was sought on whether the Council was able to influence these processes.

The Service Director, Property and Facilities Services stated that, following recent discussions on climate change, biodiversity, and related matters, officers had committed to developing clearer policies and standards to manage environmental impacts. It was acknowledged that while carbon impacts were routinely assessed for housing schemes, this approach had not consistently been applied to other infrastructure projects, and work was underway to address this gap. It was noted that

sustainability measures, including renewable energy provision, should be considered at the outset of development rather than retrospectively.

It was confirmed that officers were developing clear local standards and policies to guide infrastructure projects, drawing on best practice from housing delivery. While influence was more challenging at a regional level, the Council was actively lobbying through leadership channels and working with South Yorkshire partner authorities. Establishing clear standards and policies was identified as a key first step in enabling a more consistent approach across all future infrastructure schemes.

Councillor Allen referred to the table on page 189 relating to net zero by 2030 performance measures and queried whether the cumulative percentage change figure in the final row had been calculated correctly, noting that this may require further checking. Officers were asked to review the figures and confirm their accuracy.

Reference was also made to the allocated capital decarbonisation budget. It was asked whether horizon scanning had been undertaken to identify potential alternative funding sources, whether there was any indication of the likelihood of securing such funding, and whether a contingency plan was in place should external funding not be available to match the Council's contribution.

The Executive Director of Regeneration and Environment advised that the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme had concluded and that, while there had been discussion of alternative government funding, no further updates had been received. It was noted that some climate-related funding would be available through the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority as part of its agreed three-year single settlement, although details on allocation and spend were not yet known. Officers intended to pursue opportunities to access this funding, recognising that it would need to be shared across multiple local authorities.

The Service Director, Property and Facilities Services largely reiterated points made previously and outlined the operational challenges around funding availability. It was noted that the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme remained in existence but was no longer open to new bids. Some projects, including solar PV at the markets, had been funded through the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority at no cost to the Council. Officers continued to work with the Combined Authority to clarify what funding was available across South Yorkshire, although the position remained unclear.

It was also noted that there was limited direction from GB Energy, with indications that future focus may be on rooftop solar rather than large-scale renewable schemes. Officers considered there to be significant potential to maximise use of the Council's housing and corporate estate. Horizon scanning remained challenging, but as part of the current review, it was estimated that achieving the 2030 target through

direct Council investment would require approximately £40 million, subject to review.

This was identified as a potential contingency approach, recognising that many renewable investments, such as solar PV, typically delivered a financial return within five to ten years and contributed to energy security as well as emissions reduction. While the scale of investment was significant, it was expected that much of the cost could be recovered over time through business-case-led approaches. Fleet decarbonisation was highlighted as a particular challenge due to its higher costs and associated infrastructure requirements. It was confirmed that a contingency plan existed, although it was acknowledged to be difficult.

Councillor Monk welcomed the inclusion of rooftop solar at Swinton and noted that works had recently begun. A query was raised about how local intelligence was gathered prior to project delivery, particularly given recent antisocial behaviour issues at the library site, including individuals accessing rooftops. Clarification was sought on how officers engaged with neighbourhood teams and used local knowledge to ensure appropriate preventative measures were in place, so that projects were viable in the long term and avoided unnecessary damage.

In response the Service Director, Property and Facilities Services explained that, as with all capital projects, officers engaged with end-user services at an early stage, in this case library services, to understand any operational issues, including antisocial behaviour. It was confirmed that project groups also engaged with local communities, stakeholders, and neighbourhood teams to gather local intelligence and identify potential risks. Officers sought to design out antisocial behaviour wherever possible, acknowledging that risks could not be entirely eliminated. It was noted that climate change considerations were now embedded across all Cabinet reports, with officers reviewing proposals organisation-wide, alongside a wider communications and engagement approach to support the long-term viability of projects.

Councillor Monk asked whether any measures had been installed at the Swinton site to prevent further access to the roof. Councillor Monk was advised that specific details were not immediately available but confirmed that officers were considering measures such as anti-vandal coatings and other preventative options. It was stated that officers would follow up with the relevant team and provide a specific update in relation to Swinton.

Councillor McKiernan raised a question regarding the potential use of battery storage in Council buildings to complement rooftop solar installations. It was noted that while solar panels were effective during summer months, their contribution was reduced in winter, and some buildings had limited capacity for additional panels. Reference was made to the potential for battery storage, including charging overnight, and clarification was sought on whether this was being considered by officers or whether costs currently made it unviable.

The Service Director, Property and Facilities Services confirmed that battery storage was being considered where appropriate. It was noted that planned works at Riverside House included a small solar canopy with associated battery storage, enabling energy generated during daylight hours to be used more effectively during winter or evening periods. Officers were routinely reviewing the inclusion of battery storage and other complementary technologies when assessing renewable energy options, rather than relying solely on solar PV installations.

Councillor McKiernan raised concerns following visits to the markets and new café. It was noted that while significant investment had been made in solar energy, the installed battery capacity was limited and appeared insufficient, albeit with scope for future expansion. Acknowledgement was given that battery storage remains costly.

Further concerns were raised regarding electric vehicle charging for residents without off-street parking. It was highlighted that trailing charging cables across pavements could result in fines. Clarification was sought on whether solutions such as council-installed pavement channels had been considered, or whether residents needed clearer guidance on penalties and safety requirements for cable protection.

The Service Director, Property and Facilities Services referred to the Cabinet report of the 15th, which highlighted issues around on-street electric vehicle charging. It was noted that some local authorities, predominantly in the south, had taken a more permissive approach, while authorities across South Yorkshire were collectively reviewing the Highway Act to improve management of the issue.

Options such as installing underground cabling were being explored. It was also noted that government was considering whether electric vehicle charging infrastructure could be included under existing electrification and communications legislation, which would allow suppliers to undertake roadworks and assume responsibility for reinstatement and maintenance.

It was confirmed that the council was currently required to remain compliant with the Highway Act, but that this position was under review in line with emerging opportunities and national policy developments.

Councillor McKiernan sought reassurance that, where pavements were excavated for infrastructure works, reinstatement would be carried out to an acceptable standard. The Chair confirmed this expectation.

Councillor McKiernan then raised a final question regarding the emerging government proposals for plug-in solar panels. It was acknowledged that responsibility for housing sat elsewhere; however, clarification was sought on whether any work was underway to explore the potential role of such measures, alongside insulation, in improving housing resilience and reducing energy costs.

The response clarified that the council was aware of plug-in solar panel systems, which were widely used in parts of Europe. It was noted that their use was not yet fully approved in the UK due to safety considerations, but that the climate team was aware of the developments and had begun discussions with housing colleagues about potential future use.

A preference was expressed for hard-wired solar panels, which were considered safer, particularly for new-build developments, with retrofit options also being considered. It was confirmed that while plug-in systems remained under consideration pending government approval, initial exploratory conversations were underway.

The recommendations were supported by a majority with one abstention.

Resolved: That the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board supported the recommendations to Cabinet.

Further actions that arose from discussions were that:

- In response to a question raised by Councillor Monk, information would be provided on what specific measures had been installed to address anti-social behaviour and prevent roof access to the solar panels at Swinton Library.

134. WORK PROGRAMME

The Governance Manager advised the Board that in relation to potential review regarding antisocial behaviour in country parks, it was noted that information had been requested from officers on the number of local and country parks, along with related antisocial behaviour statistics. Members were informed when this information had been received.

Councillor Allen raised questions regarding the work programme format, specifically why certain items were presented as information briefings rather than formal committee reports. It was suggested that bringing matters to the committee as reports could improve transparency, scrutiny, and democratic accountability. An alternative proposal was also raised to consider related matters together through a single Regeneration and Environment directorate OSMB session.

The Chair responded that work programmes were determined by individual committees. A personal view was expressed that where work was intended to progress to Cabinet, it should be supported by a formal report to enable effective scrutiny and recommendations. However, it was noted that a lack of member volunteers to undertake work programme items had presented challenges. Members were encouraged to be more proactive in shaping work programmes when consulted. While reservations were expressed about relying on information sheets, it was acknowledged that some items had progressed through the appropriate

governance processes, and agreement was expressed with the principle of clearer and more structured reporting.

Resolved: That the Work Programme be approved.

135. WORK IN PROGRESS - SELECT COMMISSIONS

Update from Health Select Commission:

This update was noted as presented within the agenda pack.

Update from Improving Lives Select Commission:

This update was noted as presented within the agenda pack.

Update from Improving Places Select Commission:

The Chair of Improving Places Select Commission, Councillor McKiernan reported on a recent site visit to Rother Valley Country Park, noting that attendance had been limited but that the visit had been productive and treated as a scrutiny exercise. It was stated that members reviewed what had worked well and what had not, with issues identified primarily relating to HR and procurement.

The concerns around procurement were highlighted as an area potentially outside the Places remit, and it was indicated that this issue could potentially be brought back to the committee for consideration. It was also noted that similar scrutiny visits had been undertaken, including visits to libraries and the new café, with the intention of increasing the number of site visits in future to support effective scrutiny of council activities.

Councillor Blackham sought clarification on whether the issues raised related to a specific procurement matter or a broader, general procurement issue. It was confirmed that the concerns related to general procurement processes.

Councillor McKiernan explained that procurement issues had contributed to delays in opening, with some ordered items arriving late. Further difficulties were highlighted in relation to catering supplies, where standard procurement arrangements designed for school catering had not aligned well with the needs of a café setting. It was noted that, as a local authority, procurement was required to follow government legislation, including formal tendering and framework agreements, which limited flexibility in purchasing day-to-day items. An issue relating to the YPO framework was acknowledged and was being pursued separately.

The Chair sought clarification on whether the café was council-run or operated by a private provider. In response it was confirmed that the café was council-owned and council-run, which explained some of the HR challenges encountered. It was noted that recruitment had been affected

by the council's requirement for three years of references, which had created difficulties for younger applicants and those returning from university.

It was highlighted that the café operated with a dedicated head chef, which was unique within the council's cafés. If successful, this role could support improvements across other council-run cafés in country parks. The café was also noted to be producing food in-house rather than relying on pre-purchased products, which had implications for procurement processes.

The Chair commented that, as the café was newly opened, it would need time to settle before any formal scrutiny review could be undertaken into the issues raised at the meeting. It was emphasised that the café would be expected to operate on a viable, income-generating basis. Any future scrutiny, if undertaken, should consider all council and externally operated cafés across the borough, rather than focusing solely on one location.

136. FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS

The Board considered the Forward Plan of Key Decisions, with the Chair outlining the proposed items for inclusion on the next OSMB agenda. It was noted that the Progress Update on Future Rothercare Model would be considered at the May meeting, having been deferred due to the length of the current agenda. Additional items proposed for consideration were the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy, Rotherham Market and Libraries (with a focus on financial and programme issues), and the Selective Licensing Community Impact.

Councillor Yasseen raised concerns about agenda length and the risk of excessive items limiting effective scrutiny, suggesting that a maximum of three substantive items may be more manageable, in line with practice elsewhere.

The Chair emphasised the importance of scrutiny and noted that failure to scrutinise items could lead to concerns being raised later. It was highlighted that the frequency of OSMB meetings had reduced in recent years, and that effective scrutiny could still be achieved provided members prepared in advance by reading reports and submitting focused questions.

The Chair proposed that all four items be included on the next agenda. A vote was taken, and it was agreed that all four items would be brought forward to the next OSMB meeting, with no votes against or abstentions recorded.

Resolved: That the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board:

1. Agreed that the following items would be added to the May agenda as part of OSMB's pre-decision scrutiny work:
 - Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2026

2031

- Rotherham Markets and Libraries
- Selective Licensing Community Impact

137. SOUTH YORKSHIRE MAYORAL COMBINED AUTHORITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

An update was provided by the Chair on South Yorkshire Combined Authority (SYMCA) matters, with it noted that bus franchising was the most significant recent development and was progressing well. SYMCA had taken control of the bus stations, including responsibility for repairs, and was progressing plans for electric buses across South Yorkshire. No specific issues were raised at that stage.

Councillor Blackham raised concerns regarding electric bus procurement, highlighting recent media commentary on the impact of overseas manufacturers, particularly from China, undercutting UK bus manufacturers. It was suggested that consideration should be given, where possible, to the impact on UK manufacturing and jobs when procuring vehicles.

The Chair responded that procurement processes required open competition and compliance with regulations, and that contracts would be awarded based on value for money. It was noted that a range of fleet options were being considered to ensure the best financial outcome and passenger experience for residents.

Councillor McKiernan asked for clarification on progress relating to the devolution proposals involving the South Yorkshire Fire Authority and its potential incorporation into SYMCA. Concerns were raised about the lack of clarity around the governance and scrutiny arrangements, and it was requested that this be raised through SYMCA scrutiny channels. The Chair advised that the matter had previously been raised and that plans were still developing. Members were reminded of recent training sessions with SYMCA officers, which had low attendance but had provided relevant information. It was also noted that further engagement opportunities were planned by the SYMCA Mayor, including six-monthly consultations with elected members, some of which had been delayed due to elections. It was agreed that the issue could be raised again.

Councillor Yasseen raised reports that Doncaster Council had withdrawn support for Doncaster Sheffield Airport and asked whether this could be followed up to understand any implications for South Yorkshire and previous investment plans. The Chair responded that the Mayor's position may differ and that this was a matter primarily for SYMCA leadership. It was agreed that the issue would be discussed with the Leader to seek clarification.

138. CALL-IN ISSUES

There were no call-in issues.

139. URGENT BUSINESS

There were no urgent items.

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Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Cabinet – 11 May 2026

Report Title

Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2026–2031

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 of Adult Care, Housing and Public Health

Report Author(s)

Helen Caulfield-Browne, Housing Options Operational Manager

Helen.caulfield-browne@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

This report presents the findings from the review of the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2023–2026 and seeks Cabinet approval for the new Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2026–2031. It sets out the Council's statutory duties under the Homelessness Act 2002, which requires local authorities to carry out a homelessness review, to formulate and publish a homelessness strategy based on that review, and to publish a new strategy at least once every five years. The report describes how these duties have been fulfilled through the completion of the latest review and the development of the new Strategy.

The report outlines the eight-week consultation and engagement process undertaken with residents, people with lived experience, officers, and key stakeholders. Feedback from this process, alongside national policy, local evidence, and wider housing and homelessness intelligence, has informed the development of the new Strategy.

The Strategy is structured around four strategic priorities and sets out the Council's approach to preventing homelessness and rough sleeping over the next five years. It highlights the key issues affecting households experiencing or at risk of homelessness in Rotherham, details how the Council will work collaboratively with partners to respond to these challenges and demonstrates alignment with wider Council strategies and plans.

Recommendations

That Cabinet:

1. Notes the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy consultation summary report.
2. Approves the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2026-31.
3. Delegates authority to the Executive Director of Adult Care, Housing and Public Health to approve:
 - (a) Any minor data amendments to the Strategy prior to publication.
 - (b) The Action Plan, following its development, including any amendments arising from annual reviews.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 - The Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2026-2031

Appendix 2 - Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy Consultation Summary Report

Appendix 3 - Equality Impact Assessment (Part A) and (Part B)

Appendix 4 - Climate Impact Assessment

Background Papers

[Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2023-2026](#)

[Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government- A National Plan to End Homelessness \(December 2025\)](#)

[Rotherham's Housing Strategy 2025-2030](#)

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

None

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2026–2031

1. Background

1.1 The current Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy (2023–2026) has reached the end of its term, prompting a review. Under the Homelessness Act 2002, the Council must review homelessness in the borough and publish a new strategy at least every five years. The Homelessness Code of Guidance requires the review and strategy to:

- Assess current and future homelessness levels.
- Review trends and projections.
- Review existing activities and resources.
- Identify gaps and opportunities to prevent and resolve homelessness.
- Engage relevant agencies and consult the public, voluntary sector, and people with lived experience.
- Consider how all relevant agencies can contribute towards addressing identified needs to prevent and resolve homelessness.

1.2 Homelessness remains a significant challenge across the UK, with local authorities facing sustained increases in demand for support against the backdrop of rising housing costs, welfare reform, and ongoing cost of living pressures. Nationally, levels of homelessness continue to rise, with latest estimates (December 2025) reporting that 382,618 people in England are homeless, the highest figure recorded representing an 8% increase in just one year. These national pressures are reflected locally in Rotherham, where the number of people approaching the Council for homelessness assistance increased by 25.6% between 2023/24 and 2024/25, rising from 1,448 to 1,818.

1.3 The Council recognises that providing a home is only the first step in resolving homelessness, as many individuals face complex and overlapping issues that housing alone cannot address. The ongoing cost of living crisis continues to heighten vulnerability by widening the gap between income and essential living costs. The Strategy therefore aligns with the Council Plan, which prioritises helping residents to live safe, healthy, and independent lives, supported by significant investment in cost of living measures that reflect the crucial link between financial stability and sustaining a home.

1.4 In addition, the Council's wider focus on improving health and wellbeing, strengthening communities, and supporting vulnerable residents highlights the need for a whole-system, multi-agency response. This requires coordinated action across health, social care, community safety and voluntary sector partners to effectively prevent and relieve homelessness.

1.5 Rotherham's Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2026-2031, attached at Appendix 1, places emphasis on strengthening multi-agency approaches to early intervention and prevention. This includes ensuring services are responsive to local needs, improving coordination and

timeliness of support, and enabling more sustainable, long-term solutions to reduce homelessness and rough sleeping across the borough.

1.6 To meet these aims the vision of the refreshed Strategy is:

“We will work in partnership to prevent homelessness wherever possible, because everyone deserves a safe, affordable home. Where prevention isn’t possible, homelessness will be rare, brief, and not repeated. With the right support at the right time, people can regain stability, rebuild and thrive.”

1.7 A comprehensive review of homelessness in Rotherham has been completed, and a new Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy proposing a five-year plan has been developed following an eight-week public consultation.

1.8 The proposed Strategy provides both national and local context on homelessness, highlighting the key trends influencing demand and service pressures. It sets out a coordinated, compassionate, and proactive approach, with high-level aims and actions designed to improve outcomes for residents who are experiencing or are at risk of homelessness. It also defines four key priorities for delivery over the next five years.

The proposed four key priorities are:

- Prevent homelessness through early, proactive intervention
- Increase the supply of and access to suitable, affordable housing
- Ensure support reaches those most in need at the right time
- Tackle rough sleeping through prevention and rapid response

1.9 It is proposed to move from a three year to a five year strategy. This enables the Council and partners to establish a longer term, more stable framework for planning, investment, and partnership working. This extended timeframe reflects the increasing complexity of homelessness pressures, the need for sustained prevention activity, and the importance of aligning with wider strategic plans and multi-year national policy commitments. A five year strategy therefore enables a more strategic, coordinated, and forward looking approach to tackling homelessness and rough sleeping.

1.10 The Strategy builds on the achievements of the previous three year Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2023-26, during which the Council and its partners delivered targeted interventions that helped prevent homelessness and supported individuals and families across the Borough. Initiatives such as early intervention, improved quality and quantity of council-owned temporary accommodation, and strengthened partnerships with community organisations have already made a measurable difference and provide a strong foundation for future delivery.

1.11 Summary of key achievements (2023–2026)

Over the lifetime of the previous strategy, significant progress has been made in preventing homelessness, improving service delivery, and expanding housing options. Key achievements include:

- Strengthened homelessness prevention, with a 65.4% increase in successful prevention outcomes within 56 days between 2022-23 and 2024-25.
- Completion and publication of the Housing Strategy 2025–2030, reaffirming the Council’s commitment to prevention and increasing access to affordable homes through new developments and acquisitions.
- Continued progress towards the Council’s target of 1,000 new council homes by summer 2027, with 791 delivered as of 20th April 2026 and with planning underway for the next programme cycle.
- Publication of an updated Housing Allocation Policy, improving fairness by refining eligibility and banding to prioritise those in greatest need.
- Expansion of temporary furnished homes from 127 to 173, improving quality and significantly reducing reliance on and cost of hotel accommodation.
- Strong employment support outcomes through the Council’s Employment Hub.

2. Key Issues

2.1 Consultation

Between July and September 2025, an eight-week consultation was undertaken, supported by a comprehensive programme of engagement. This included an online public survey and a series of in-person sessions. These involved focus groups and drop-in events, delivered across the borough to ensure wide representation. Engagement involved local residents, some of whom had lived experience of homelessness, Council staff, and partners, including health and voluntary sector organisations.

2.2 Partnership working was central to the consultation approach, with voluntary sector homelessness providers supporting engagement with service users and frontline staff. Partners also contributed through the Homelessness Forum, providing a structured opportunity for collaborative discussion, shared expertise, and insight.

2.3 The consultation process generated over 415 consultation interactions, including 203 responses to the public online survey. Notably, 47% of respondents reported having lived experience of homelessness, providing valuable contributions to inform the development of the Strategy.

2.4 Feedback from the consultation informed a refreshed shared vision to end homelessness, strengthened the Council's values-led approach, and shaped the key priorities within the proposed Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2026–31. A summary of the consultation is provided in Appendix 2, Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy Consultation Summary Report.

2.5 The Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy reflects the key challenges that have persisted or emerged since the previous strategy was published. These include rising demand for homelessness services, growing complexity of support needs among some households and individuals and limited access to suitable and affordable housing options. These pressures have been exacerbated by the ongoing cost of living crisis and wider financial pressures on households.

2.6 A summary of the four priorities is set out below.

2.7 **Priority 1 – Prevent homelessness through early, proactive intervention**

Homelessness is rising nationally due to the cost of living crisis, increasing rents, and a shortage of affordable homes, and Rotherham mirrors these trends. Households approaching the Council for homelessness assistance who were owed a prevention duty (where the Council is required to take reasonable steps to prevent homelessness) or relief duty (where the Council must take reasonable steps to help secure accommodation for households who are already homeless increased from 1,229 in 2022-2023 to 1,596 households in 2024-2025, an overall increase of 29.9% since 2022.

2.8 This priority aligns with the Government's National Plan to End Homelessness (December 2025), which places early intervention and prevention at the forefront of tackling homelessness. Early identification of risks such as financial pressure, relationship breakdown, or declining mental health enables the Council and partners to help residents remain safely housed and avoid crisis. The priority strengthens both universal and targeted prevention for groups including care leavers, survivors of domestic abuse, people leaving institutions, armed forces personnel, and those with multiple support needs. It also emphasises community-based support, ensuring residents receive timely advice, practical help and access to trusted local networks. By improving access to clear information and enhancing collaborative working across statutory and voluntary services, the Strategy promotes coordinated action well before anyone reaches a crisis point.

2.9 Actions in the Strategy contribute to the above elements by:

- Increasing the rate of successful homelessness prevention and relief through timely, effective interventions, reducing the number of individuals who go on to require the main homelessness duty.
- Reducing repeat homelessness amongst homeless households.
- Reducing the number of homeless households requiring temporary accommodation.

- Increasing joint multi-agency working and earlier identification of risks of homelessness.

2.10 **Priority 2 - Increase the supply of and access to suitable, affordable housing**

Rotherham faces growing housing pressures that mirror national trends, including limited social housing, rising private rents, and the continued national freeze on Local Housing Allowance, which leaves many low income households unable to afford private rented homes. These challenges are compounded by the cost of living crisis.

2.11 This priority aligns strongly with the Council's Housing Strategy 2025–2030, which places increasing the supply of affordable, high-quality homes at its core. The Council's commitment to deliver 1,000 new homes by summer 2027, alongside strengthening partnerships with housing associations and private landlords, is central to increasing local housing capacity.

2.12 This priority aligns with and supports the Government's National Plan to End Homelessness, which seeks to expand access to affordable housing, improve housing pathways, and eliminate the use of hotel accommodation, particularly for families with children. The Council already exceeds statutory expectations by ensuring families are not placed in hotel accommodation for longer than six weeks and, where temporary accommodation is required, prioritises the use of its own furnished temporary accommodation housing to better meet household needs. Through the new Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy, the Council will further reduce the time households spend in all forms of temporary accommodation, enabling faster move-on into settled housing and contributing to more sustainable and stable housing outcomes in line with national ambitions.

2.13 Actions in the Strategy contribute to the above elements by:

- Increasing the number of council and affordable homes available, including through new build and acquisitions.
- Increasing the number of homeless households rehoused into settled affordable housing.
- Increasing the number of partnerships with private landlords.
- Reducing the number of households with children placed into temporary accommodation, particularly hotel or bed and breakfast placements.
- Reducing the average length of stay across all forms of temporary accommodation for all household types.

2.14 **Priority 3 - Ensure support reaches those most in need at the right time**

This priority recognises the growing number of people in Rotherham who are homeless or at risk, and the increasing complexity of the support they require. The rising number of households presenting with multiple disadvantages reflects both national trends and the urgent need for timely,

integrated support. Between 2022/23 and 2024/25, 4,254 households were owed a homelessness duty, with 587 households presenting with two support needs and 715 households presenting with three or more. Data shows the most common needs (mental health, physical disabilities, substance dependency, domestic abuse, and offending behaviours) highlighting the importance of trauma informed, person centred approaches that respond to multiple challenges simultaneously.

2.15 Ensuring residents can access the right support at the right time is central to preventing crisis. This priority strengthens pathways to advice, health services, financial support, employment, education, and training. By addressing gaps in provisions, the aim is to reduce repeat homelessness and support long-term stability and independence.

2.16 This approach aligns closely with the Government's *A National Plan to End Homelessness*, which places strong emphasis on coordinated public services, and earlier intervention. It also calls for person-centred models. By adopting these principles locally, the Strategy supports the shared ambition to make homelessness rare, brief, and not to be repeated, ensuring every individual receives timely and effective support.

2.17 Actions in the Strategy contribute to the above elements by:

- Increasing the number of people who are supported to access employment, training and education.
- Delivering successful outcomes at prevention or relief for households particularly those with multiple support needs.
- Decreasing the use of all forms of temporary accommodation, due to more households accessing support early and avoiding homelessness crisis.
- Increasing the number of households assisted to remain in their existing home.

2.18 **Priority 4 - Tackle rough sleeping through prevention and rapid response**

Rough sleeping is the most acute and visible form of homelessness, posing serious risks to rough sleepers' health, safety and wellbeing. Preventing people from reaching this point is essential to avoid these risk, and where rough sleeping does occur, rapid intervention is critical to safeguarding individuals and supporting recovery.

2.19 This priority recognises that many people who experience rough sleeping face significant challenges, including mental ill health, trauma and multiple disadvantages. Those experiencing long-term rough sleeping often have multiple support needs that require a trauma-informed, person-centred and coordinated approach. This priority focuses on preventing rough sleeping wherever possible, supported by assertive outreach, swift access to safe and suitable accommodation, and clear pathways into health, support and welfare services.

2.20 Although rough sleeping levels in Rotherham have remained relatively low compared to some local authorities, recent increases highlight the need for continued efforts and strong multi-agency working. The Strategy strengthens collaboration with partners, enhances community outreach support and reinforces local safeguarding arrangements for vulnerable adults, and continues to explore new opportunities to provide evidence-based housing models such as the Rotherham Housing First model. These actions aim to ensure rough sleeping in Rotherham is prevented, or if it does occur it is rare, brief, and not repeated.

2.21 Actions in the Strategy contribute to the above elements by:

- Reducing the number of people sleeping rough long term.
- Reducing the number of new people sleeping rough.
- Reducing the number of people returning to rough sleeping.

2.22 **The homelessness prevention and rough sleeper action plan and publication**

A cross working action plan will be developed with key partners including health, social care, community safety and the voluntary sector, to monitor progress and delivery against the Strategy over the five year period. While the Council has a statutory obligation to lead on the development and publication of the Strategy, the action plan should be collectively owned by partners and stakeholders, reflecting that tackling homelessness is a shared responsibility across the whole system.

2.23 The action plan will set out the specific activities, milestones and performance measures. It will also be shaped in anticipation of the Government's forthcoming duty to collaborate, which will require public services to work together more closely to prevent homelessness. Embedding this duty into local partnership arrangements will strengthen shared accountability and ensure a coordinated, multi-agency approach to delivery.

2.24 Cabinet is asked to delegate approval of the action plan and any subsequent updates following its annual reviews to the relevant Executive Director. It is anticipated that minor data updates of the Strategy may be required prior to publication. Cabinet is therefore asked to delegate approval of any final amendments to the Executive Director of Adult Care, Housing and Public Health.

2.25 The Improving Places Select Commission will receive annual updates on delivery against the published action plan, providing scrutiny of progress and identifying any areas requiring further attention.

2.26 **Governance of the Delivery of the Strategy and the Action Plan**

In line with the new National Plan to End Homelessness, Rotherham's Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper action plan will be published no later than Autumn 2026, with annual reviews and updates to maintain transparency.

2.27 While this report identifies key indicative measures associated with each priority, detailed and measurable performance indicators will be finalised through the action planning phase, ensuring a robust, outcome-focused framework, supported by clear governance and accountability.

2.28 Delivery will be monitored through a tiered governance structure to track progress, manage risks, and ensure continuous improvement. Monitoring will focus on:

- Progress against the action plan.
- Key milestones.
- Performance indicators.
- Emerging risks and opportunities.
- Feedback from people with lived experience, staff, and partners.

3. Options Considered and Recommended Proposal

3.1 Option 1: (This is the recommended option)

That Cabinet approves the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2026–2031 and delegates authority to the Executive Director of Adult Care, Housing and Public Health to:

- Approve any minor data amendments to the strategy prior to publication.
- Approve the action plan, following its development, prior to publication.
- Approve any amendments in the action plan, arising from annual reviews.

3.2 Option 2:

That Cabinet does not approve the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2026–2031

3.3 This option is not recommended, as it would prevent the Council from meeting its statutory duty under the Homelessness Act 2002 to review and publish a homelessness strategy at least every five years and would fail to address the issues identified in this report or respond to consultation findings.

4. Consultation on Proposal

4.1 As detailed in section 2.1 - 2.4 of this report and in **Appendix 2** - Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy Consultation Summary Report.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

5.1 The Service Director of Housing has overall accountability for delivering the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy commitments.

5.2 The Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2026-2031 will be implemented in May 2026.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

6.1 The activity resulting from the implementation of the revised strategy will be managed within existing budgets and staffing resources. The General Fund Homelessness budgets have been strengthened in 2026/27 which has been partly supported by additional government grants.

6.2 There are key commitments in priority two that require resource, including council-provided temporary accommodation and increased supply of affordable housing.

6.3 There are adequate budgets and other resources in place within the General Fund in 2026-27 to manage and support the provision of 173 council temporary accommodation properties.

6.4 There are adequate resources within the Housing Revenue Account capital and revenue budgets to support the build or acquisition of additional properties from 2026-27 onwards. This will provide increased numbers of council homes available to rent.

6.5 There are no direct procurement implications arising from the recommendations detailed in this report. However, if third party suppliers are required to support in the delivery of the strategy, these must be procured in compliance with relevant procurement legislation (Procurement Act 2023 or the Public Contracts Regulations 2015), dependent on the route to market, as well as the Council's own Financial and Procurement Procedure Rules.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

7.1 The Homelessness Act 2002 [the Act] places a statutory duty upon the Council as a local housing authority to carry out a homelessness review and to formulate and publish a strategy based on the results of that review.

7.2 The Act states that the Council must ensure that a new homelessness strategy is published within the period of five years beginning with the day on which the last homelessness strategy was published.

7.3 Section 3 of the Act sets out the meaning of a homelessness strategy as being a strategy formulated by the local housing authority for:

- (a) preventing homelessness in their district;
- (b) securing that sufficient accommodation is and will be available for people in their district who are or may become homeless;
- (c) securing the satisfactory provision of support for people in their district—
 - (i) who are or may become homeless; or
 - (ii) who have been homeless and need support to prevent them becoming homeless again.

- 7.4 The Council shall also keep their homelessness strategy under review and may modify it from time to time. This report sets out the proposal for such decisions to be made and requests that authority is delegated to the relevant Executive Director.
- 7.5 It is a statutory requirement under the Act to consult before adopting or modifying a homelessness strategy. Consultation is to take place with the public, local authorities, voluntary organisations or other persons considered to be appropriate.
- 7.6 A copy of the homelessness strategy published is to be made available at the Council's principal office for inspection by members of the public or by providing a copy if requested.
- 7.7 The Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities, published in February 2018 and updated in December 2025, provides detailed guidance around homelessness reviews and strategies.
- 7.8 There is no statutory timeframe for the consultation but the 8-week consultation which has taken place and the way in which the consultation has taken place is sufficient.
- 7.9 Adopting option 1 will ensure that the Council remains compliant with its statutory duties and significantly reduces the risk of legal challenge.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

- 8.1 There are no HR implications associated with this report.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 9.1 The Children and Young People's and Adult Care Services have been consulted and contributed to the development of the strategy. The Strategy aligns with key priorities across both areas, including early intervention, safeguarding, and supporting vulnerable residents to live independently. Strengthened collaborative working through clearer joint pathways, improved information-sharing, and coordinated support planning will ensure children, young people, care leavers, and adults with complex needs receive timely, integrated support and assistance.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

- 10.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) attached at Appendix 3, has been completed in accordance with the Council's procedures. No additional Equalities or Human Rights implications have been identified beyond those set out in the analysis.
- 10.2 The Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy is designed to be inclusive of all protected characteristics. Its central aim is to improve outcomes for all households in Rotherham affected by homelessness,

ensuring that support is accessible, fair, and responsive to the diverse needs of the local population.

- 10.3 By focusing on removing barriers, improving access to support, and ensuring timely intervention for those at risk of or experiencing homelessness, the strategy is expected to have a positive impact on communities across the borough. This includes strengthened support for groups who may be disproportionately affected, ensuring that the Council continues to meet its equalities duties while improving fairness in service delivery.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

- 11.1 Climate change poses a significant threat to environments, individuals, communities, and economies on a local, national, and international scale. In recognition of this the Council has aimed to be net carbon neutral as an organisation by 2030, and for Rotherham as a whole to achieve the same position by 2040.
- 11.2 Anticipated implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change are detailed in the Carbon Impact Assessment attached at Appendix 4.

12. Implications for Partners

- 12.1 The aims set out in the Strategy will only be achieved through strong partnership working across local and regional systems. The Council works strategically with partners through the Rotherham Homelessness Strategic Board and collaborates closely with a wide range of stakeholders, including statutory agencies, Housing Associations, Private Rented Sector and voluntary and community sector organisations, to meet the diverse housing and support needs across the borough.
- 12.2 The Council is also committed to working with the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority to maximise regional opportunities, including securing funding, aligning with wider housing and inclusion priorities, and developing a consistent regional approach to preventing and reducing homelessness. Strengthening these partnerships ensures that collective resources, expertise and influence are used effectively to improve outcomes for residents and support sustainable, long-term solutions.

13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 The main risk in adopting the new Strategy is the potential failure to deliver its commitments. This will be mitigated through a detailed action plan, supported by strong partnership working, clear processes, and regular performance monitoring, including annual reporting through the agreed governance framework.
- 13.2 There is also a risk that the Strategy becomes outdated due to changing national policy or local needs. This will be addressed through routine management reviews, data analysis, and regular engagement with the

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) regional advisers.

- 13.3 A further risk is misalignment across the wider system, including statutory and voluntary partners. This is mitigated through established partnership governance arrangements, including the Rotherham Homelessness Strategic Board, and ongoing collaboration with the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority to support coordinated delivery and maximise access to regional funding opportunities.

14. Accountable Officers

Sarah Clyde, Service Director of Housing

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	John Edwards	22/04/26
Executive Director of Corporate Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	13/04/26
Service Director of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phil Horsfield	13/04/26

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

ROTHERHAM'S HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION AND ROUGH SLEEPER STRATEGY 2026-2031



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TABLE OF CONTENTS	
FOREWORD	3
INTRODUCTION - Our vision for tackling homelessness in Rotherham	4
PURPOSE OF THE STRATEGY	5
STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT	5
LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT	5
DEVELOPMENT OF THE STRATEGY	6
OUR VALUES LED APPROACH	8
BUILDING ON OUR ACHIEVEMENTS	8
RESPONDING TO CHANGE OF NEED AND DEMAND	9
COMMITMENT TO PARTNERSHIP WORKING	9
ACTION PLAN	9
UNDERSTANDING HOMELESSNESS AND THE CAUSES	10
KEY PRIORITIES IN DETAIL	11
Priority 1: Prevent homelessness through early, proactive intervention	11
Priority 2: Increase the supply of and access to suitable, affordable housing	13
Priority 3: Ensure support reaches those most in need at the right time	15
Priority 4: Tackle rough sleeping through prevention and rapid response	17
EQUALITIES AND INCLUSION	19
GOVERNANCE, ASSURANCE, AND DELIVERY	20
CASE STUDIES	21
APPENDIX I - Glossary	23

FOREWORD

By Councillor Linda Beresford, Cabinet Member for Housing



I am pleased to introduce Rotherham’s Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2026–2031, building on the strong foundations of our previous work. Over the past three years, we’ve made real progress thanks to the collaborative working between partners and council colleagues. Together, we’ve strengthened an early prevention approach and improved access to support, helping more people achieve stability, security, and hope for the future.

Our new strategy builds on this momentum. It aims to deepen our impact, scales up proven approaches, and fosters innovation. It champions trauma-informed practice and cross-sector collaboration to improve health, reduce inequalities, boost employment, and build resilient communities. Guided by local needs, national policy, and lived experience, it sets out a coordinated, compassionate, and proactive approach to homelessness prevention and tackling rough sleeping. Developed through meaningful consultation with residents, communities, and partners, it reflects a shared ambition for lasting change.

In Rotherham, the aspiration for a safe, affordable home is a shared value. A secure home is more than bricks and mortar, it’s the foundation for health, education, employment, and wellbeing. For families with children, housing stability is critical, it provides the security they need for their children to attend school consistently, build friendships, and thrive in their development. Yet rising living costs, limited affordable housing, and pressures on support services continue to create barriers, especially for those facing complex circumstances.

Homelessness is a challenge that no single organisation can solve alone. In times of financial pressure, collaboration matters more than ever. By working in partnership and creating integrated services, we can share resources, cut duplication, and deliver the right support to those who need it most.

Our strategy aligns with the Government’s ambition: Together, we will make homelessness in Rotherham rare, brief, and not repeated.

Thank you to everyone who helped shape this strategy and for your ongoing commitment to tackling homelessness and supporting our communities.



INTRODUCTION

Our vision for tackling homelessness in Rotherham

This strategy sets out our vision for preventing and responding to homelessness and rough sleeping across Rotherham. It builds on our previous commitments and introduces a values led approach with clear priorities to address all forms of homelessness over the next five years.

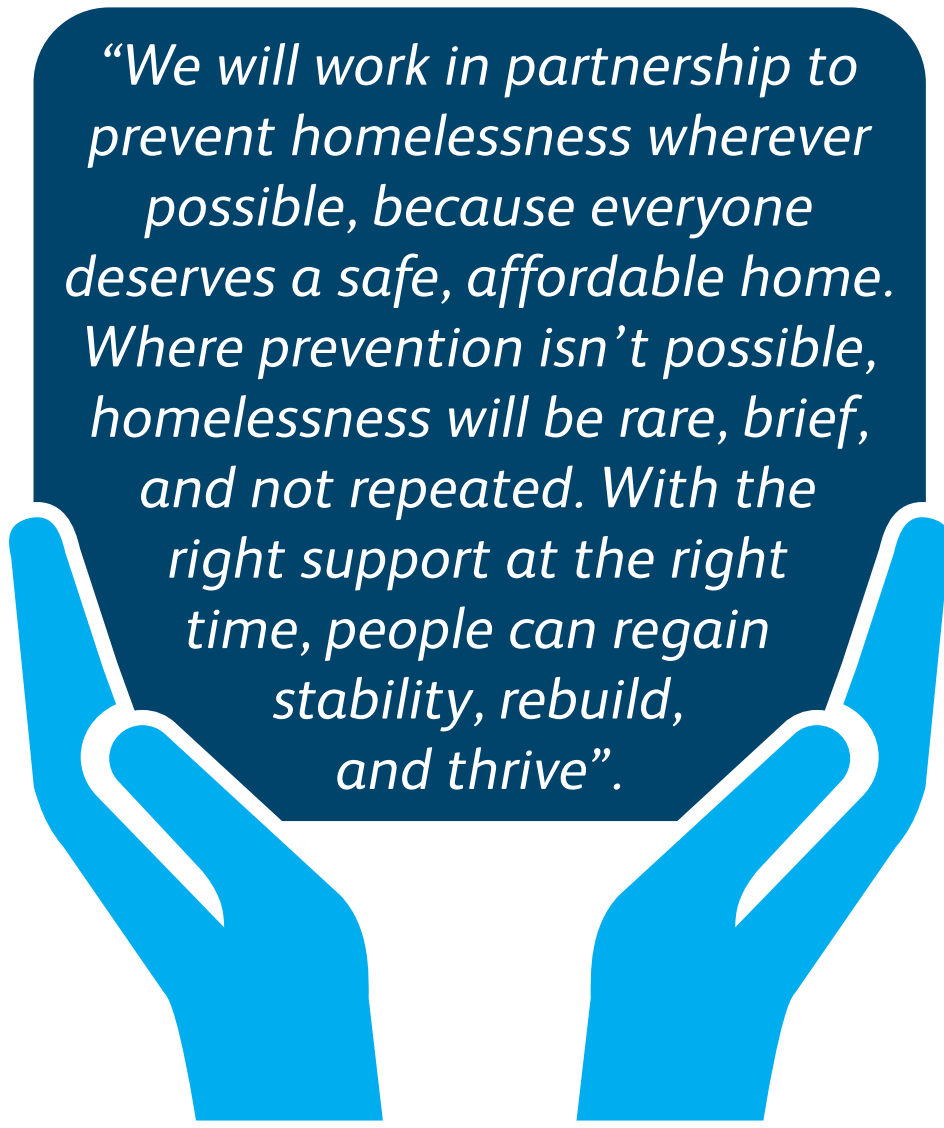
Homelessness is complex and often the result of multiple challenges, including financial hardship, relationship breakdown, mental ill health, substance misuse, limited tenancy skills, and the shortage of affordable housing. These pressures make it harder for individuals and families to both secure and sustain a home. Addressing them requires coordinated, person centred and compassionate responses across services and partners.

Our goal is to prevent homelessness wherever possible by identifying risks early, offering timely and practical advice, and working collaboratively to tackle the root causes. This includes supporting households experiencing financial strain, family or relationship breakdown, or other pressures that can lead to homelessness.

Where homelessness cannot be prevented, we will act swiftly to secure safe accommodation, minimise impact, and ensure people receive the support they need to recover, rebuild their lives, and successfully settle within their community.

As part of refreshing our previous strategy, we have revisited and strengthened our shared vision to reaffirm our commitment.

Our shared vision



“We will work in partnership to prevent homelessness wherever possible, because everyone deserves a safe, affordable home. Where prevention isn’t possible, homelessness will be rare, brief, and not repeated. With the right support at the right time, people can regain stability, rebuild, and thrive”.

PURPOSE OF THE STRATEGY

In line with the Homelessness Act 2002, Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and the Homelessness Code of Guidance, the Council must review homelessness and publish a strategy at least every five years. While this fulfils our statutory duty, our commitment goes far beyond compliance.

The Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy sets out how the Council and its partners will work together to prevent homelessness, reduce rough sleeping, and support those at risk of losing their home. It provides a clear framework to help individuals and families stay in safe, secure housing, access timely support, and achieve long-term solutions when homelessness occurs.

Tackling homelessness requires collaboration across housing, health, social care, voluntary organisations, and other public services.

By working together, we can:

- Understand the complex causes of homelessness
- Share resources and expertise
- Deliver person-centred, trauma-informed support that improves outcomes for residents

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

This strategy aligns with key local priorities, including the Council Plan 2025-2030, Rotherham's Housing Strategy 2025-2030, and the Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy 2026-2029. It also reflects national reforms and commitments, such as the Government's National Plan to End Homelessness (2025), the Renters' Rights Act, and the Supported Housing

Act. Through a coordinated, integrated approach across partners and services, it aims to strengthen housing stability, health and wellbeing, financial resilience, and community safety.

For more information, please refer to the Council website:

www.rotherham.gov.uk/homelessness where the Strategy is published online and provides supporting information – How the Strategy Aligns with Local Priorities, National Homelessness Reforms and the National Context.

LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

What the law says about homelessness

The Housing Act 1996 (Part VII) is the main legislation governing homelessness in England, setting out local authorities' duties to assist people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, introduced in April 2018, strengthened this framework by focusing on early intervention and prevention.

It created new duties for councils to:

Prevent homelessness for all eligible applicants at risk within 56 days, regardless of priority need or intentionality.

Relieve homelessness for those already homeless by helping them secure accommodation for at least six months.

If homelessness is not resolved during the relief stage, and the applicant is in priority need and unintentionally homeless, the Council owes the Main Housing Duty to secure suitable longer-term accommodation.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE STRATEGY

This strategy was developed through an evidence based and collaborative approach, combining local data with meaningful engagement from stakeholders, partners, and residents. Central to the process was listening to people with lived experience of homelessness, whose insights have helped shape practical, person centred solutions.

This strategy uses some statutory and technical terms. A glossary explaining these terms is provided in *Appendix 1* to support accessibility and understanding.

For more information, please refer to the the Council’s website:

www.rotherham.gov.uk/homelessness where the Strategy is published online and provides supporting information – Local Context – Homelessness: Summary of the Data and Analysis 2022/23 and 2024/25.

Consultation headlines

In summer 2025, the Council carried out a wide ranging public consultation, including an online survey, focus groups, drop ins and pop up events with voluntary sector partners. These created safe, accessible spaces to hear directly from residents, partners and people with lived experience; 46.8% of survey respondents had experienced homelessness themselves, offering crucial insight into priorities and barriers.

Across all engagement activity, people emphasised the need for trusted, accessible services and stronger multi agency support. They highlighted ongoing challenges such as unclear information, communication barriers, stigma, ID requirements and isolation in temporary accommodation. Participants called for clearer guidance, more compassionate face to face help and greater peer involvement. This feedback has shaped the strategy and will continue to guide our work.

These quotes highlight what people told us and the key messages that helped shape our strategy.



“More homeless education in schools and colleges for young people.”

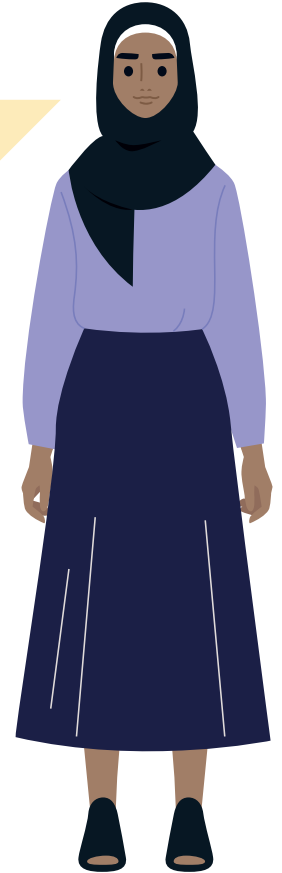


“The rough sleeper team were persistent to help me, never giving up, it really felt like somebody cared.”

“There needs to a better understanding of what homelessness is, the barriers and what it looks like, it may prompt people to seek support earlier, before things reach crisis point.”



“We want to be more involved using our own experiences is future services.”



“More and better joined up working between different agencies.”



“Better relationships with private landlords, we need to increase access to affordable private rented accommodation.”



“We need more community face to face support, these needs promoting, so people know where to go and get help.”



OUR VALUES LED APPROACH

Shaped by consultation, four core values sit at the heart of this strategy, guiding both its development and delivery. These values define how we work, how we support people, and how we create meaningful outcomes for our communities. They are:



Collaborative working

We work collaboratively across agencies, services, and communities to tackle homelessness and inequality through early, coordinated intervention preventing escalation and improving outcomes.



Outcomes focused

We will drive innovation and share best practice to deliver lasting homelessness solutions shaped by lived experience across Rotherham.



Caring, empathetic and honest

We will treat people with dignity, compassion and understanding, and communicate openly to build trust and encourage positive engagement.



Trauma-informed

We deliver services with compassion and with an understanding of trauma, creating safe, respectful environments that support recovery and prevent re-traumatisation.

BUILDING ON OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

Three years ago, we launched Rotherham's Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2023–2026, setting out our ambition to reduce homelessness and end rough sleeping. Since then, we have focused on early prevention and timely intervention, improved the quality of temporary accommodation by increasing the number of council owned furnished properties, strengthened local partnerships, and successfully prevented homelessness for many individuals and families. This has demonstrated the value of a proactive, person centred approach.

However, homelessness remains a growing challenge both nationally and locally, driven by rising housing costs, increased pressures on temporary accommodation, and growing demand for support. To meet these challenges, we must continue to adapt and keep prevention at the heart of our services.

The next phase of our work will build on these foundations, with a renewed focus on sustainable housing solutions, earlier identification of risk, and stronger multi agency collaboration to tackle the root causes of homelessness.

RESPONDING TO CHANGE OF NEED AND DEMAND

Responding to changing needs and demand is a cross cutting theme that underpins all four priorities. By drawing on lived experience and real time data, we will develop services that can adapt quickly, track repeat homelessness to understand system effectiveness, and share insights through the Homelessness Strategic Board to support joined up decision making. This approach enables timely adjustments, strengthens health and wellbeing outcomes, and aligns with both Rotherham’s Healthy Homes Plan and the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority’s vision for South Yorkshire to become the healthiest region in the country.

COMMITMENT TO PARTNERSHIP WORKING

Rotherham is committed to tackling homelessness and related social challenges through strong collaboration. Partnership working is central to this strategy, driving sustainable, person-centred solutions that improve lives across the borough.

Working alongside statutory partners, voluntary organisations, and regional bodies such as the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority, we will build a truly joined-up system of support, making services more responsive, inclusive, and rooted in lived experience.

ACTION PLAN

The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy will be underpinned by a detailed cross working action plan that clearly sets out priorities, timescales, and accountabilities. In line with the national homelessness plan, the action plan will strengthen collaborative delivery by aligning responsibilities across housing, health, adult and children’s services, criminal justice, and voluntary sector partners, ensuring a coordinated and system wide approach to preventing homelessness and rough sleeping.

The Action Plan will be published by Autumn 2026 to meet national expectations with updates made publicly available after each annual review to ensure transparency and accountability.

Measurables

To understand whether our priorities are being met, we will establish a robust set of measurables indicators. These measurables will be developed collaboratively during the action planning phase and will align with statutory reporting requirements, local priorities, and national strategic expectations.

UNDERSTANDING HOMELESSNESS AND THE CAUSES

Understanding homelessness and its causes is crucial, as the term is often misunderstood. Many people associate homelessness only with rough sleeping, the most visible form, but the reality is far broader. It also includes individuals living in overcrowded, unsuitable, or temporary accommodation, as well as those moving between friends or relatives, commonly known as “sofa surfing”. These hidden forms of housing insecurity are just as urgent and deserve attention.

Households are considered homeless if any one of the following applies

No accommodation available to occupy

At risk of violence or domestic abuse

Accommodation exists but is not reasonable to continue living in

Accommodation exists but cannot be accessed

No legal right to occupy the accommodation

Living in a mobile home or houseboat with no place to station or reside in it

The causes of homelessness are varied and interlinked. Structural issues such as a shortage of affordable housing, poverty, and unemployment are major contributors. Personal circumstances, such as leaving prison, care, or the armed forces without suitable housing can also lead to homelessness.

Many affected individuals have escaped abusive relationships or face financial hardship, including rent or mortgage arrears.

Homelessness has a significant impact on individuals, families, and communities. It is closely linked to poor physical and mental health, substance misuse, relationship breakdowns, and barriers to employment. It also places increasing financial pressure on the Council and wider public services.

Rough sleepers

Rough sleeping is rarely caused by a single issue, often resulting from a combination of factors such as loss of accommodation, relationship breakdown, financial hardship, and barriers to accessing housing. These challenges are frequently compounded by mental health issues, substance misuse, and experiences of trauma.

Sleeping rough exposes people to severe and immediate dangers, including physical harm, poor mental and physical health, and vulnerability to violence, exploitation, and crime. Prolonged exposure to the elements can lead to serious illness or even death. It also causes social isolation, loss of dignity, and reduced access to essential services, making recovery harder.

Youth homelessness

Youth homelessness is often driven by family breakdown, domestic abuse, leaving care, poverty, and limited access to affordable housing, alongside challenges such as mental ill health, substance misuse, exploitation, or criminal justice involvement. Homelessness at a young age increases vulnerability and the risk of long term disadvantage, including poorer health and reduced education and employment outcomes. This underscores the importance of upstream prevention, aligned with the national homelessness plan, through early identification of risk, trauma informed support, and joined up partnership working across housing, children’s services, education, health, youth justice, and the voluntary sector to prevent homelessness before crisis occurs.

KEY PRIORITIES IN DETAIL

Why it's important, what we have done so far, our aims and how we will measure success

Priority 1: Prevent homelessness through early, proactive intervention

Why is this important?

Preventing homelessness through early, proactive intervention ensures risks are identified and addressed before they escalate into crisis. Effective prevention combines universal actions, such as tackling poverty, insecure renting, and limited housing supply with targeted support for households at higher risk and sustained help to avoid repeat homelessness.

Early recognition of pressures such as financial hardship, relationship breakdown, or housing insecurity enables people to remain in stable accommodation. This reduces distress and disruption, particularly for families with children, and helps individuals maintain their wellbeing, employment, education, and community connections. By promoting stability, resilience, and long term positive outcomes, early intervention not only benefits individuals and families but also delivers significant savings for the wider public sector and strengthens communities.

What we have done so far:

- **Improved prevention outcomes:** Successful prevention outcomes for households at risk of homelessness within 56 days have significantly increased, with a 65.4% rise in prevention cases between 2022/23 and 2024/25.
- **Strengthened the Domestic Abuse Pathway:** The Domestic Abuse Pathway and the Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy were refreshed, resulting in a new 2026–2029 strategy that enhances support for people affected by domestic and sexual abuse.
- **Expanded tenancy readiness support:** The 'A Place of Your Own' tenancy ready course, delivered by a local homelessness charity, supported 510 residents between April 2023 and March 2025, helping people to sustain tenancies and reducing the risk of repeat homelessness.

Aims over the next 5 years:

1. Adopt a proactive, early intervention approach:

We will continue to adopt proactive, early intervention models that address the root causes of homelessness, ensuring clear, accessible information and advice reaches all residents, particularly those who are vulnerable or at heightened risk.

2. Target prevention and intervention support to those most at risk:

We will continue to focus targeted prevention efforts on groups disproportionately affected by homelessness, including young people, care leavers, LGBTQ+ residents, survivors of domestic abuse, people leaving institutions, members of the armed forces community, and individuals with multiple or complex support needs.

3. Strengthen duty to refer practice across public bodies:

We will work proactively with public bodies to embed a strong understanding of their Duty to Refer responsibilities, ensuring consistent compliance, timely referrals, and improved partnership working to identify risk earlier.

4. Improve pathways and coordinated support:

We will work towards improving pathways and coordinated support by ensuring clear routes between housing, health, social care and other services, supported by shared information and early risk identification. This will be strengthened by the new Duty to Collaborate once implemented.

How we will measure success:

- Increase the rate of successful homelessness prevention and relief through timely, effective interventions, reducing the number of individuals who go on to require the main homelessness duty.
- Reduce repeat homelessness amongst homeless households
- Successful outcome at prevention or relief for households with 3 support needs or more
- Reduce the number of homeless households requiring temporary accommodation
- Increase the number of Duty to Refer (DtR) notifications received from all specified public bodies (e.g., hospitals, prisons, Jobcentre Plus, probation).

KEY PRIORITIES IN DETAIL (continued)

Priority 2: Increase the supply of and access to suitable, affordable housing

Why is this important?

Increase the supply of and access to suitable, affordable housing, and ensuring we have the right types of homes, such as larger properties for families experiencing overcrowding and more single-person accommodation to meet our biggest homelessness need, is essential to addressing the diverse needs of our communities.

A shortage of affordable homes forces many households into overcrowded, unsuitable, or temporary accommodation, which can negatively impact health, wellbeing, and life opportunities. By expanding the availability of quality, affordable housing, we create stability for families, support economic growth, and reduce reliance on costly emergency interventions. This proactive approach ensures that everyone has access to a safe, secure home, which is the foundation for thriving individuals and resilient communities.

What we have done so far:

- The Housing Strategy 2025–2030, was reviewed and published, reaffirming the Council’s commitment to tackling homelessness by prioritising prevention and increasing access to affordable homes through new developments and property acquisitions.
- The Council’s target is to deliver 1,000 new council homes by summer 2027, with over 761 already completed as of 25 Feb 2026 and a new programme being developed for 2027/28 onwards.
- The Council in partnership with a young people’s charity secured over £700,000 through the Single Homelessness Accommodation Programme for specialist supported housing for young people, providing 14 additional homes for young people experiencing homelessness.
- Following extensive consultation, an updated Housing Allocation Policy was published which refines eligibility and banding, ensuring social housing goes to those in greatest need.
- The Council expanded temporary furnished properties from 127 to 173, improving quality and reducing hotel use.
- The Council introduced a new Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy, shaped by lived experience, to make decisions clearer and transparent.

Aims over the next 5 years:

1. Increase the supply of, and access to, suitable affordable housing:

We will increase the supply of, and access to, suitable affordable housing through new developments and partnerships with housing developers and providers.

2. Reduce reliance on hotels and ensure high quality temporary accommodation:

We will minimise the use of hotels as temporary accommodation and ensure that council-provided temporary housing meets local needs, while commissioned supported housing is tailored to deliver the right support for those who need it.

3. Strengthen engagement with the private rented sector:

We will continue to explore landlord incentive schemes to strengthen engagement with private sector landlords and increase the supply of affordable housing.

4. Improve standards and ensure a robust housing pathway:

We will promote high standards across all landlords and continue to review the housing pathway, to ensure it provides a diverse range of housing solutions. This includes supported housing for people with multiple disadvantages and support needs, ensuring it is well managed and meets all relevant regulations. We will also work with Housing Associations to maximise nominations.

How we will measure success:

- Increase the number of council homes available, including through new build and acquisitions.
- Increase the number of homeless households rehoused into settled affordable housing.
- Increase the number of partnerships with private landlords to expand the range of housing options available to homeless households.
- Reduce the number of households with children placed in hotel temporary accommodation
- Number of households with children that remain in hotel temporary accommodation for more than six weeks.
- Reduce the average length of stay across all forms of temporary accommodation for all household types.

KEY PRIORITIES IN DETAIL (continued)

Priority 3: Ensure support reaches those most in need at the right time

Why is this important?

Providing timely support is essential to preventing homelessness and promoting long-term stability. Early intervention through advice and practical support helps individuals avoid homelessness, repeat homelessness, financial hardship, and poor health outcomes. When help is delayed, people often experience greater stress and disruption, leading to more complex and costly solutions later. By prioritising those at greatest risk and acting promptly, services can make a meaningful difference improving lives, strengthening resilience, and using resources effectively. This includes access to employment and health services, enabling people to achieve financial independence, enhance wellbeing, and build a secure resilient future.

What we have done so far:

- The Council reviewed its commissioned housing-related support services in partnership with key stakeholders, leading to the development of a new Framework. This Framework strengthens service quality and consistency, drives innovation, leading to better outcomes for people at risk of homelessness.
- In partnership the Council along with local organisations, delivered 102 multi-agency drop-in sessions in 2025/26, hosted by a central local homeless charity, providing people at risk of homelessness with coordinated access to advice, essential services, and timely support.
- The Employment Hub and Employment Solutions Services have supported more people into positive outcomes, receiving 4,626 referrals between January 2023 and December 2025, with 2,014 households assisted, 451 people supported into training, and 568 into employment.
- The Council has published its Adult Social Care Mental Health Strategy for 2026–2029.

Aims over the next 5 years:

1. Strengthen multi agency working through collaborative working:

We will strengthen multi-agency working and embed person-centred, trauma informed approaches to ensure individuals receive coordinated, flexible, support at the right time.

2. Empower residents to build resilience through strengthening support pathways:

We will provide targeted support to households during the cost-of-living crisis while creating clear pathways to employment, education, and training. By combining immediate help with long-term opportunities, we aim to empower residents to build financial resilience and achieve lasting stability.

3. Identify gaps in support and develop new opportunities:

We will identify gaps in support provision and actively pursue new opportunities to strengthen and expand effective interventions, shaped by lived experience.

4. Personalised, connected support at the right time and place

Personalised support will be delivered within communities, at the right time, through a joined-up, locally driven approach.

How we will measure success:

- Number of people who are supported to access employment, training and education.
- Successful outcome at prevention or relief for households with 3 support needs or more
- Decrease use of all forms of temporary accommodation, due to more households accessing support early and avoiding homelessness crisis.
- Number of households who were assisted to remain in their existing home

KEY PRIORITIES IN DETAIL (continued)

Priority 4: Tackle rough sleeping through prevention and rapid response

Why is this important?

Preventing and responding to rough sleeping is vital to safeguarding health, dignity, and life chances. Rough sleeping exposes people to severe risks, including physical harm, poor mental health, social isolation, and vulnerability to exploitation and crime.

This strategy prioritises early prevention, stopping people from reaching crisis point rather than waiting until they are sleeping rough. Where rough sleeping does occur, rapid identification and response are essential to provide immediate support, safe accommodation, and access to vital services.

Our approach aligns with the government's ambition to halve long term rough sleeping by 2029, our aspiration is to go further by driving innovative prevention, rapid intervention, and strong partnership working. It also supports national goals to strengthen collaboration between housing, social care, and safeguarding services, particularly for people with multiple support needs.

The Council remains fully committed to responding to Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) activations as a critical safeguarding measure. SWEP ensures that during periods of severe weather, no one is left sleeping rough due to conditions that pose an immediate risk to life and health.

What we have done so far:

- The Rough Sleeper Initiative Team tripled early morning walks and added daytime checks, increasing visibility and enabling quicker identification and assistance for those sleeping rough. This has led to a 25 % increase in number of rough sleepers the outreach team have engaged with, moving them off the streets into safe accommodation.
- We have strengthened our partnership working with statutory and voluntary agencies, ensuring rough sleeping remains a shared priority and that no one falls through the cracks.
- The Council reviewed and recommissioned the Rotherham Housing First provision, an initiative designed to end homelessness by providing people with a home first, focusing on people with multiple support needs.

Aims over the next 5 years:

1. Rapid and responsive housing solutions:

We will provide and regularly review rapid housing solutions to help people move off the streets and into stable accommodation, while identifying gaps in provision and responding to households with multiple support needs.

2. Community based support and assertive outreach:

We will continue to work with partners and local communities to ensure support and advice are based in community settings, complemented by assertive outreach approaches that proactively engage individuals who may not otherwise seek help.

3. Strengthened multi agency coordination:

We will strengthen coordination across housing, health, criminal justice, benefits and voluntary sectors to ensure no one falls through the gaps.

4. Enhanced safeguarding for people sleeping rough:

Recognising the heightened risks faced by rough sleepers, we will strengthen integrated safeguarding through Rotherham's vulnerable adult pathway in collaboration with partners and social care.

How we will measure success:

- Reduce number of people sleeping rough long term
- Reduce number of new people sleeping rough.
- Reduce the number of people returning to rough sleeping.

EQUALITIES AND INCLUSION

Homelessness does not affect everyone equally. Certain groups face higher risks and greater barriers to accessing support, including people with disabilities, care leavers, older people, refugees, LGBTQ+ individuals, and those from minority ethnic communities. Our strategy is committed to ensuring that all services are inclusive, accessible, and responsive to the diverse needs of Rotherham's residents.



Equality impact assessments: this strategy has undergone an equality impact assessment to identify and mitigate potential disadvantages for protected groups under the Equality Act 2010.



Accessible services: We will provide information in multiple formats and ensure physical and digital accessibility for all.



Cultural competence: Staff will receive training to understand and respect cultural, religious, and personal identities, ensuring services are delivered without discrimination.



Targeted support: We will work with partners to identify and address the specific needs of vulnerable groups, including, individuals fleeing domestic abuse, people with learning disabilities, people with neurodiversity needs which includes, autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).



Data and monitoring: We will collect and analyse data on service use by protected characteristics to monitor fairness and improve outcomes.

Tackling inequalities

Together the Council and partners recognise that structural inequalities and discrimination can exacerbate homelessness.

Our approach will:

Embed equality principles in all homelessness prevention and response services

Actively challenge discrimination and stigma faced by vulnerable groups

Ensure fair access to housing and support services regardless of background or identity

Work with community partners to co-design solutions that reflect the lived experiences of diverse groups

Monitor outcomes to identify and close gaps in service provision for underrepresented or disadvantaged communities

GOVERNANCE, ASSURANCE, AND DELIVERY

Delivery of this strategy will be monitored through a tiered governance structure designed to track progress, ensure accountability and transparency, maintain focus on strategic outcomes, and support continuous improvement.

Regular monitoring will consider:

- Progress against the cross-working action plan
- Achievement of key milestones
- Performance against measurable indicators
- Emerging risks, barriers, and opportunities
- Feedback from service users with lived experience, frontline staff, and partners



Laura's Journey: The impact of safe supported housing for young people

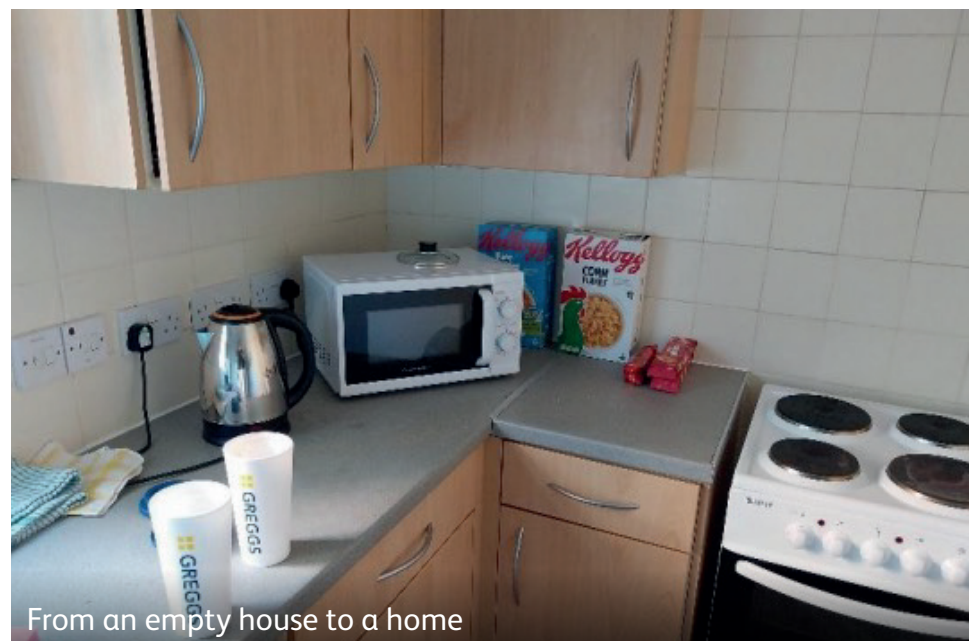
At 17, Laura became homeless after her relationship with her parents broke down. She moved between family, friends and temporary social care placements. Through joint work between Children's Services and the Council's Homelessness Team, Laura was offered a place in a young people's supported housing group living project.

This gave her a secure home and staff who could support her to rebuild her life. Laura engaged with specialist young people services, including education, employment and training support, trauma informed services for young women experiencing crisis or vulnerability, and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services to support her mental health.

With stability, Laura went on to secure a retail job and attended consistently, demonstrating strong commitment to her future. Nine months later, Laura had developed the independence and confidence to move into a dispersed property in the community, while continuing to receive support. When Laura became pregnant, staff helped her prepare for parenthood and navigate the process of applying for her own tenancy. Laura also enrolled on a business course to pursue her ambition of starting a beauty business.

Support continued throughout Laura's housing journey. Laura was matched with a two bedroom home, and support staff helped her secure the grants she was entitled to, sourced donated and affordable furniture, and supported her to set up her utilities, helping turn an empty property into a real home.

Today, 2 years later Laura is happy, safe and settled, continuing to pursue her aspirations. Her journey shows how the right support and a stable home can truly transform a young person's life.



“The kindness, generosity and non judgemental support I received from my support worker has been invaluable to my progress. Having someone willing to lend an ear and offer guidance has been incredibly helpful, whether it's been a difficult day at work, a personal challenge, or just a rough day”.

– Laura

CASE STUDY

Peter's Journey:

From domestic abuse and rough sleeping to a safe home

Peter, employed in a professional role, experienced homelessness for the first time after fleeing domestic abuse. Despite being in work, he could not afford hotel accommodation and was forced to sleep in his car while continuing to work. Isolated, worried about losing his job, and unable to have his children stay with him, Peter's mental health deteriorated. Following encouragement from his employer, he contacted a local homeless charity, who provided reassurance and notified the Council's Rough Sleeper Outreach Team.

The following morning, the outreach team located Peter sleeping in his car and acted quickly to secure emergency hotel accommodation, followed by a fully furnished temporary flat close to his workplace. Peter was referred to specialist domestic abuse service and allocated a dedicated Domestic Abuse Housing Officer. With tailored support, including a male peer support group, Peter began to rebuild his confidence.

During his stay in temporary accommodation, Peter received support with budgeting, financial management, and securing a permanent home. Within six weeks, he was matched to a two bedroom property, providing stability and a safe home where his children could stay. Peter expressed gratitude to the Rough Sleeper Outreach Team, the Independent Domestic Violence Advisor Service, and the local homeless charity for helping him move from crisis to safety and a fresh start.



Collaborative working

Working together with local organisations, communities, and people with lived experience to prevent homelessness and improve support.

Complex needs

When someone faces several challenges at the same time, such as mental health issues, disability, substance use, domestic abuse, or involvement with the justice system, and needs joined up support.

Cross partner delivery

Services delivered together by the Council and partner organisations, so people receive the right help without having to repeat their story.

Data analysis

Looking at information and evidence to understand homelessness in Rotherham and improve services and decisions.

Domestic abuse

Abusive behaviour by a partner, ex partner, or family member. This can include physical, emotional, psychological, financial, or controlling behaviour and can lead to homelessness.

Duty to refer

A legal requirement for certain public services, with a person's consent, to tell the Council if someone is homeless or at risk so they can get help early.

Duty to collaborate

The duty to collaborate is a central government led requirement for local partners to share information and work jointly to prevent homelessness more effectively.

Evidence based

Using information, research, and people's lived experience to make sure actions and decisions are effective.

Inequalities

Unfair differences in outcomes for some people or groups, such as poorer health, housing, or financial security. The Strategy aims to reduce these differences.

Intentionality

A check the Council must make to understand whether someone has deliberately done something that caused them to lose their home.

Legislation

The laws that set out the Council's responsibilities to prevent and deal with homelessness.

Lived experience

Knowledge and insight shared by people who have experienced homelessness.

Local connection

How the Council decides which area is responsible for helping someone, based on where they live, work, have family, or other special reasons.

Main housing duty

When the Council has a legal responsibility to provide suitable accommodation because someone meets the required criteria.

Multiple disadvantages/multiple support

When someone experiences more than one difficulty at the same time, such as homelessness alongside poor health, domestic abuse, poverty, or exclusion from services.

Our value led approach

Providing services in a fair, respectful, and compassionate way, treating people with dignity and understanding.

Person centred

Putting people at the centre of decisions and shaping support around their individual needs and circumstances.

Prevention duty

A legal duty on the Council to take reasonable steps to help prevent homelessness when someone is at risk within the next 56 days.

Priority need

Groups of people recognised in law as particularly vulnerable and who may be entitled to extra housing support.

Rapid rehousing

Helping people move as quickly as possible into a settled home, with support to help them stay there.

Relief duty

A legal duty on the Council to take reasonable steps to help someone find accommodation if they are already homeless.

Upstream prevention

Taking action early, before a crisis happens, to reduce the risk of homelessness in the future.

Rough sleepers

People who are sleeping outside or in places not meant for living in, such as doorways, tents, or vehicles.

Solution focused

Concentrating on practical actions and next steps to resolve housing problems and prevent homelessness.

Temporary accommodation

Short term housing provided while longer term, settled accommodation is found.

Trauma informed

Recognising that people may have experienced trauma and providing support in a safe, respectful, and understanding way.

Vision

The Council's long term aim for preventing homelessness and reducing rough sleeping in Rotherham.

Youth homelessness

Homelessness affecting young people, usually aged 16 to 25, often linked to family breakdown, care experience, mental health, or money problems.

Appendix 2.

**Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council
Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper
Strategy 2026-2031
Consultation Summary
Report**

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Contents

1. Consultation Overview 4

2. Introduction 5

3. Who Responded 5

 3.1 Respondent Type 5

 3.2 Tenure of Resident Respondents..... 5

 3.3 Lived Experience 5

4. Communications and Reach 6

5. Key Messages from the Consultation 6

 5.1 Support for the Vision 6

 5.2 Strategic Priorities for 2026–2031 6

 5.3 Main Barriers People Face 7

 5.4 Suggested Solutions 7

6. Engagement Summary: Groups Consulted 7

7. Summary of Feedback from Consultation Sessions 8

 7.1 Domestic Abuse & Families 9

 7.2 Young People 9

 7.3 Households with Multiple Support Needs 9

 7.4 Rough Sleepers 10

8. Overall Conclusions 11

1. Consultation Overview

Homelessness Prevention & Rough Sleeper Strategy 2026–2031 Consultation Summary

<p>What was the purpose of the consultation and who was consulted?</p>	<p>The Homelessness Act 2002 outlines that Local Authorities must have an approach for homelessness prevention and rough sleeping. This strategy has to be revised every 3 to 5 years; the consultation was to revisit the key areas of homelessness prevention and support for rough sleepers in Rotherham to assess what the priorities should be over the proposed 5-year period of the strategy.</p> <p>An 8-week public consultation was delivered to ensure equal opportunity for the public, services and organisation in Rotherham were able to have their say on the direction of the revised strategy.</p>
<p>What time period did the consultation run over?</p>	<p>The consultation ran for 8 weeks, launching on the 7th of July and closing on the 1st of September.</p>
<p>How many responses were received?</p>	<p>A total of 203 responses were received.</p>
<p>How will the responses be used by the Council?</p>	<p>The responses from the consultation, alongside the feedback attained in the community drop ins and sessions will help to shape the strategic direction for tackling homelessness and rough sleeping in Rotherham from 2026 to 2031. The consultation will outline the vision, priorities and ways to ensure housing is more sustainable for local residents.</p>
<p>Where will the outcomes of the consultation be made public?</p>	<p>The outcomes of the consultation will be made available once the new Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2026-2031 is approved by Cabinet. The current timeline for the new strategy to go to Cabinet is on the 11th May 2026; on the basis that the strategy is approved, it will be published before June 2026.</p>

Homelessness Prevention & Rough Sleeper Strategy 2026–2031 Consultation Summary

2. Introduction

Rotherham Council carried out an 8-week public consultation from 7 July to 1 September, to help shape the refreshed Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2026–2031. The consultation aimed to understand local views on the current vision, key priorities, barriers faced by people experiencing homelessness, and what actions should be taken over the next five years.

In total, 203 responses were received through the online survey, supported by a comprehensive programme of engagement with residents, people with lived experience, frontline staff, partners, charities and voluntary sector organisations.

The findings demonstrate strong continued support for the overall direction of the current strategy, while highlighting important areas for improvement, particularly around communication, early intervention, availability of affordable housing, and joined-up support for people with complex needs.

(Percentages have been rounded to one decimal place, so totals may not equal exactly 100%)

3. Who Responded

3.1 Respondent Type

- **77.3%** – Residents of Rotherham
- **5.9%** – Residents outside Rotherham
- **4.4%** – Statutory agencies
- **3.4%** – Voluntary organisations
- **3.0%** – Temporary accommodation providers
- **1.0%** – Housing providers
- **4.9%** – Other/Unknown

3.2 Tenure of Resident Respondents

- **49.0%** - Owner occupiers
- **10.2%** - Private renters
- **12.7%** - Council/Housing Association tenants
- **13.4%** - Temporary accommodation
- **8.9%** - Supported accommodation
- **4.8%** - Homeless / NFA

3.3 Lived Experience

- **46.8%** had current or past experience of homelessness.

4. Communications and Reach

The consultation was widely promoted through:

- **Eight Facebook posts** (33,395 views; 19,601 users reached; 147 engagements).
- **LinkedIn**, Rotherham Round-up bulletins, direct emails across Council directorates, NHS partners and voluntary sector networks.
- **Posters** were provided to organisations who supported and hosted drop-in's and focus groups.

This ensured broad awareness and opportunities for residents and partners to participate.

5. Key Messages from the Consultation

5.1 Support for the Vision

Across all respondent groups, **89.8%** agreed that the current vision remains relevant. A strong consensus emerged around:

- Working in partnership to end homelessness
- Everyone having a secure, affordable home
- Ensuring the right support is available at the right time

Additional themes suggested for strengthening the vision include:

- Communication and partnership working
- Empathy and respect
- Staff training and trauma-informed practice
- Tenancy sustainment
- More affordable and supported housing
- Early advice and information

5.2 Strategic Priorities for 2026–2031

Respondents selected their top priorities from a list of ten. The highest-ranked priorities were:

1. Prevention and early intervention (75.9%)
2. Increase access to affordable housing (70.4%)
3. Joined-up support for homeless/rough sleeping households (60.1%)
4. Make homelessness brief and not repeated (47.3%)
5. Joined-up approach for people with complex needs (43.8%)

People with lived experience identified access to affordable housing as their highest priority (80%), followed by early prevention and access to tailored support.

5.3 Main Barriers People Face

Common barriers identified through survey responses and engagement sessions included:

- Lack of affordable housing and high private rental costs
- Cost-of-living pressures
- Limited or fragmented support for mental health and substance misuse
- Domestic abuse
- Lack of ID, particularly for rough sleepers
- Accessibility issues (language, digital barriers, limited information)
- Inconsistent communication across services

These barriers impact people before, during and after experiencing homelessness.

5.4 Suggested Solutions

Respondents highlighted a range of practical and strategic solutions:

- Better relationships with private landlords and incentives to widen access
- Building more social housing and improving supported accommodation options
- More specialist provision (women, young people, people with multiple support needs)
- Earlier intervention and clearer information across the borough
- Improved cross-partner working (homeless service, health, prisons, Adult Care, voluntary sector)
- More tailored support, counselling, trauma-informed practice and help with employment
- Ensuring pathways out of supported accommodation that enable people to work and sustain housing

6. Engagement Summary: Groups Consulted

A wide-ranging consultation was carried out with partners, service users, voluntary sector organisations, and council staff to understand what is working well, the challenges in preventing homelessness, and what improvements are needed in Rotherham. Engagement took place with groups representing domestic abuse survivors, young people, rough sleepers, people with multiple support needs, veterans, supported accommodation residents, and the wider public.

A total of 18 engagement sessions took place across the borough (in addition to the online survey), ensuring wide representation. Below is the full list of groups consulted:

Group / Organisation	Date	Format	Participants
Housing Options Staff (RMBC)	02/07/2025	Online presentation	48
Shiloh	04/07/2025	Focus group	5
Rotherham Homeless Forum	08/07/2025	Workshop	28
Strategic Housing Forum	09/07/2025	Workshop	16
Safeguarding Board	16/07/2025	Presentation	17
Rotherham Ethnic Minority Alliance (REMA)	22/07/2025	Drop-in	3
Action Housing Breakfast Club	25/07/2025	Focus group	11
Social Supermarket	30/07/2025	Drop-in	13
Shiloh	01/08/2025	Drop-in	4
Queen Street Rough Sleeper Hostel	06/08/2025	Drop-in	3
Homeless Strategic Board	06/08/2025	Presentation	19
RMBC Staff Session	08/08/2025	Presentation	1
Young People (Rush House & Roundabout)	08/08/2025	Focus group	6
Elliot Court (Target Housing)	13/08/2025	Drop-in	6
Social Supermarket (Second session)	14/08/2025	Drop-in	3
Armed Forces Covenant	18/08/2025	Presentation	13
RMBC Staff Session	20/08/2025	Presentation	5
Rotherham Show*	06– 07/09/2025	Public stall	35

(*Fell outside the 8-week online survey window but included for wider engagement.)

7. Summary of Feedback from Consultation Sessions

Across all sessions, several common themes emerged:

- **The need for more affordable and suitable accommodation** across the borough.
- **Better joined-up working**, especially between housing, social care, health, and voluntary sector partners.
- **Improved access to timely information**, advice, mental health support, and early intervention.
- **A stronger emphasis on prevention**, lived experience influence, and trauma-informed approaches.
- **More specialist provision**, including options for women, people with multiple and often complex support needs, young people, and people with pets.

Below is a further summary.

7.1 Domestic Abuse & Families

Main Themes:

- Need for more affordable housing across all areas of the borough.
- Localised support, including counselling and holistic recovery services, should be better integrated.
- Challenges when supporting victims include trauma, mental health, returning to perpetrators, and risk of re-entering abusive relationships.
- Identified gaps include female-specific supported housing.
- Emphasis on healthy relationship education for victims.

7.2 Young People

Main Themes:

- Better joint working between services (housing, social care, education).
- Need for clear leaving-care pathways and improved early financial education.
- Young people face barriers accessing affordable housing.
- Suggested improvements:
 - Mediation and support for families.
 - More education in schools and colleges.
 - More LGBTQ+ awareness and support.
 - Female-specific options.
- Importance of good quality, modern temporary accommodation.
- Need for extra emergency provision, support for young parents, and learning from failed placements.
- Support around furnishing and decorating homes would aid tenancy sustainment.
- Riverside House, Council office environment felt adult, overwhelming, and difficult for neurodivergent young people. There is a need for trauma-informed spaces for young people presenting as homeless.
- Accessing mental health support can be too slow and not always at the right level, better access is needed.
- Better understanding barriers faced by young people in the BME community.

7.3 Households with Multiple Support Needs

Main Themes:

- Greater focus on universal prevention and expectation-setting for service users.
- Stronger multi-agency working to improve MARAC referrals and reduce delays around consent.

- Strengthening crisis prevention: wraparound support, tenancy monitoring, and clearer referral pathways.
- More emergency supported accommodation is required, especially small, supported schemes like the 7-bed provision.
- More front-end housing options could help people progress into long-term models such as Housing First.
- Building trust is essential to improving engagement and recovery.

7.4 Rough Sleepers

Main Themes:

- More suitable accommodation that allows:
 - Longer stays.
 - People to work without unaffordable rents.
 - Provision for pets.
- Greater mental health support to reduce crisis-led homelessness.
- Importance of lived experience in shaping services.
- Better joint work with prison services to reduce risk of rough sleeping.
- Strengthening supported accommodation standards.
- A joined-up approach between accommodation providers is essential for crisis prevention.
- More providers needed for SWEP (Severe Weather Emergency Protocol) that can offer a warm safe place to stay.

A summary of other feedback during the consultation:

What Works

- Strong support from good homelessness providers, especially around wellbeing, life skills and signposting.
- Trusted, accessible community services providing multi-agency drop-ins.
- Most services in Rotherham seen as caring and accessible.
- The continued development of partnership working for veteran homelessness.

What Needs Improvement

- More peer support and provider funding.
- More empathy from staff across agencies.
- More supported accommodation for males and females.
- Better discharge processes (hospitals/prisons).
- Earlier interventions, improved integration, better furniture support.
- Improve non-commissioned supported accommodation standards.
- Limited options for high support needs.
- Lack of affordable housing.
- Health access difficulties and financial barriers.
- Practical barriers: lack of ID.

Why Change is Needed

- To sustain accommodation, provide long-term post-move-on support, improve health and wellbeing support, reduce isolation, and support employment pathways.
- Need for public perception change and reducing stigma, education on homelessness will help earlier prevention and understanding that anyone can be homeless.

8. Overall Conclusions

The consultation demonstrates strong continued support for the current direction of homelessness work in Rotherham. The refreshed strategy should retain the core vision and priorities, while strengthening the areas most highlighted by residents and partners:

- Earlier, more accessible prevention.
- More affordable and diverse housing options.
- Stronger cross-partner working.
- Better mental health and addiction support.
- Clearer information, communication.
- Focus on vulnerable cohorts such as, people with multiple needs, young people, and domestic abuse victims.
- Trauma-informed practice - More compassionate, face-to-face support needed.
- Greater use of peer support and early intervention.
- Person centred approach that is outcome focused.

These findings will directly shape the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2026–2031, due for Cabinet consideration - 11th May 2026.

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Appendix 3

PART A - Initial Equality Screening Assessment

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

A **screening** process can help judge relevance and provide a record of both the process and decision. Screening should be a short, sharp exercise that determines relevance for all new and revised strategies, policies, services and functions.

Completed at the earliest opportunity it will help to determine:

- the relevance of proposals and decisions to equality and diversity
- whether or not equality and diversity is being/has already been considered, and
- whether or not it is necessary to carry out an Equality Analysis (Part B).

Further information is available in the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance – see page 9.

1. Title	
Title: Homelessness Prevention & Rough Sleeper Strategy Review and Consultation 2026-2031	
Directorate: Adult Care, Housing and Public Health	Service area: Housing Options
Lead person: Richard Leighton-Cox	Contact: 01709334598
Is this a:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strategy / Policy	<input type="checkbox"/> Service / Function <input type="checkbox"/> Other
If other, please specify	

2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening
<p>This EIA is screening the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy Review and Consultation for 2026-2031.</p> <p>The current priorities set out in the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2023-26 are</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make homelessness a rare occurrence by focusing on prevention and early intervention.

2. Minimise the use and improve the quality of temporary accommodation and end the use of hotels.
3. Increase access to affordable housing options.
4. Improve access to housing support, employment, and health services.
5. Support people with complex needs.
6. End rough sleeping in Rotherham.

The current Strategy was approved by Cabinet in March 2023 and published in April 2023. (3-year strategy). The Strategy is set to expire, necessitating a review and refresh. Under Section 1(1) of the 2002 Act, the Council is obligated to: (a) Conduct a homelessness review for their district. (b) Formulate and publish a homelessness strategy based on the review's findings.

Although significant progress has been achieved during the current strategy period, housing services have encountered new challenges related to the six priorities. These challenges include the continued cost-of-living crisis impacting households, a shortage of affordable housing, and changes in the private rental market.

A review of the existing strategy and understanding the current challenges, both nationally, regionally and locally will help to outline new priorities and initiatives to tackle homelessness more effectively, which will be reflected in the new proposed strategy.

3. Relevance to equality and diversity

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

The review of the Strategy will consider the effects on different groups, particularly those protected under equality legislation. The aim will be to ensure that the new proposed strategy does not disproportionately disadvantage any group and actively promotes equality.

The review will assess the impact on various groups, including race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion, and other relevant characteristics, including victims of domestic abuse, individuals with multiple support needs, rough sleepers and those who may be more at greater risk of homelessness.

A data analysis will help to inform this review alongside the consultation.

Questions	Yes	No
Could the proposal have implications regarding the accessibility of services to the whole or wider community?	X	
Could the proposal affect service users?	X	
Has there been or is there likely to be an impact on an individual or group with protected characteristics?	X	
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns regarding the proposal?	X	

Could the proposal affect how the Council’s services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom?	X	
Could the proposal affect the Council’s workforce or employment practices?	X	
If you have answered no to all the questions above, please explain the reason		

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

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

4. Considering the impact on equality and diversity

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

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

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

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

The Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy Review and 2026-31 Consultation will have a positive Equalities and Diversity impact, as it will lay out the achievements and successes of the Strategy so far, whilst identifying key challenges and barriers to better support households at risk of homelessness or rough sleeping.

The Homelessness Code of Guidance, states that Housing authorities must consult public or local authorities, voluntary organisations, or other persons as they consider appropriate before adopting or modifying a homelessness strategy. It also states that Housing authorities may also wish to consult with service users and specialist agencies that provide support to homeless people in the district.

Best practice includes engaging with people with lived experience of homelessness. This was demonstrated in the development of the current Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2023-2026 and will form part of the proposed strategy refresh. To ensure that the impact on Equality and Diversity are understood, an analysis of Homelessness Data submitted quarterly to central government has been undertaken to identify overrepresented groups within the homeless cohort. This will evidence how the Strategy will have a positive impact on protected characteristic groups. It is noted that limited information is available at this stage, and focuses on Age, Sexual Orientation and Ethnicity data recorded in Quarter 1, Quarter 2 and Quarter 3 of 2024/25.

• **Key findings**

Data shows that people aged 16-24, 25-34 and 35-44 are overrepresented in homeless data, compared to their prevalence in the general population of Rotherham. Those aged 16-24 made up 20.6% of homeless households between April and December 2024, compared to 10.7% of the population as per the 2021 UK Census (please note that census data records this age category as 15-24). Similarly, people aged 25-34 made up 31.6% of homeless households in the same time period, compared to 13.0% of the general population. People aged 35-44 made up 27.2% of homeless households, compared to 12.1% of the general population.

Data on Ethnicity shows that 72.7% of households that were assessed as homeless and owed a duty between April and December 2024 were White British, significantly lower than the 91.1% of the general Rotherham population recorded in the 2021 UK Census. 19.2% of homeless households were from BME backgrounds, compared to 8.9% of general population. This data demonstrates that people from BME backgrounds are overrepresented in homeless data in Rotherham.

Data on Sexual Orientation shows that 74.8% of homeless households owed a duty between April and December 2024 identified as being heterosexual/straight. This is a significant difference compared to the general Rotherham population of 91.6%. 4.7% of households identified as being LGBTQ+, higher than the general Rotherham population of 2.3%. 19.4% of homeless households recorded they preferred not to disclose their sexual orientation.

• **Actions**

- Completion of Part B of the Equalities Impact Assessment.
- Further research of local data regarding homelessness and rough sleeping in Rotherham
- Attain equalities data relating to homelessness in Rotherham through 2024/25.
- Attain further data to look into wider protected characteristics for full picture of equality impacts.
- Consider national and regional trends

Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	02/06/2025
Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	30/09/2025
/Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title):	Richard Leighton-Cox Housing Options Development Officer

5. Governance, ownership and approval

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

Name	Job title	Date
Helen Caulfield-Browne	Housing Options Operational Manager	03/06/25
Kim Firth	Homeless Team Manager	04/06/25
Chloe Harrop	Corporate Improvement Officer	09/06/2025

6. Publishing

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

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

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

Date screening completed	02.06.2025
Report title and date	Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy Review and Consultation 2026-31
If relates to a Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision – report date and date sent for publication	
Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	02.06.2025

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: Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy Review and Consultation 2026-2031	
Date of Equality Analysis (EA): 18/06/2025	
Directorate: Adult Care, Housing and Public Health	Service area: Housing Options
Lead Manager: Helen Caulfield-Browne	Contact number: 01709 807831
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)
Richard Leighton-Cox	RMBC	Housing Options Development Officer
Helen Caulfield-Browne	RMBC	Housing Options Operational Manager
Kim Firth	RMBC	Homelessness Prevention and Resettlement 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, other groups or stakeholder/s e.g. service users, employees, partners, members, suppliers etc.)

The Council has a statutory duty under the Homelessness Act 2002, as amended by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, to review homelessness in its area and to develop, publish, at least every five years. This duty is reinforced by the Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities, which sets clear expectations that local authorities must undertake a robust review of homelessness, informed by meaningful engagement with people affected by homelessness and those who work with them, and translate this evidence into a clear, actionable strategy.

The Code of Guidance is explicit that the review and development of a homelessness strategy should be comprehensive and inclusive. This may include engagement with individuals or groups identified by a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010, as well as other groups and stakeholders such as people with lived experience of homelessness, service users, employees, partner organisations, elected Members, and the wider community. The strategy must reflect local need, inequality, and risk, and demonstrate how homelessness will be prevented and rough sleeping reduced through partnership working and targeted intervention.

The new Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy is a key statutory document that sets out Rotherham's vision for preventing homelessness and tackling rough sleeping. It provides a shared framework for action across the Council and its partners, setting out clear priorities, expected outcomes, and measures that will be used to monitor delivery and impact.

Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategies are designed to remove barriers to households affected by homelessness. The Strategy must ensure that the priorities, aims and objectives are relevant to the local and national context surrounding homelessness. Additional steer from the recently published Government Homelessness Plan helps to shape this approach, alongside a comprehensive consultation to ensure

lived experience of homelessness is incorporated. Below, the key priorities of the Strategy are outlined:

- Priority 1: Prevent homelessness through early, proactive intervention.
- Priority 2: Increase the of and access to suitable, affordable housing
- Priority 3: Ensure support reaches those most in need at the right time
- Priority 4: Tackle rough sleeping through prevention and rapid response

The Strategy outlines the Councils collaborative approach with partners to prevent homelessness earlier, reduce inequality, and provide timely, person-centred support. It also defines the processes for monitoring performance and reviewing progress to promote continuous improvement.

The Strategy has been shaped and developed following a public consultation that took place between July 2025 and the end of August 2025, alongside targeted engagement with partners and stakeholders. Feedback from people with lived experience of homelessness and frontline services has informed the strategic priorities and actions.

Relevant Legislative Framework

- **Homelessness Act 2002** – Requires local authorities to review homelessness in their area and publish a homelessness strategy at least every five years.
- **Homelessness Reduction Act 2017** – Strengthens prevention duties and requires earlier intervention and partnership working with public bodies to prevent homelessness.
- **Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities** – Sets out expectations for homelessness reviews and strategy development, including consultation, equality considerations, partnership working, and evidence-based action planning.

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

Equality data is available from homelessness information, sent to Central Government via HCLIC quarterly, the 2021 UK Census, information provided by respondents consenting to provide equalities information when completing the consultation survey and data reports based on information pulled from Homeless Advice Cases.

The below links are referenced for information source purposes:

- [UK census data - Office for National Statistics](#)
- [Tables on homelessness - GOV.UK - HCLIC data](#)
- [Rough Sleeping Data Framework, January to March 2025 - GOV.UK](#)

Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy Consultation

The Strategy has been shaped by an eight-week public consultation, which ran from 7 July to 1 September. A total of 203 responses were received, with 47% of respondents reporting lived experience of homelessness.

The feedback gathered through the consultation has provided valuable insight into the real barriers faced by people with lived experience in Rotherham. This has ensured that the Strategy's priorities are grounded in what residents identify as most important, reflecting both their needs and their experiences.

Participation in the consultation saw a total combination of 415 interactions, across survey responses, focus group sessions and other methods of engagement. The consultation was conducted in a semi-structured manner, a blend of structured questions and multiple-choice options with an opportunity for add additional comments to be feedback, as well as open discussions that formed the main parameters for discussion.

The consultation was structured to engage groups that often experience barriers to participation. This includes those that are most at risk of homelessness and individuals with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. A mixed method approach was used to reduce barriers to engagement and maximise participation. The main method of consultation was through the promotion of the online survey was via the Councils website, social media platforms and partner networks, however, to tackle barriers around digital exclusion, a broad range of in-person sessions were arranged at different locations such as food banks and support services, allowing people to share their views in safe, familiar setting. The details of the timeline of consultation engagement sessions and dates are listed in under section - ***Engagement undertaken with customers. (date and group(s) consulted and key findings) – refer to page 14.***

Targeted focus groups and engagement delivered through partner organisations enabled stronger participation from groups who are often under-represented in formal consultations, including people with lived experience of homelessness. Alternative ways of providing feedback such as creative and artistic expression were also offered to ensure individuals could communicate their views in ways that felt accessible and meaningful.

This approach helped ensure that consultation responses reflected a wide range of experiences and perspectives, supporting the identification of key barriers, priorities, and areas for improvement. The survey included an optional question on equality and diversity; respondents were not required to provide this information. Targeted focus groups were also encouraged and supported to participate with the online survey.

HCLIC data (Homelessness Case Level Information Collection)

H-CLIC data is the national case-level dataset submitted by local authorities in England to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. It is used to monitor statutory homelessness and local authority duties under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.

In relation to protected characteristics, these datasets include information on age, ethnic background, and sexual orientation for individuals who presented to the Council as homeless between April 2022 and March 2025.

UK Census Data 2021

Data collected during the 2021 UK Census can be used to provide further supporting evidence in overrepresentation of certain protected characteristics within people

presenting as homeless in Rotherham. The data can be used as a rough indicator, as the data is not directly comparable due to a change in population year on year. The tables below provide a breakdown of the data that is available that can be used to better understand the impacts on different protected characteristics.

Homeless Advice Cases data (internal data)

Homeless households that approach the Council will have an Advice Case opened to record information provided by the household and advice given by the relevant officer. Information stored has been pulled into an overview summary, giving better context to the range of support needs that are prevalent within the homeless cohort by year of presentation. This information can be used where appropriate. The datasets do include all households who have a homeless assessment completed. This includes households who were not owed a homeless duty by the Council. The data can be used to support evidence of need, growing demand or prevalence of certain groups.

Protected characteristic	Evaluation																		
Age	<p>HCLIC Age data is available from 2022/23 through to 2024/25. Across the 3-year period, 20.3% (863) people aged between 16-24 were owed a duty under homeless legislation as a result of presenting to the Council as homeless. People aged 65+ made up 3.1% (132) of the homeless cohort across the 3-year period. The largest cohort group by age was people aged 25-34, making up 32.2% (1,386) of homeless households. Households aged 35-44 made up 26.4% (1,123) of households, with 12.1% (515) being aged between 45-54. The final group of people aged 55-64 made up 5.9% (252) of homeless households in Rotherham.</p> <p>The 2021 UK Census data provides the following breakdown of information on age of Rotherham residents.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="603 1447 1477 1794"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="778 1451 842 1485">Age</th> <th data-bbox="1161 1451 1337 1485">Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="770 1491 850 1525">16-24</td> <td data-bbox="1201 1491 1297 1525">13.0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="770 1532 850 1565">25-34</td> <td data-bbox="1201 1532 1297 1565">15.8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="770 1572 850 1606">35-44</td> <td data-bbox="1201 1572 1297 1606">14.7%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="770 1612 850 1646">45-54</td> <td data-bbox="1201 1612 1297 1646">16.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="770 1653 850 1686">55-59</td> <td data-bbox="1201 1653 1297 1686">8.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="770 1693 850 1727">60-64</td> <td data-bbox="1201 1693 1297 1727">7.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="770 1733 850 1767">65-74</td> <td data-bbox="1201 1733 1297 1767">12.9%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="770 1774 850 1807">75+</td> <td data-bbox="1201 1774 1297 1807">11.0%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>A comparison of the datasets shows that those aged 25-34 are overrepresented in homelessness data, as they are not the largest population group in the general population.</p> <p>The Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy</p>	Age	Percentage	16-24	13.0%	25-34	15.8%	35-44	14.7%	45-54	16.5%	55-59	8.5%	60-64	7.5%	65-74	12.9%	75+	11.0%
Age	Percentage																		
16-24	13.0%																		
25-34	15.8%																		
35-44	14.7%																		
45-54	16.5%																		
55-59	8.5%																		
60-64	7.5%																		
65-74	12.9%																		
75+	11.0%																		

	<p>2026-2031 anticipates no expected or possible negative impacts.</p>																
<p>Ethnic background</p>	<p>HCLIC data on ethnic background across the 3-year period shows that 72.3% of households owed a homeless duty in Rotherham were White British. The second highest group in terms of prevalence were households identifying as Asian or Asian British, accounting for 8.8% of homeless households. Overall, 19.5% of homeless households in Rotherham were from different Ethnic Minority Backgrounds.</p> <p>The 2021 UK Census data provides the following breakdown of the Ethnic Background of Rotherham residents.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="608 712 1476 1093"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="608 712 1043 752">Ethnic background</th> <th data-bbox="1043 712 1476 752">Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="608 752 1043 792">White</td> <td data-bbox="1043 752 1476 792">91.0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="608 792 1043 866">Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Groups</td> <td data-bbox="1043 792 1476 866">1.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="608 866 1043 940">Black African, Caribbean, Black British</td> <td data-bbox="1043 866 1476 940">1.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="608 940 1043 981">Prefer not to say</td> <td data-bbox="1043 940 1476 981">0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="608 981 1043 1021">Other Ethnic Group</td> <td data-bbox="1043 981 1476 1021">1.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="608 1021 1043 1061">Not known</td> <td data-bbox="1043 1021 1476 1061">0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="608 1061 1043 1093">Asian or Asian British</td> <td data-bbox="1043 1061 1476 1093">5.3%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Comparison of the data shows that people from ethnic backgrounds are overrepresented in homelessness data, compared to the overall population of Rotherham.</p> <p>The Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2026-2031 anticipates no expected or possible negative impacts.</p>	Ethnic background	Percentage	White	91.0%	Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Groups	1.4%	Black African, Caribbean, Black British	1.1%	Prefer not to say	0%	Other Ethnic Group	1.1%	Not known	0%	Asian or Asian British	5.3%
Ethnic background	Percentage																
White	91.0%																
Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Groups	1.4%																
Black African, Caribbean, Black British	1.1%																
Prefer not to say	0%																
Other Ethnic Group	1.1%																
Not known	0%																
Asian or Asian British	5.3%																
<p>Sexual orientation</p>	<p>HCLIC data is available on sexual orientation, however, the recording metric changed between 2022/23 and 2023/24 to include a separate recording for people identifying as bisexual. In 2022/23, 61.2% of households were recorded as being heterosexual/straight, with 1.7% recorded as homosexual (gay/lesbian). 24.7% of households were recorded as Other, with a further 11.9% stating they preferred not to say. Across 2023/24 and 2024/25, 76.7% of households were recorded as heterosexual/straight. 4.8% were recorded as being homosexual, bisexual or other, with 18.1% stating they preferred not to say.</p> <p>The Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2026-2031 anticipates no expected or possible negative impacts.</p>																

Gender	<p>HCLIC data shows that across the 3-year period of 2022/23 to 2024/25, the gender split shows an average figure of 55.1% of homeless cases were for males. It is worth noting however, that this data only captures the lead applicants gender.</p> <p>The 2021 UK Census data provides the following breakdown of the gender split of Rotherham residents.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="608 517 1469 633"> <thead> <tr> <th>Gender</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Female</td> <td>51%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Male</td> <td>49%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2026-2031 anticipates no expected or possible negative impacts.</p>	Gender	Percentage	Female	51%	Male	49%																
Gender	Percentage																						
Female	51%																						
Male	49%																						
Religion	<p>The 2021 UK Census data provides the following breakdown of the religion of Rotherham residents.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="608 927 1469 1384"> <thead> <tr> <th>Religion</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>None</td> <td>39.8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Christianity (all denominations)</td> <td>49%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Muslim</td> <td>5.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Prefer not to say</td> <td>5.2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Any other religion</td> <td>0.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hindu</td> <td>0.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sikh</td> <td>0.2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Buddhist</td> <td>0.2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Jewish</td> <td>0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Unknown</td> <td>0%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2026-2031 anticipates no expected or possible negative impacts.</p>	Religion	Percentage	None	39.8%	Christianity (all denominations)	49%	Muslim	5.1%	Prefer not to say	5.2%	Any other religion	0.4%	Hindu	0.3%	Sikh	0.2%	Buddhist	0.2%	Jewish	0%	Unknown	0%
Religion	Percentage																						
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Jewish	0%																						
Unknown	0%																						
Disabled under the Equality Act 2010	<p>The 2021 UK Census data provides the following breakdown of Rotherham residents who are disabled under the Equality Act 2010.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="608 1682 1469 1832"> <thead> <tr> <th>Disabled under the Equality Act</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Yes</td> <td>21.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No</td> <td>78.9%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2026-2031 anticipates no expected or possible negative impacts.</p>	Disabled under the Equality Act	Percentage	Yes	21.1%	No	78.9%																
Disabled under the Equality Act	Percentage																						
Yes	21.1%																						
No	78.9%																						

<p>Transgender</p>	<p>Data on transgender households is available for April 2024 to March 2025, as it was not mandatory to report this information in the previous years. The data shows 1.4% of households presenting as homeless in this time period identified as being transgender.</p> <p>The Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2026-2031 anticipates no expected or possible negative impacts.</p>
<p>Are there any gaps in the information that you are aware of?</p> <p>Using the data provided in the consultation, Census data, HCLIC data and Homeless Advice Case data, a wide range of comprehensive data is available to help understand who the policy is seeking to support. The various datasets also provide a good level of context to the varying needs, patterns of change over a 3-year period and where certain groups or protected characteristics might be overrepresented within the local population of households who have experienced homelessness.</p>	
<p>What monitoring arrangements have you made to monitor the impact of the policy or service on communities/groups according to their protected characteristics?</p> <p>The Strategy is designed to be inclusive of all protected characteristics. Its central aim is to improve outcomes for all households in Rotherham affected by homelessness, ensuring that support is accessible, fair, and responsive to the diverse needs of the population.</p> <p>To ensure this commitment is delivered in practice, the Strategy will be supported by a cross-service action plan and overseen through a tiered governance structure. This structure will provide regular and robust monitoring to identify whether any groups with protected characteristics are disproportionately affected or face barriers in accessing support.</p> <p>Regular monitoring will include consideration of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress against the cross-service action plan • Achievement of key milestones within the Strategy • Performance against measurable indicators related to homelessness prevention and relief • Identification of emerging risks, barriers, or inequalities, particularly for groups statistically at higher risk of homelessness • Feedback from service users, frontline staff, and partner organisations, helping to highlight lived experience and any differential impacts <p>Governance Structure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness Operational Board – Quarterly • Homelessness Strategic Board – Quarterly • Homelessness Forums – Biannually 	

Use of Data and Insight

Analysis of homelessness data, led by the Homelessness Team Manager with support from the Performance Team, will monitor trends and patterns in service demand. This analysis enables early identification of shifts that may disproportionately affect particular groups or communities according to their protected characteristics. Where such patterns emerge, the service will respond proactively for example, through targeted prevention activity or tailored support offers.

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

Overall, 212 people engaged in the different sessions delivered during the consultation.

Organisation	Date
Housing Options – RMBC	July 2025
Shiloh*	July 2025
Rotherham Homeless Forum	July 2025
Strategic Housing Forum	July 2025
Safeguarding Board – RMBC	July 2025
Rotherham Ethnic Minority Alliance (REMA)	July 2025
Action Housing Breakfast Club (supported housing)	July 2025
Social supermarket	July 2025
Shiloh	August 2025
Queen Street rough sleeper hostel	August 2025
Homeless strategic board	August 2025
RMBC employee session	August 2025
Young People's focus group (Rush House & Roundabout)	August 2025
Elliot Court (supported housing)	August 2025
Social supermarket	August 2025
Armed Forces Covenant	August 2025
RMBC employee session	August 2025
*Rotherham Show	September 2025
*Rotherham Mental Health, Learning Disability and Neurodiversity transformation group	November 2025

**Represents valued feedback received after the formal consultation period*

	<p>Refer to page 9, which provides a summary of the findings through engagement sessions.</p> <p>203 completed survey responses were received also. The summary of findings from the consultation are outlined below:</p> <p>The Vision</p> <p>89.8% of respondents agreed that the current vision remains relevant for the 2026–2031 strategy. Residents, people with lived experience, and professionals all showed strong support, emphasising partnership working, affordable housing, and appropriate support as the core approach to preventing homelessness and improving outcomes.</p> <p>This aligns closely with feedback from the Rotherham Homeless Forum and Housing Options staff, further confirming that the vision remains fit for purpose.</p> <p>Additional suggested themes for the vision included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger partnership working and communication • Respectful, empathetic approaches • Focus on tenancy sustainment • More specialist supported accommodation • Better staff training • More affordable housing options • Improved access to early advice and information <p>These suggestions provide evidence for future workstream’s and priorities aimed at improving tenancy sustainability.</p> <p>Priorities</p> <p>Respondents identified five key strategic priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention and early intervention • Increasing access to affordable housing • Better coordinated support for homeless households and rough sleepers • Ensuring homelessness is brief and not repeated • A joined-up approach for people with complex needs <p>These priorities closely reflect the current strategy and were reinforced through stakeholder sessions with the Rotherham Homeless Forum and Housing Options service.</p> <p>Main barriers</p> <p>Understanding barriers helps shape future service delivery. Respondents highlighted key issues including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of affordable housing, cost of living pressures, and
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	<p>limited employment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient support services • Addiction and mental health problems • Domestic abuse • Difficulties obtaining ID/documentation • Language, technology, and information access barriers <p>Stakeholder organisations reported similar themes, indicating consistent challenges across the borough.</p> <p>Solutions to mitigating barriers</p> <p>To address these barriers, respondents suggested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger relationships with private landlords • Developing more social housing • Improving accommodation options • Better cross-partner collaboration • Person-centred approaches • Enhanced support for managing complex needs <p>These solutions highlight the need for a coordinated, borough-wide approach involving the council, partners, voluntary sector, and community organisations.</p> <p>Accessing affordable housing</p> <p>Respondents stressed that improved access to affordable housing across social housing, private rent, supported accommodation, and affordable ownership is key to meeting local needs. Better access to support services was also seen as crucial for tenancy sustainment, preventing homelessness, and ensuring timely interventions.</p>
<p>Engagement undertaken with staff (date and group(s) consulted and key findings)</p>	<p>Staff from across RMBC were invited to a session to understand more about the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy consultation. The session included an overview of the legal requirements, what the consultation will seek to achieve and an understanding of key achievements, data and challenges since 2022.</p> <p>Engagement included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Options Staff Session – 02.07.25 • Council-wide online session – 08.08.25 • Strategic Housing Forum – 07.07.25 • Rotherham Safeguarding Board 0 16.07.25 • Homeless Strategic Board – 06.08.25 <p>The feedback received helped to shape the key priorities, ensure the vision remains relevant and that strategy is values-led.</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)

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

No problems or barriers to communities or groups has been identified.

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

The Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy has a positive impact by promoting inclusive, accessible, and preventative homelessness services for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, including those with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 and others identified as vulnerable through homelessness legislation. This includes families with children, pregnant people, care leavers, victims of domestic abuse, people affected by mental or physical health needs, older age or disability, people with experience of the criminal justice system or armed forces, and those who lose their home due to an emergency.

The Strategy identifies and supports practical solutions to remove barriers that can prevent households from accessing help at the earliest opportunity, including systemic, communication, and engagement barriers. It promotes early intervention and targeted prevention for groups most at risk, such as young people, care leavers, LGBTQ+ individuals, survivors of domestic abuse, people leaving institutions, former members of the armed forces, and those with complex needs. Where homelessness cannot be prevented, the Strategy seeks to reduce the risk of repeat homelessness through timely, coordinated, and person-centred support, helping people to secure and sustain suitable accommodation.

The Strategy takes a flexible and adaptive approach that recognises the changing nature and complexity of homelessness, including shifts in need and changes in the characteristics of households affected. A key priority focuses on providing timely and effective support for vulnerable households to prevent escalation of need and improve outcomes.

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

The Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy is designed to have a positive effect on community relations by promoting early intervention, inclusion, and fair access to support for people at risk of homelessness across Rotherham. By focusing on

prevention and reducing repeat homelessness, the Strategy supports improved stability for individuals and families, which in turn contributes to safer and more cohesive communities.

The Strategy emphasises partnership working between the Council, statutory services, voluntary and community sector organisations, and people with lived experience of homelessness. This collaborative approach supports shared understanding of homelessness, reduces stigma, and encourages constructive engagement between services, communities, and those affected by homelessness.

Targeted support and increased access to information for groups most at risk, alongside ongoing engagement with diverse communities, helps ensure that the needs of different groups are recognised and addressed fairly. This approach, promotes equality, and strengthens community confidence in how homelessness is prevented and managed locally.

Improving the Boroughs availability of good quality, affordable housing will enable more long-term, sustainable outcomes to be achieved. This considers affordable rents, supported accommodation and better financial opportunity for households in the borough, enabling tenancy sustainment and community cohesion.

Having a responsive framework towards rough sleeping, alongside improved early intervention and prevention, will improve not only individual outcomes around health, housing and wellbeing, but also improve public perceptions around homelessness, issues identified around community safety and image of the town centre.

The Strategy aligns with relevant local plans and policies ensuring that Rotherham's approach reflects both local priorities direction.

- [Council Plan – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)
- [Rotherham Housing Strategy – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)
- [Housing Allocation Policy – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)

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: Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2026-2031
Directorate and service area: Adult Care, Housing & Public Health
Lead Manager: Helen Caulfield-Browne – Operational Manager Kim Firth – Homelessness Manager
Summary of findings:
<p>Different data streams have been analysed in line with the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy, including HCLIC submission data, Advice Case data, Consultation data and UK Census data. This is to provide a comprehensive understanding into the reasons for homelessness, the support needs amongst the cohort and to understand the demographic/equality information. Despite the varying forms of data, we do not hold a full picture of the protected characteristics amongst the homeless cohort in Rotherham between 2022/23 and 2024/25; this is due to changes in the requirements of recording and the appropriateness of capturing certain personal information.</p> <p>Due to the nature of the Strategy, no negative impacts or barriers have been identified. The Strategy aims to be inclusive and seeks to remove barriers to homelessness services and support across the Borough, including groups that are considered to be harder to reach or marginalised.</p>

Action/Target	State Protected Characteristics as listed below	Target date (MM/YY)
Ensure regular monitoring of homelessness data is undertaken to identify changes and trends, which may specifically impact a certain protected characteristic group.	All	Annually
Ensure that key issues that are identified regarding homelessness in Rotherham are raised through the appropriate Governance channels and escalated as necessary, to mitigate and reduce harm.	All	Quarterly and annually

***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
Cllr Linda Beresford	Cabinet Member for Housing	25 th March 2026
Ian Spicer	Executive Director of Adult Care, Housing and Public Health	27 th March 2026

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	05.01.2026
Report title and date	Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2026-2031
Date report sent for publication	
Date Equality Analysis sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	23/02/2026 – approved 26.02.26

Failure to delivery the aims of the Strategy may however have consequences for particular cohort groups in Rotherham. Comparing homelessness data against the 2021 UK Census, it shows that households identifying as Asian or Asian British are overrepresented. This highlights the importance of the governance process overseeing the delivery and management of the Strategy, alongside key external partners.

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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?	None	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Emissions from transport?	Increase	<p>Broader multi-agency working between RMBC staff and other services in the borough may require increase travel, increasing the number of work miles covered.</p> <p>There is a potential to see a reduction for the Council / contractors in the form of reduced refurbishment of temporary accommodation units. Reduced demand for temporary accommodation due to increased prevention work will subsequently require less maintenance and upkeep of the TA units, reducing travel time.</p>	<p>Whilst the impacts would be minimal, it could contribute to an increase in the release of greenhouse gasses in the borough. Increased carbon emissions could cause a reduction in air quality within Rotherham.</p>	<p>Promotion of public transport use. Car sharing where possible also encouraged to reduce carbon emissions. Adopt online meetings as a means of reducing carbon footprint.</p>	<p>Review methods of partnership working to ensure unnecessary travel is avoided.</p> <p>Officer travel is included with the Council's Net Zero 2030 greenhouse gas emissions accounting and is monitored by the council's Climate Change team.</p>

Emissions from waste, or the quantity of waste itself?	Decrease	N/A	Increased prevention work will reduce the need for households to utilise temporary accommodation. Reducing TA usage will subsequently reduce the amount of replacement furnishings that will be required due to a high level of turnover that is experienced.	N/A	
Emissions from housing and domestic buildings?	Increase	There is a potential for the Councils utility costs and subsequent emissions through use of gas/electricity in ringfenced temporary accommodation properties to increase. Whilst the properties are void between placements of different households, the Council will be liable for heating and maintaining the property, which will increase energy consumption. Work is ongoing to increase the availability of ringfenced properties to be used as temporary accommodation. Whilst increase RMBC TA provision will reduce need for hotel	Increased energy consumption contributes to greater carbon emissions. This could contribute to a minor decrease in air quality and carbon rating for the Council in terms of energy consumption & efficiency.	<p>Better throughput for households placed into temporary accommodation through providing more access to affordable housing will help to mitigate this. Reducing placement length will reduce maintenance work that is required between placements in a TA property. Reducing the re-let time for TA properties will reduce the cost & carbon emissions the Council will inherit during this process.</p> <p>The combined estimated figure for Visiting Officer mileage in 2025 is 3281 miles. This equates to 8.3 tonnes of CO2, based on</p>	

		<p>placements, which are large consumers of energy, it is worth flagging that increasing the TA portfolio will subsequently greater energy usage whilst properties are void.</p> <p>There is the potential to reduce carbon emissions in the form of streamlining work and reducing duplication.</p>		<p>an average mileage for a petrol vehicle in the UK. A reduction of temporary accommodation placements by 10% would see a saving of 0.8 tonnes of CO2 per year, a saving of 1.3 tonnes for a 15% reduction and 1.7 tonnes for a 20% reduction in use of TA.</p>	
Emissions from construction and/or development?	Unknown	N/A	<p>Delivery of either new build social housing, supported accommodation or hostel-style accommodation to increase access to affordable housing options would cause an increase in the emissions contributed into the environment locally.</p> <p>This could be delivered as part of wider Council strategies that would fall under the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy by means of improving access to affordable housing and providing</p>	<p>The use of modern methods of construction will be considered for all new schemes, where value for money can be demonstrated as well as carbon reduction.</p> <p>For refurbishment / retrofit schemes, emissions from the construction and refurbishment of properties could be offset by the reduction in carbon emissions from newly installed components having lower or zero carbon emissions.</p>	<p>Housing Strategy for 2022-2025 agreed by Cabinet in July 2022 includes the Green Housing Strategy to reduce energy costs and improve efficiency of homes.</p> <p>Outcomes of the strategies are monitored and reported through internal governance.</p>

			longer-term housing security for local residents. This would not be directly delivered under the strategy.		
Carbon capture (e.g. through trees)?	None	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
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 Strategy will not have any adverse effects on either the Council's or local residents' resilience or capacity to manage any changes regarding climate change. The Strategy will seek to support better outcomes for households at risk of or threatened with homelessness. This will reduce risk of people rough sleeping, subsequently reducing the risks associated with extreme and increasingly adverse weather conditions, such as flooding, heavy snow, freezing temperatures, heatwaves and high winds. Another aim of the Strategy will be to reduce the number of households who lose their accommodation. Preventing homelessness reduces the need for households to potentially access temporary accommodation.

Temporary accommodation requires a lot of resource and energy to sustain and maintain suitability. When households move on from temporary accommodation, deep cleans are often required, along with repairs to the property and replacement of furnishing. Due to the relatively short time frames households are placed in temporary accommodation, this is resource intensive and therefore has a negative impact on the environment. By reducing the need for temporary accommodation, this will have a positive impact on the local environment. In some cases, households requiring temporary accommodation will be placed into hotels. Due to the nature of hotel operation, this accommodation provision is less environmentally friendly. This is due to lighting, heating and staffing of large-scale buildings. Reducing need for hotel placements through prevention of homelessness will again provide better local resilience to the impacts of climate change. By preventing homelessness and reducing use of temporary accommodation, this will also reduce the amount of travel required by both households who are homeless and RMBC staff across the homeless, temporary accommodation and rough sleeper teams.

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

As outlined previously, the aims of the Strategy do not have any adverse effects on the local population. Due to the nature of homelessness and how the Strategy will aim to achieve better outcomes, there are not an extensive list of impacts or monitoring arrangements in place. The main area where climate impact may be identified and monitored is around temporary accommodation usage. If improved prevention outcomes are achieved, less households will require temporary accommodation. In turn, this will reduce the turnover of furnishings, reducing waste and resource to remove items. It will also reduce the mileage the Visiting Officers have to cover, providing potential carbon emission savings (estimations outlined in table above).

Supporting information:

Climate Impact Assessment Author	Richard Leighton-Cox Housing Options Development Officer Housing Options Adult Care, Housing and Public Health
Please outline any research, data or information used to complete this Climate Impact Assessment.	Due to the similarities and crossover, sections from CIA304, Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy written by Helen Caulfield-Browne have been used.
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: CIA 578 Arthur King Principle Climate Change Officer

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Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Cabinet – 11 May 2026

Report Title

Selective Licensing Update

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

No, but it has been included on the Forward Plan

Executive Director Approving Submission of the Report

Andrew Bramidge, Executive Director of Regeneration and Environment

Report Author(s)

Emma Ellis Head of Service Community Safety and Regulatory Services
emma.ellis@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected

Boston Castle
Brinsworth
Dinnington
Rawmarsh West
Rotherham East
Rotherham West
Thurcroft and Wickersley South

Report Summary

Rotherham Council made declarations for six new Selective Licensing areas which commenced in February 2026 for a period of five years. While traditional Selective Licensing tools have enabled the Council to regulate private landlords and deal directly with specific housing problems, during the consultation undertaken prior to declaration, the Council also heard from both tenants and landlords about wider problems in their communities. These included environmental and anti-social behaviour problems, and a lack of direct support to tenants.

To maximise the positive outcomes of these new designations, including improved housing standards, stronger community engagement, and enhanced regulatory intervention, as part of the 2026/27 budget setting process, the Council has agreed an additional revenue investment of £362,000 per annum. This aims to increase the impact of enforcement and regulatory activity, provide additional direct support to tenants, as well as provide increased capacity to ensure local stakeholder groups are well run and well supported.

In addition, the Council also agreed the allocation of a £500,000 capital budget over four years, 2026/27 to 2029/30 spread across the six areas, to deliver targeted improvements that complement enforcement activity. This capital programme will be shaped by the local stakeholder groups, and local teams.

This report sets out the operational model, responsibilities, governance, and expected outcomes for both the liaison function and the capital funding.

Recommendations

That Cabinet:

1. Note the report and progress to date.
2. Approve the approach to the community liaison roles and stakeholder panels.
3. Approve the approach to establishing the capital programme, with stakeholder groups identifying local priorities and delegate agreement for the final governance arrangement to the Executive Director of Regeneration and Environment in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Service Director for Legal Services.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 – Equality Impact Assessment Part A
Appendix 2 – Equality Impact Assessment Part B
Appendix 3 – Climate Impact Assessment

Background Papers

[Appendix 2 - Proposed Revenue Investments.pdf](#)

[Selective Licensing Policy - Updated report and appendices pack Agenda Supplement for Cabinet, 20/10/2025](#)

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

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Selective Licensing Update

1. Background

- 1.1 The 2020–2025 Selective Licensing schemes delivered clear, measurable improvements in housing conditions, community safety and neighbourhood stability across designated areas. The schemes drove proactive compliance and enforcement activity, resulting in thousands of housing and environmental hazards being identified and remedied, significant reductions in serious property risks, and improved standards across the private rented sector. They also contributed to wider place-based outcomes, including tackling criminality and anti-social behaviour through stronger partnership working and delivering demonstrable health benefits in individual cases. Overall, the schemes demonstrated that selective licensing, when implemented as part of a coordinated, multi-agency approach, can secure sustained improvements in both housing quality and community wellbeing.
- 1.2 Following a broad public consultation, the Council agreed to a further six designations to run from 2026 – 2031. The Selective Licensing designations aim to improve private rented sector conditions, reduce antisocial behaviour, and enhance neighbourhood quality. To support these ambitions, the Council committed to an additional revenue investment (totalling £362,000 per annum) to strengthen enforcement teams, tenant/landlord (community) liaison work and management capacity.
- 1.3 The Council also agreed an additional targeted capital programme funding (£500,000 over 4 years across the six areas) that will seek to further support delivery of the outcomes through both regulatory and environmental improvements, increasing community confidence, and long-term sustainable change.
- 1.4 This report seeks to provide an update on the implementation of selective licensing to date, outline the detail of the new investments and provide an overview of the governance structure for the schemes.

2. Key Issues

2.1 Rollout of the new Selective Licensing Designations

- 2.1.1 Implementation of the new Selective Licensing designations is progressing from mobilisation into delivery. Core systems are now in place, with the online application process and website fully operational and applications being processed through both digital and paper routes. Draft licences have begun to be issued, with full licences to follow as volumes stabilise. Neighbourhood Development and Improvement Plans have been formally adopted by Area Management Groups, embedding Selective Licensing within a wider place-based delivery framework. Governance arrangements are being finalised, including the establishment of a multi-agency Steering Group and the development of performance reporting to support statutory returns and local oversight. A targeted communications programme is

underway to increase landlord engagement and licence uptake, responding to lower than anticipated early application levels.

- 2.1.2 A risk based, intelligence led inspection model is being finalised to ensure early enforcement activity focuses on the highest risk properties and landlords, with active inspections scheduled to commence in May 2026. New inspection technology and reporting tools are being introduced to support consistent evidence gathering and governance. Implementation of Selective Licensing is being closely aligned with preparation for the implementation of the Renters' Rights Act 2025, including updated enforcement policies, staff training and partnership working with homelessness and legal services, ensuring the Council is well positioned to deliver both the new designations and forthcoming legislative duties.

2.2 Revenue Investment

- 2.2.1 The additional revenue investment agreed by the Council provides for additional enforcement capacity, with three new Enforcement Officers dedicated to the Selective licensing areas. These new officers will enhance the capacity within the service to respond to environmental, housing and anti-social behaviour complaints in the six areas. Recruitment for these posts commenced in March 2026.

- 2.2.2 In addition, two further dedicated officers have been funded in order to improve local engagement with the schemes and to support the establishment of local stakeholder groups and again, recruitment to these posts commenced in March 2026.

- 2.2.3 Finally, a dedicated management resource has also been provided to give greater oversight of Selective Licensing, ensuring alignment with the Renters Rights Act 2025 and to be accountable for all enforcement coordination (pro-active and reactive) activity across all private sector housing. Recruitment for this role commenced in April 2026.

- 2.2.4 The aim of these combined roles is to:
- Strengthen engagement with tenants, landlords, residents and partners.
 - Provide a visible point of contact for all activity linked to Selective Licensing.
 - Coordinate locality-based responses to housing, environmental, safety and wellbeing issues.
 - Support and service local stakeholder panels.
 - Contribute to neighbourhood development and improvement plans.
 - Ensure insight from residents feeds directly into enforcement and service delivery.
 - Oversee community communications and local reporting mechanisms.
 - Provide day to day engagement, tenancy support, and early intervention to prevent homelessness and resolve issues quickly.

2.3 Capital Investment Programme (£500,000 over 4 Years)

2.3.1 Alongside the additional revenue investment, the Council also agreed to provide capital funding for the six areas. The capital programme is specifically designed to deliver physical improvements that complement the regulatory impact of Selective Licensing. This includes environmental enhancements, safety measures, and small-scale neighbourhood improvements not deliverable through revenue budgets.

2.3.2 Funds will be allocated across the six Selective Licensing areas based on:

- Local needs
- Stakeholder identified priorities
- Alignment with neighbourhood development and ward plans
- Deliverability and measurable impact

2.3.3 Examples of eligible capital spend could include:

- Alleyway improvements, gating, and lighting
- Improvements to communal areas
- Crime prevention design features including CCTV and/or lighting,
- Waste storage solutions
- Landscaping or greening interventions
- Signage and neighbourhood identity features

2.3.4 The process for identification of opportunities for investment will be through consultation with local councillors, local Council teams and partners as well as residents and landlords who engage with the stakeholder panels. Ideas will need to be properly formed and costed prior to seeking the agreement of local stakeholder panels. Following on from this, proposals will be examined through a scheme-wide board, which is further detailed in section 2.5, to identify any consistencies or economies of scale before being submitted for formal approval through the Council's capital governance processes.

2.4 Stakeholder groups

2.4.1 In response to consultation feedback, the Council has agreed to establish new stakeholder panels in each of the designated areas. Stakeholder groups will be multiagency groups representing residents, landlords, partners, elected members and Council services. The groups will identify improvement priorities, review performance of the scheme and impacts locally and propose or review potential capital projects. The panels will also advise on community impacts and emerging issues.

2.4.2 The panels will be brought together initially following focussed communications in local areas in order to attract interest. Firstly, the Council will utilise mailing lists, populated as a result of previous selective licensing work, in order to contact potential local community members, residents and landlords to seek interest to take part in the stakeholder groups. The groups will be arranged virtually and in the early evening in order to maximise attendance for those who may have other commitments during the day. As

the new engagement and liaison roles are established, the Council will seek to more proactively recruit members to these groups by attending local events, engaging with local community and voluntary organisations and working directly with local councillors.

2.5 Governance

2.5.1 Selective Licensing designations and the associated capital and revenue investments will be overseen by new governance arrangements which will be multi-layered. Each designation, as detailed in section 2.4 will have a stakeholder panel, as agreed as part of the scheme implementation, this is underpinned by a bespoke Neighbourhood Development and Improvement Plan (NDIP).

2.5.2

- To ensure an integrated approach across the Council, Governance arrangements will be established that ensure integration with other groups and boards and enable oversight by Cabinet and Scrutiny.

2.5.3 These activities and arrangements are closely aligned with existing structures and will contribute to the delivery of a range of different strategic aims across the Council, not least supporting the thriving neighbourhoods ambitions. Progress updates will be routinely shared across priority areas and strategic groups. The previous Cabinet report set out some of the other key areas which Selective Licensing will contribute towards including:

- Housing Strategy
 - The Selective Licensing Scheme aligns with Rotherham's Housing Strategy, aiming to improve tenant conditions and management standards in the PRS.
- Homelessness Strategy
 - Selective Licensing complements the Homelessness Strategy by improving PRS standards and enabling enforcement officers to support residents into long-term, stable housing.
- Rotherham Empty Homes Plan 2025-2029
 - Although empty homes are not licenced, the scheme supports efforts to bring long-term vacant properties back into use.
- Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Policy
 - The scheme reinforces the Council's ASB Policy by requiring landlords to actively manage and prevent ASB.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

3.1 This report provides an update following the decision to implement Selective Licensing and to allocate additional capital and revenue investment as part of the 2026/27 budget and therefore no alternative options have been considered in the preparation of this report.

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 The Selective Licensing designation underwent extensive formal consultation, which has informed the approach as set out within this report.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 Implementation of the strengthened Selective Licensing model is already underway. Recruitment for the Community Liaison Function has commenced in March 2026, the Private Sector Housing Manager role went out to advert in April 2026, and the Enforcement Officer posts were also advertised in March 2026.
- 5.2 In parallel, governance structures will be established and aligned. The Selective Licensing Board will be convened in June 2026 to agree its terms of reference, membership and reporting arrangements. Stakeholder groups in each of the six licensing areas will be refreshed or established, ensuring they are ready to shape local priorities and feed recommendations into the capital programme from the outset.
- 5.3 Early capital priorities will be identified during the first year, with preparatory work undertaken while governance approvals and stakeholder recommendations are confirmed. As staff become fully operational and the liaison function begins to embed, the relationship between enforcement, community engagement and physical improvements will strengthen, enabling the programme to move into a steady, coordinated delivery phase for the remainder of the five year designation period.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 6.1 Where there is a need to engage third party suppliers/contractors to provide goods, works or services to deliver this activity they must be procured in compliance with procurement legislation (Public Contracts Regulations 2015 / Procurement Act 2023 depending on the route to market) as well as the Council's Financial and Procurement Procedure Rules.
- 6.2 On 4th March 2026, Council approved a £362k permanent revenue budget investment and a £500k capital investment as part of the Council's Budget and Council Tax Report 2026/27 to support the current Selective Licensing Scheme. This report also outlines the proposed arrangements for use of the capital funding, which will be in addition to the Council's existing financial monitoring processes.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

- 7.1 The governance arrangements set out in the report, including the establishment of a Selective Licensing Board and local stakeholder panels, must operate within the Council's constitutional framework. While stakeholder panels may identify local priorities and make recommendations,

formal decision-making must remain with appropriately authorised officers in accordance with the Council's Scheme of Delegation.

- 7.2 Other than the above there are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations within the report.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

- 8.1 As this is a progress update report there are no direct HR implications arising from the report.

- 8.2 Any workforce implications arising from the recommendations will be managed in accordance with the Council's policies and procedures.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 9.1 The Selective Licensing scheme and the additional revenue and capital investment activity are expected to have a positive impact on children and young people living within the designated areas. Improvements in housing conditions, environmental quality and neighbourhood safety contribute to healthier home environments, reduced exposure to hazards and improved wellbeing outcomes.

- 9.2 Vulnerable adults, including those living in poor quality or insecure private rented accommodation, will benefit from increased enforcement activity, enhanced tenancy support and improved access to advice. The approach supports early intervention, homelessness prevention and safeguarding by improving visibility of issues, strengthening engagement and enabling concerns to be identified and addressed at an earlier stage.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

- 10.1 The Selective Licensing scheme and the associated investment have been designed to support fairness, inclusion and equality of opportunity. The designated areas include communities with higher levels of deprivation and a greater concentration of vulnerable households. By targeting resources and investment in these areas, the programme seeks to reduce inequalities in housing standards, environmental conditions and access to support.

- 10.2 An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken and is included as an appendix to this report. The assessment identifies that the proposals are likely to have a positive impact on groups protected under the Equality Act 2010, including tenants, low-income households and those with disabilities or health conditions. Ongoing monitoring will ensure that engagement activity, stakeholder groups and service delivery remain inclusive and that no group is disadvantaged by the implementation of the programme.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

- 11.1 The proposals set out in this report are not expected to result in significant negative impacts on CO₂ emissions. The capital investment programme will focus on small-scale, place-based improvements and will be delivered in line with the Council's existing environmental and sustainability requirements.
- 11.2 Where capital projects are developed, opportunities will be taken to support climate-positive outcomes where appropriate, such as improved waste management, environmental enhancements, lighting upgrades and greening interventions. A Climate Impact Assessment has been completed and is included as an appendix to this report.

12. Implications for Partners

- 12.1 Delivery of the Selective Licensing scheme and the associated capital investment programme relies on effective partnership working across a range of internal and external organisations. Key partners include South Yorkshire Police, health services, housing providers, environmental services, voluntary and community sector organisations, and other statutory agencies operating within the designated areas. The strengthened governance and engagement arrangements are intended to improve coordination, information-sharing and joint problem-solving rather than create additional demands on partners.
- 12.2 Partners will benefit from clearer routes for engagement through the stakeholder groups providing opportunities to influence priorities, align activity and contribute to place based solutions. The approach will be designed to complement existing partnership structures and locality arrangements, supporting shared objectives around community safety, housing standards, health and wellbeing. Any implications for partner resources will be managed through existing partnership agreements and ongoing dialogue to ensure expectations are proportionate and sustainable.

13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 There are several key risks associated with the delivery of the Selective Licensing programme and the wider neighbourhood improvement work.
- 13.2 One of the primary risks relates to sustaining meaningful engagement across all six areas. Without consistent involvement from residents, tenants and landlords, the ability to shape local activity and deliver change could be limited. This risk is mitigated through the enhanced presence of the Community Liaison Function, which will lead proactive engagement, maintain regular communication and support inclusive participation.
- 13.3 Risk of delays in delivering capital schemes or underspending against the annual allocation, particularly where projects require complex procurement or experience unforeseen operational issues. This will be addressed

through phased planning, early identification of deliverable schemes, and strong monitoring by the Locality Working Board to ensure timely progress and intervention where needed.

- 13.4 Ensuring equity across the six Selective Licensing areas, there is potential for local expectations or differing levels of capacity to create pressure for an unbalanced distribution of capital resources. The strengthened governance arrangements will provide oversight to ensure decisions are fair, transparent and evidence based.
- 13.5 A further risk arises from the dynamics within stakeholder groups. In some neighbourhoods, there is the potential for a dominant personality or interest group to disproportionately influence discussions or priorities, limiting diverse voices being heard. This will be mitigated through clear terms of reference, officer-led facilitation, and active support from the dedicated officers to ensure balanced representation and transparent decision-making.
- 13.6 Finally, as the programme relies on coordination between multiple Council departments and partner agencies, there is a risk of inconsistent practice or delays due to operational pressures. The new governance structure will support regular review, escalation and joint problem-solving, while the dedicated management capacity created through the investment will improve coordination and accountability.

14. Accountable Officers

- 14.1 Emma Ellis Head of Community Safety and Regulatory Services

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	John Edwards	24/04/26
Executive Director of Corporate Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	13/04/26
Service Director of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phil Horsfield	13/04/26

Report Author:

Emma Ellis Head of Service Community Safety and Regulatory Services
emma.ellis@rotherham.gov.uk

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

PART A - Initial Equality Screening Assessment

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

A **screening** process can help judge relevance and provide a record of both the process and decision. Screening should be a short, sharp exercise that determines relevance for all new and revised strategies, policies, services and functions.

Completed at the earliest opportunity it will help to determine:

- the relevance of proposals and decisions to equality and diversity
- whether or not equality and diversity is being/has already been considered, and
- whether or not it is necessary to carry out an Equality Analysis (Part B).

Further information is available in the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance – see page 9.

1. Title	
Title: Community Liaison Function & Capital Investment Programme in Selective Licensing Areas	
Directorate: Regeneration & Environment	Service area: Regulation and Enforcement
Lead person: Emma Ellis, Head of Service – Community Safety & Regulatory Services	Contact: emma.ellis@rotherham.gov.uk
Is this a: <input type="checkbox"/> Strategy / Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Service / Function <input type="checkbox"/> Other ✓ Strategy / Policy ✓ Service / Function Other: Operational delivery framework for Selective Licensing support functions and capital programme If other, please specify	

Appendix 1

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

Additional Band G officer posts to increase capacity for enforcement, engagement, early intervention and regulatory work; including Community Liaison to support tenants, landlords and residents across six Selective Licensing areas.

A £500,000 capital investment programme over five years to deliver environmental, community safety and neighbourhood improvements aligned to local priorities.

These measures aim to improve housing conditions, reduce antisocial behaviour, support vulnerable tenants, strengthen local engagement structures, and enable fair and transparent allocation of capital funds.

3. Relevance to equality and diversity

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

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

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

Questions	Yes	No
Could the proposal have implications regarding the accessibility of services to the whole or wider community?	x	
Could the proposal affect service users?	x	
Has there been or is there likely to be an impact on an individual or group with protected characteristics?	x	
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns regarding the proposal?	x	
Could the proposal affect how the Council's services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom?	x	
Could the proposal affect the Council's workforce or employment practices?		x

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

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

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

4. Considering the impact on equality and diversity

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

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

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

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

The proposals affect residents, tenants, landlords and communities within six Selective Licensing areas, many of which experience high deprivation, poor housing conditions, higher proportions of ethnic minority households, and vulnerable individuals including:

- Low-income families
 - Private renters experiencing housing insecurity
 - People with disabilities or long-term conditions
 - Migrant households and those for whom English is not a first language
 - Victims of ASB, harassment, or exploitation
 - Single parents, young tenants, and older residents
- Analysis of IMD data identifies that some areas fall within the top 10 most deprived nationwide, indicating greater exposure to poor housing and environmental conditions.
 - Consultation undertaken during the Selective Licensing process highlighted barriers faced by tenants, migrant households and vulnerable individuals, including lack of support, fear of reporting issues, language barriers, and limited knowledge of rights.
 - The Community Liaison Function is designed specifically to ensure equitable access, visible contact points, and targeted support for groups who are less likely to engage with council services.
 - Capital investment will be prioritised based on evidence of need, ensuring that areas with higher concentrations of disadvantaged groups receive fair and proportionate improvements.
 - Governance arrangements include community representation to avoid dominant groups controlling outcomes.

Key findings

- The proposals positively impact groups with protected characteristics by improving safety, housing, accessibility and engagement pathways.
- Risks relate mainly to:
 - Uneven participation in stakeholder panels
 - Language and communication barriers
 - Risk of dominant individuals influencing priorities
 - Mitigation is built into the roles of liaison officers, terms of reference for panels, and officer-led facilitation.
- Additional staffing increases capacity for early intervention, case support, and preventing homelessness, supporting vulnerable groups.

Appendix 1

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions <p>Ensure stakeholder groups are diverse, accessible and representative, Provide translation, interpretation and accessible materials, Monitor engagement volumes across protected groups, Use data to prioritise capital spend fairly and transparently Train new officers on equality, cultural competence and vulnerable person safeguarding,</p>	
Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	2/4/2026
Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	2/4/2026
Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title):	Emma Ellis, Head of Service – Community Safety & Regulatory Services

5. Governance, ownership and approval

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

Name	Job title	Date
Sam Barstow	Service Director, Community Safety & Street Scene	08/04/26

6. Publishing

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

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

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

Date screening completed	April 2026
Report title and date	Community Liaison Function & Capital Investment Programme in Selective Licensing Areas – Cabinet, 13 May 2026
If relates to a Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision – report date and date sent for publication	
Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	2/4/2026

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: Community Liaison Function & Capital Investment Programme in Selective Licensing Areas	
Date of Equality Analysis (EA): 2/4/2026	
Directorate: Regeneration and Environment	Service area: Community Safety and Street Scene
Lead Manager: Emma Ellis, Head of Service – Community Safety & Regulatory Services	Contact number: emma.ellis@rotherham.gov.uk
Is this a:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strategy / Policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Service / Function
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other
If other, please specify Operational delivery framework for Selective Licensing support functions and capital programme	

Appendix 2

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)
Emma Ellis	RMBC	Head of Service Community Safety and Regulatory Services
Sam Barstow	RMBC	Service Director Community Safety and Street Scene
Chris Stone	RMBC	Community Protection 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 proposal affects tenants, private landlords, residents, and a range of vulnerable groups within the six Selective Licensing areas. The aim is to:

- Improve housing standards
- Reduce anti-social behaviour
- Enhance neighbourhood quality
- Improve engagement, support and early intervention
- Deliver targeted capital improvements identified by communities

These groups include:

- Low-income families
- People with disabilities
- Migrant and ethnically diverse households
- Older people
- Single parents
- Those at risk of homelessness
- Victims of ASB or exploitation

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

The equality evidence supporting this proposal is consistent with, and builds directly upon, the Equality Analysis (Part B) approved by Cabinet in October 2025 as part of the Selective Licensing Policy decision.

The October 2025 Cabinet report highlights a high concentration of private rented sector accommodation, low household incomes and residents at increased risk of homelessness should housing conditions deteriorate. Evidence from the 2020–2025 scheme identified the continued presence of serious Category 1 and 2 hazards, with over 8,000 hazards removed from 1,416 homes, demonstrating the ongoing link between housing conditions, health outcomes and inequality.

Appendix 2

That Equality Analysis concluded that the proposed Selective Licensing areas experience multiple and intersecting forms of disadvantage, including entrenched deprivation, poor housing conditions, higher proportions of residents with long-term health conditions or disabilities, and increased ethnic diversity compared with borough averages.

All six areas fall within the most deprived deciles nationally, with one neighbourhood ranking within the top 10 most deprived in England according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation. These areas were designated on the statutory criteria of high levels of deprivation, consistent with previous Selective Licensing schemes in Rotherham, and confirming that poor housing standards within the private rented sector were contributing to adverse health, safety and wellbeing outcomes.

It further identified that residents with protected characteristics, particularly disabled residents, people from ethnically diverse backgrounds, older people and low-income households, were disproportionately affected by unsafe housing, environmental harm and antisocial behaviour, and faced barriers to accessing support due to language needs, health conditions or fear of enforcement.

The report further confirms that several of the proposed areas, including central Rotherham neighbourhoods, have high levels of ethnic diversity, with a greater proportion of households where English is not a first language. Consultation activity evidenced that language barriers, low trust in statutory services and fear of reporting poor conditions disproportionately affect these communities

The Community Liaison Function and Capital Investment Programme proposed here directly respond to the mitigation measures and service improvements identified within the October 2025 Cabinet Report, by focusing on early intervention, accessible engagement, visible officer presence and targeted neighbourhood investment.

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

No significant gaps, but ongoing monitoring is required to ensure that:

- People with protected characteristics are equitably represented in engagement structures
- Barriers for groups with language needs or disabilities are fully understood as the programme embeds

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

Quarterly monitoring through the Selective Licensing Governance Board, Locality Working Board and performance dashboards.

Tracking engagement levels and service access by key characteristics (where it is proportionate and lawful).

Monitoring of:

- Equality impacts
- Distribution of capital funding
- Participation in stakeholder groups
- Issues raised by vulnerable groups

Appendix 2

<p>Engagement undertaken with customers. (date and group(s) consulted and key findings)</p>	<p>As set out in the Cabinet report (October 2025), a statutory public consultation was undertaken between January and June 2025 in relation to the proposed Selective Licensing designations. All residents, businesses, neighbourhood groups, local charities, faith groups, landlord groups, tenants, owner occupiers and visitors, which the council were aware of, were directly contacted. This included over 30,000 direct mail leaflets to all known addresses in the areas, supplemented by a range of other contact methods.</p> <p>Engagement activity included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public consultation events held within the proposed designation areas, • A formal written consultation, available online and in paper format, promoted through ward members, council channels and community networks • Targeted engagement with private sector tenants. • Engagement with landlords and managing agents, • Input from voluntary and community sector organisations, particularly those supporting migrant communities, low-income households and residents with complex needs <p>The Key findings from the consultation were that of those who responded, the majority did not support the proposed scheme. There was no indication that any specific group with protected characteristics had a specific objection related to their characteristics. The objections came from Landlords who do not wish to pay a licence fee, owner occupier who fear a reduction in house prices and private tenants who are concerned about possible rent increases.</p>
<p>Engagement undertaken with staff (date and group(s) consulted and key findings)</p>	<p>Internal engagement with Housing Enforcement, Community Protection, ASB, neighbourhoods, and locality based officers was undertaken during 2025 (January – June) to develop the operating model and the Neighbourhood Development and Improvement plans presented to Cabinet in October 2025.</p> <p>Officers highlighted that despite the success of previous schemes, underlying landlord behaviours had not changed sufficiently to achieve sustained improvement without continued intervention. Capacity pressures, complex household needs and fragmented engagement were identified as key risks.</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)

- Increases service visibility and approachability, particularly for isolated, marginalised or vulnerable residents.
- Provides targeted, accessible support for tenants at risk of homelessness or exploitation.
- Enhances environmental safety (lighting, CCTV, public realm improvements).
- Ensures minority and marginalised voices are empowered within stakeholder groups.
- Translation, interpretation and accessible formats will be used to support diverse communities.

Race and ethnicity

Several Selective Licensing areas have high levels of ethnic diversity, and that consultation identified language barriers, fear of reporting and low trust in statutory services. The Community Liaison Function mitigates these risks by enabling accessible engagement, building trusted relationships and ensuring that minority communities can influence priorities and access services equitably.

Disability and health inequality

Poor housing conditions link to adverse physical and mental health outcomes, including respiratory illness and mental health impacts. Improved housing standards, enforcement and environmental investment reduce hazards and improve wellbeing, while inclusive engagement approaches ensure disabled residents are not excluded from decision making.

Low income and deprivation

The areas were approved because of high levels of deprivation, low-income tenants face increased risk of poor housing conditions, antisocial behaviour and homelessness. Targeted liaison, early intervention and transparent capital investment support residents most affected by cumulative disadvantage.

Age and family status

Poor housing conditions and environmental harm disproportionately impact older residents and families with young children. Improved neighbourhood conditions, visible officer presence and coordinated responses enhance safety, reduce isolation and improve quality of life.

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

Potential risks include:

- Dominance of certain individuals or groups in decision making forums.

Appendix 2

- Language or literacy barriers limiting participation.
- Digital exclusion for some residents.
- Accessibility issues for people with disabilities if engagement is not inclusive.

All identified risks have mitigation built into the delivery model.

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

Yes – significant positive impacts:

- Improved housing quality and safety.
- Enhanced community cohesion.
- Better access to services for migrants, disabled people and low-income families.
- More responsive, coordinated action on ASB and environmental issues.
- Stronger representation of community voices in setting neighbourhood priorities.

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)

Positive:

- Encourages joint problem solving between communities, landlords and the Council.
- Builds trust through visible officers and consistent communication.
- Reduces tensions by addressing environmental issues, poor housing and ASB collectively.
- Increases fairness through transparent governance and equitable allocation of capital funding.

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: Community Liaison Function & Capital Investment Programme in Selective Licensing Areas
Directorate and service area: Regeneration and Environment, Community Safety and Street Scene.
Lead Manager: Emma Ellis
Summary of findings:
<p>The Equality Analysis identifies overall positive impacts across all protected characteristics, with especially strong benefits for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low-income and vulnerable tenants • Disabled residents • Ethnically diverse communities • Older people and young families • Those experiencing ASB, unsafe housing or environmental neglect <p>Risks primarily relate to barriers in participation or communication and have been addressed through robust mitigation strategies including officer facilitation, translation, accessible communication, strong governance and continuous monitoring.</p>

Action/Target	State Protected Characteristics as listed below	Target date (MM/YY)
Ensure stakeholder groups are inclusive, representative and actively supported by officers	A, D, RE, SO, GR	Ongoing
Provide translation, interpretation, accessible and easy-read materials	RE, D	Ongoing
Monitor engagement and participation by protected groups	All	Quarterly
Apply fair, transparent criteria for capital allocation	All	Ongoing
Ensure training for new officers covers equality, safeguarding and cultural competency	All	At induction

*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
Sam Barstow	Service Director	08/04/26
Cllr Linda Beresford	Cabinet Member	08/04/26

7. Publishing

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

Appendix 2

<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	
Date Equality Analysis completed	2/4/2026
Report title and date	Community Liaison Function & Capital Investment Programme in Selective Licensing Areas – Cabinet, 13 May 2026
Date report sent for publication	May 2026
Date Equality Analysis sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	2/4/2026

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Climate Impact Assessment, Appendix 3, Community Liaison Function & Capital Investment Programme in Selective Licensing Areas

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?	None	No significant changes to Council buildings. Community Liaison staff will be locality based and use existing office space with minimal energy impact.	Capital projects may include small improvements to communal areas (lighting, safety). If LED/low energy options are chosen, this results in marginal reductions in community energy use.	Specify LED or solar powered lighting in capital projects; avoid adding energy demanding infrastructure unless essential.	Monitoring through capital project sign-off and reporting via the SL Governance Board.
Emissions from transport?	Increase	Additional officer travel may increase fleet mileage. However, locality-based working reduces duplication and creates efficient routing.	Improvements to public realm may encourage walking/active travel in some neighbourhoods. Reduced fly tipping improves route efficiency for waste teams.	Use sustainable travel where safe; optimise routing; encourage walking for short-distance locality work; explore use of electric fleet vehicles if available.	Mileage monitoring for enforcement and liaison officers; periodic review via Locality Working Board.
Emissions from waste, or the quantity of waste itself?	Decrease	Better waste storage solutions reduce reactive collection miles and contractor trips.	Reduced fly tipping and clearer waste arrangements improve neighbourhood waste profiles, lowering emissions from clearance and disposal.	Prioritise waste related improvements; work with waste services to design sustainable containerisation options.	Monitor fly tipping reports and reactive clearance demand. Waste Services to provide quarterly feedback.
Emissions from housing and domestic buildings?	Unknown	The decision does not directly retrofit homes but strengthens regulatory enforcement, which improves housing conditions and may	Tenants benefit indirectly from safer, warmer homes where landlords respond to increased enforcement and liaison support.	Continue to signpost tenants/landlords to energy efficiency support; integrate energy efficiency messaging into liaison work.	Housing enforcement data and periodic review of category 1/2 hazards linked to energy inefficiency.

		reduce energy inefficiency linked to disrepair.			
Emissions from construction and/or development?	Increase	Small scale capital works may use materials with embodied carbon (e.g., concrete, metal, timber).	Minor increases in emissions from local construction activity depending on chosen projects. Overall scale is low due to £500k spread across six areas.	Prioritise low carbon materials; use recycled products; require contractors to minimise waste and follow RMBC sustainable procurement policy.	Capital project documentation will include carbon considerations. Monitoring through project approval and post-delivery review.
Carbon capture (e.g. through trees)?	Unknown	No direct impact on Council estate unless tree planting projects occur on RMBC land.	Where local stakeholder groups prioritise greening, tree planting, pocket parks or landscaping, this will create new local carbon sinks and biodiversity benefits.	Encourage green infrastructure bids; provide guidance on suitable species; ensure maintenance plans included.	Monitor number and type of greening projects funded; annual review of green infrastructure outcomes.

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

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 proposal will have a positive impact on climate resilience.

How it strengthens resilience for Council services:

- The increased investment creates stronger local intelligence about environmental issues (e.g., flooding hotspots, heat-affected areas, waste build-up), enabling earlier intervention and more efficient deployment of services.

- Multi-agency neighbourhood structures improve coordination during extreme weather events by providing clearer communication routes between communities and Council services.
- Cleaner, better-maintained neighbourhoods reduce the strain on services during weather-related surges (e.g., blocked drains, fly-tipping during heatwaves or storms).
- Capital projects may include drainage, greening, or environmental improvements that reduce long-term pressures on Council teams.

How it strengthens communities' ability to adapt:

- Environmental improvements (shading, trees, planting, better drainage, safer outdoor spaces) support residents during heatwaves, heavy rainfall and flooding.
- Greener, cleaner environments reduce heat-retention in built-up areas and improve local air quality, helping vulnerable residents cope with climate impacts.
- Strengthened engagement structures ensure residents—especially those who are vulnerable, low-income or isolated—have better access to information, support and services during climate-related events.
- Better waste systems reduce pests and hazards that can worsen during warm weather.

Overall assessment:

The proposal enhances climate resilience for both the Council and residents by improving environmental conditions, strengthening community networks, and embedding climate-positive options in the capital investment programme.

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

The proposal has a low overall climate impact, with small risks from officer travel and minor construction activity that can be effectively mitigated through low carbon materials, efficient routing, and sustainable procurement. Improvements to waste management, neighbourhood greening, and safer public spaces offer positive contributions to environmental quality and carbon reduction across the Selective Licensing areas. Ongoing monitoring through the Selective Licensing Governance Board will ensure emission impacts remain minimal and climate friendly opportunities are maximised.

Non-domestic buildings – None

- No significant change to Council buildings.
- Small improvements (e.g., LED lighting) may slightly reduce energy use.

Transport – negative/none

- Officer travel may increase slightly.
- Locality-based working will reduce duplication and unnecessary trips.

Waste – Positive

- Better waste storage and less fly tipping means fewer clearance trips and lower emissions.

Housing – Indirect positive

- Stronger enforcement improves energy efficiency indirectly by addressing disrepair and cold homes.

Construction – Low negative

- Small capital works produce some embodied carbon.
- Overall very limited due to small scale.

Carbon capture – Positive (where chosen)

- Community-led greening projects create opportunities for tree planting and biodiversity enhancements.

Mitigation

- Use LED/solar lighting and low carbon materials.
- Optimise officer travel routes; encourage active travel.
- Prioritise greening projects where communities support them.
- Ensure sustainable procurement, recycled materials, and waste minimising contractors.
- Use governance boards to require a climate check on all capital bids.

Monitoring (One-line Summary)

- Monitor officer mileage, fly tipping levels, capital project materials/energy use, and delivery of greening schemes through the **Selective Licensing Governance Board** and **Locality Working Board**.

Supporting information:	
Climate Impact Assessment Author	Emma Ellis Head of Service Community Safety and Regulatory Services Community Safety and Street Scene Regeneration and Environment
Please outline any research, data or information used to complete this Climate Impact Assessment.	
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.	
Validation	Tracking Reference: CIA 623 Arthur King Principal Climate Change Officer

Public Report
Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – 06 May 2026

Report Title

Rothercare – Update Report

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

No

Executive Director Approving Submission of the Report

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

Report Author(s)

Jayne Metcalfe, Head of Service – Access and Prevention
01709 823041 Jayne.metcalfe@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

In 2024 Rotherham Council undertook a review of the Rothercare telecare and assistive technology (AT) service to ensure it remained modern, sustainable, and aligned with the needs of a growing, ageing population. National demographic trends show steadily increasing demand for AT solutions that support independent living, reduce pressure on health and social care services, and delay or prevent transitions into residential care.

The review was driven by significant technological change, most notably the UK wide analogue to digital telecoms switchover. Rothercare has progressed the programme at pace throughout 2024/25 and 2025/26 for analogue units to be switched over to digital units. Completion plans are in place to ensure full digital readiness with no service interruption for vulnerable residents – ahead of national targets.

The review of the service identified opportunities to address operational challenges and to remodel the AT offer - to ensure it continued to meet the needs of local residents. Implementation of the new model commenced in April 2025, and the service is just reaching the 12-month point. However, this report is being submitted to outline the progress achieved so far to members, highlight positive outcomes for people along with identifying plans for future development and opportunities.

Recommendations

1. That members note the Rothercare update report and associated development plans.
2. That members note the intention to undertake periodical reviews of the service to ensure it remains fit for purpose and customer focused, as part of its continuous service improvement journey.

Appendix 1

Case Studies

Background Papers

<https://modgov-p-db1.rotherham.gov.uk/documents/s148733/Cabinet%20Report%20-%20Rothercare%20Future%20Model.pdf>

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

No

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Rothercare - Update Report

1. Background

- 1.1 In October 2024 Cabinet agreed a report which outlined the review of Rothercare and the Council's assistive technology offer. At the time it was solely delivered in-house by the dedicated Council service. Rothercare provided an end-to-end telecare service, managing referrals, installing equipment, monitoring, and responding to alerts. The service also procured all technical aspects including both hardware and software. The review of the service identified options to ensure the offer to the residents of the borough remained fit for purpose and could respond to future needs and technological advances, including the transition from analogue to digital due to the UK Telecom infrastructure upgrade.
- 1.2 The Council's ambition for Adult Social Care is to deploy and utilise assistive technology to enable people to live independently in their own homes and communities for as long as possible. Increasing the amount and variety of assistive technology deployed will help to realise and anticipate the model of care by using non-intrusive devices to prevent the deterioration in people's needs, whether they were living at home or in supported environments. This type of technology will contribute to the efficient use of resources across Health and Social Care services in the borough. The review of the service identified opportunities to address operational challenges and to remodel the assistive technology offer, as the service could not expand in its historical form.
- 1.3 Historically, the Rothercare charging model was linked to tenancy rather than assessed need, resulting in inconsistencies and inequitable outcomes. In addition, some equipment was outdated or expensive to maintain.
- 1.4 To address these challenges and create a sustainable, future-proofed service, the Council proposed and approved implementing a collaborative delivery model in which Rothercare continues to provide referral, triage, monitoring, and emergency response functions, while a specialist technology partner delivers the technical elements of the service. This partnership enables horizon scanning, access to cutting edge equipment, lifecycle management, recycling of unused devices, and improved efficiency through modernised processes.
- 1.5 There are currently 8,144 people in 6,266 households in receipt of Rothercare/AT equipment and monitoring across the borough.
- 1.6 In October 2024 Cabinet approved moving to a collaborative approach between an independent sector technology partner and Rothercare. This option enables Rothercare to strengthen the response element of the service and a partner – Medequip Connect taking on the specialist technology role.

2. Progress Update

- 2.1 The service changes came into force on the 1 April 2025 and the Technology partner; Medequip Connect, took on the role of undertaking Technology Enabled Care (TEC) assessments and annual reviews on behalf of the Council. Under the new model, the TEC partner installs the technology, undertakes any necessary repairs, changes batteries, collects and refurbishes any technology that is not being used or is no longer required. They safely and legally dispose of any technology that cannot be repaired /refurbished. Medequip Connect undertake the above functions for any equipment connected to the Alarm Receiving Centre (ARC).
- 2.2 The new model requires referrers to describe the persons needs and associated risks, so that Medequip Connect can assess and prescribe the solution/s from a range of Assistive Technology (AT) options, which gives opportunity for more creative solutions to maintain people safely at home and manage their risks.
- 2.3 Rothercare continues to install any digital units and pendant alarms where other AT solutions are not required.
- 2.4 Rothercare and Medequip Connect have regular operational meetings to discuss progress, issues and barriers and ensure a cohesive service delivery, as part of the Council's standard contract management arrangements.
- 2.5 The Rothercare Alarm Receiving Centre (ARC) is a dedicated, resilient ICT-enabled platform that operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Its primary function is to provide continuous monitoring and incident management for all Rothercare telecare alarms. Calls received into the ARC can be automated e.g., via a fire alarm or manually activated by the Rothercare user at the point of crisis.
- 2.6 When a Rothercare alarm is activated, the alert is immediately routed to a trained Rothercare operator. The operator assesses the nature of the incident, validates the situation, and initiates the most appropriate response pathway. This ensures that each service user receives a timely, safe, and proportionate intervention.

2.7 Response Options

- 2.7.1 Depending on the person's needs and the outcome of the Rothercare operator's assessment, the ARC may:
- Determine the call is a false alarm / customer requires reassurance.
 - Contact a designated key holder, friend, or family member.
 - Escalate directly to the appropriate emergency service.
 - Deploy a trained mobile responder to attend the property.

2.7.2 To further strengthen service efficiency and sustainability, new operational processes are being developed to support the retrieval and recycling of unused telecare equipment. The technology partner will embed equipment audits, retrieval activities, and lifecycle management into their assessment and review procedures. This will reduce waste, improve stock control, and ensure that devices are redeployed appropriately, delivering better value for money and ensuring customers receive equipment that meets current standards and needs.

2.8 Customer Impact and Mitigation

2.8.1 Rothercare customers paid a weekly charge of £4.50 in 2025/26. The charge, as agreed for 2026/27 is £5.50. This charge remains competitive and represents good value for money when benchmarked against neighbouring Local Authorities. This ensures the service remains affordable while supporting the sustainability of a modernised, digitally enabled telecare offer for the residents of the borough. At the time of the cabinet report in 2024 Doncaster charged £6.20, Barnsley £5.88 and Sheffield were £6.99 by way of comparison.

2.8.2 To protect vulnerable residents, the Council applies VAT zero-rating for customers who meet the eligibility criteria—specifically those who are chronically sick or disabled and who use the service for their own personal domestic requirements. Eligible customers therefore do not pay the additional VAT element, helping to mitigate financial impact for those with higher levels of need.

2.8.3 The Council remains committed to ensuring that no individual is disadvantaged by the charging model. Where concerns about affordability arise, a Care Act assessment could be undertaken to review needs, maximise access to financial support, and ensure that essential telecare services remain fully accessible.

2.8.4 Positive outcomes for people can be seen in the case studies attached at appendix 1 and in the compliments the service receives eg:

- (WD) My Mother has a Rothercare pendant and has had the need to use this after several recent falls. The service provided is always excellent from the staff who handle the calls to the team who come out to help my mother get back up Safley. Her most recent fall which was on Monday 26th January 2026 in the evening when she fell outside over a small wall and into a very difficult spot. The team that attended was exceptional. I cannot thank them enough for their help.

2.8.5 There have been no significant gaps in service delivery or continuity noted during the transition to the new model and Rothercare response times have been successfully maintained.

2.8.6 Work Undertaken:

Table 1: Mediquip connect have undertaken - 01/04/2025 – 28/02/2026

Total referrals	1267
Cancelled referrals – change of circumstance.	320
Outstanding referrals	46
Completed Referrals	901
A2D Cohort Additional	212 (not included in above figure)

Table 2: Collection and Repairs 01/04/2025 – 28/02/2026

Repairs	623
Collections	376

Rothercare activity between April 25 – March 26:

- Alarm alerts received: 255928
- Response Calls made to relatives, emergency services GP etc:113210
- Alarm alerts responded to by response team: 8,950
- Supported 903 referrals for Pendant alarm or standalone equipment

2.9 **Risk Management**

- 2.9.1 All commissioned services inherently carry a degree of contractual and operational risk. In the case of the Rothercare technology partnership, these risks are mitigated through established governance, monitoring, and escalation processes that are embedded within the Council's wider contract management framework.
- 2.9.2 The service operates under a robust assurance structure, allowing any performance concerns to be raised formally through routine contract management meetings, issue logs, and escalation pathways. This includes the option to trigger corrective action plans or apply contractual remedies where required.
- 2.9.3 Ongoing monitoring will continue to ensure service quality, compliance and responsiveness as the digital transition progresses.
- 2.9.4 The Council continues to operate within a well-developed ecosystem of sector collaboration. Informal South Yorkshire networks, quarterly regional groups, national update forums, and annual participation in the Telecare Services Association (TSA) Conference ensure that Rothercare remains aligned with best practice and sector innovation.

2.10 **Finance**

- 2.10.1 A revised charging policy underpins the long-term sustainability of the service. This increased the weekly charge to £4.50 during 2025/26, and £5.50 in 2026/27. This continues to represent value for money for residents compared to neighbouring Local Authority charges.
- 2.10.2 The total service cost £1.8m in 2025/26 with the new technology partner delivering within budget
- 2.10.3 Individuals who meet HMRC criteria—such as those who are chronically sick or disabled—are eligible for VAT zero-rating, reducing the financial impact of the service. Where affordability concerns arise, the Council will undertake a Care Act assessment to ensure no resident is excluded from essential support.

2.11 **Future Developments**

- 2.11.1 **National digital migration:** The national telecoms upgrade requires all analogue telecare systems to migrate to digital networks. This transition is essential, unavoidable, and time-critical, driven by UK-wide infrastructure changes that will render analogue connectivity increasingly unreliable. Ensuring continuity of service for vulnerable residents has therefore been a strategic priority for the Council. Rothercare will achieve this target ahead of the national timescale.
- 2.11.2 **Demand, innovation and equipment management:** National demographic trends continue to indicate a significant long-term increase in demand for AT solutions. With an ageing population and rising levels of long-term health conditions, AT plays a critical role in supporting people to live independently for longer, reducing avoidable pressures on statutory services, and delaying or preventing admission to residential care. These trends reinforce the need for a modern, flexible, and future-proofed telecare offer.
- 2.11.3 The collaborative partnering model enables the Council to be more aspirational and look for opportunities to maximise the use of technology to enhance support to people at home and maintain independence at home and working with partners to make links such as health telecare and housing providers.
- 2.11.4 **Stand-alone equipment:** During the implementation of the new model of delivery there have been positive developments and outcomes for people already highlighted in a selection of case studies, attached at appendix one. It has also been noted that there is a potential service gap for stand-alone equipment: this is equipment that is not connected to the ARC, such as Carers alert pagers, Buddie Trackers, door entry systems and other equipment.

- 2.11.5 The delivery of standalone equipment, not linked to the ARC currently remains with Rothercare in order to ensure continuity of service and access to equipment. A piece of work has commenced to undertake a full review of Standalone equipment.
- 2.11.6 This is a comprehensive review and will be carried out in liaison with appropriate stakeholders and partners and is an opportunity to ensure the model is effective, efficient and can embrace sector innovation to meet the changing needs of the people who use the service and the service itself.
- 2.11.7 **Analogue to Digital switchover:** An unforeseen development for the new model was the Analogue to Digital (A2D) changeover provider, NRS Healthcare, ceasing trading on 1 August 2025 before all analogue units were changed to digital units. This was a separate piece of work that was in progress outside of the move to a new model in order to change all of the analogue receiving units to digital units due to the national telecoms upgrade.
- 2.11.8 When NRS ceased trading, the Council paused the work to consider the options, and the decision was taken to manage the risk internally due to the relatively low numbers. Rothercare and Medequip Connect became responsible for swapping over the remaining units – this was approximately 800 units. As of 10 April 2026, 1 unit remains to be switched over to the digital platform. These final conversions are planned and scheduled, with contingency arrangements in place to ensure uninterrupted service for residents while the last remaining dependencies are resolved.
- 2.11.9 The near completion of the digital migration demonstrates the Council's commitment to service resilience, modernisation, and customer safety as the AT landscape continues to evolve. This work has been successfully completed ahead of the 31 January 2027 digital swap over which is a significant achievement.
- 2.11.10 Absorbing the A2D work did lead to some delays in respect of the planned developmental work from Medequip Connect in terms of reviewing new technology and providing training sessions, however the service continuity and support to residents has been successfully maintained.
- 2.11.11 Now the A2D work is almost complete, Medequip Connect have commenced with awareness sessions for referrers to include an overview of the referral and assessment process and discuss available equipment in order to improve the knowledge base of referrers and these are being well received.
- 2.11.12 As part of transformation work is well underway and will continue for Rothercare to be recorded as a service on the Adult Social Care data base where all assessment and service information is held rather than being recorded separately. Testing is in progress, training for staff is

planned in June with an anticipated go live for recording new customers on the system by the end of July 26.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 Members note that the report provides an update on the new Rothercare model as it approaches its first full year of operation, as such there are no options considered or recommended proposal.

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 No consultation is required as the report provides an update on the Rothercare model following implementation of the new partnering agreement with a technology partner in April 2025.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 As the report provides an update on the Rothercare model, service development will continue to place take as part of the continuous service improvement of the Rothercare service.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 6.1 The budget for the new operating system will continue to be closely monitored to ensure affordability and sustainability in the long term, in line with levels of activity. Additional requirements for stand-alone equipment will be identified as part of the on-going work and either capital or revenue budget identified, as appropriate.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

- 7.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report as the purpose is to provide an update on the new model implemented.
- 7.2 The Care Act 2014 (“CA 2014”) creates a general core duty for the Council to promote the individual wellbeing of adults with care and support needs and carers and also specific legal duties.
- 7.3 The Council has a duty under s2 CA 2014 to provide or arrange for the provision of services, facilities or resources, or take other steps, which it considers will contribute towards preventing or delaying the development by adults in its area of needs for care and support; reduce the needs for care and support of adults in the borough and reduce the needs for support of carers in the borough.
- 7.4 The Council also has a duty under s18 CA 2014 to meet needs for care and support having determined that a person has needs which meet the eligibility criteria and a duty under s20 to meet a carer’s needs for support.

- 7.5 The intention to undertake periodical reviews of the service to ensure it remains fit for purpose and customer focused will also ensure that the Council remains compliant with its Statutory duties.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

- 8.1 There are no direct Human Resource implications as a result of this report.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 9.1 Expanding the assistive technology offer represents a positive step in supporting vulnerable customers. The collaborative Rothercare model offers opportunities to prevent, reduce and delay the need for more formal types of care provision.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

- 10.1 Equality analysis of the potential beneficiaries of the collaborative Rothercare model was undertaken and submitted as part of the Cabinet report that was agreed in 2024.
- 10.2 The collaborative Rothercare model promotes assisting those most vulnerable in society to have their needs met in the least restrictive way.
- 10.3 The collaborative Rothercare Model supports the Council to comply with legal obligations encompassed in the:
- 10.4 Human Rights Act (1998), to treat everyone equally with fairness dignity and respect with a focus on those who are disadvantaged as a result of disability:
and Equality Act (2010) to legally protect people from discrimination in the wider society.

11. Implications for CO₂ Emissions and Climate Change

- 11.1 The Council requested Carbon impact plans from the TEC Partner organisations outlining the carbon impact of the service and their mitigating actions to address these. Rothercare are working with corporate transport to explore and move to electric response vehicles to minimise emissions.
- 11.2 No impact on climate change or CO₂ emissions has been identified to date as a result of the move to the collaborative model of Rothercare and continues to be a service consideration with ongoing development work.

12. Implications for Partners

- 12.1
- The collaborative Rothercare model has a positive impact in respect of hospital and care home admission avoidance and

accelerating safe hospital discharge along with enhancing independence at home.

- Have synergies with telehealth and will promote technology advancement in integrated health and social care.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 There are regular contract monitoring meetings with the TEC provider and with Rothercare as the response service. Risks and issues are discussed in real time and managed within the governance framework that oversees this service delivery.

13.2 The Robust arrangements in place allow us to monitor service delivery and outcomes with associated performance targets and KPIs and allows for enforcement action to be taken if the technology partner deviates from the agreed standards. To date there has been nothing of significance to escalate.

14. Accountable Officer(s)

Name, Ian Spicer Job Title Executive Director of Adult Care, Housing and Public Health.

*Report Author: Jayne Metcalfe Head of Service - Access and Prevention
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This report is published on the Council's [website](#).

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Appendix 1

OSMB Rothercare Update May 6 2026

Case Studies:

Technology Partner – Medequip Connect

Case Study – KM (Feb 26)

Background

KM is 86yrs old and lives with his wife in their council bungalow. He has a diagnosis of arthritis and had a stroke following surgery. He has carers 4x/day to support with personal care.

KM was referred by adult social care to facilitate discharge from Davies court, where he was having a period of rehab following his stroke. KM had capacity and consented to assessment/intervention and was keen to return home

Summary of the Intervention / TEC provided

Face to face assessment with wife present to support. Installation completed on same visit as assessment.

Issues identified:

Risk of falls - KM had had several falls whilst in Davies court accessing the toilet at night. These continued after being provided with urinals and pads due to him experiencing some forgetfulness. Space limited in bungalow so unable to use his walking frame, instead uses handrails on the wall for support when mobilising.

TEC provided: Rothercare install (Carium unit), falls pendant - wrist worn, bed occupancy sensor - nighttime alert only.

Outcomes identified at point of assessment:

- Mitigate risk should he fall especially at night (reduce risk of a long lie) and alert wife via Rothercare.

Outcome

6 week review completed.

KM continues to live at home with support from wife and carers.

Experienced a fall during the night shortly after returning home. Rothercare alerted wife and responders arrived, supported him back into bed.

Feedback

Wife advised that they are both very happy with the technology, it did what it was supposed to do - alerted wife to fall and Rothercare responders visited to support him back to bed. Wife advised it is reassuring to have it in place, that she knows that there is a back up/can get help if needed.

She said that KM 'wears it (falls pendant) all the time and doesn't take it off'.

Case Study – JB (Nov 25)

Background

JB is 88yrs old and lives alone in her own house, she has carers 4x/day. She has dementia and arthritis. Her only family support is her daughter who lives 2 ½ hours away.

JB was referred to facilitate discharge from hospital - admitted following a fall at home resulting in a fractured vertebra.

JB had capacity to consent to the assessment/intervention and was keen to return home.

Summary of the Intervention / TEC provided

Face to face assessment completed at home on discharge, with daughter present.
Installation completed on date of assessment.

Issues identified: JB experienced pain in her lower back due to osteoarthritis and had had 3 falls in 3 consecutive days which led to her being admitted to hospital with a fractured vertebra.

Daughter very concerned about what would happen should she fall again/be unable to alert for help.

At risk of further falls during the day and at night. Concern that she may not remember to press a pendant or take pendant with her should she get up in the night time.

TEC provided: Rothercare install (Carium unit), falls pendant on wrist strap, enzo pendant on neck cord, smoke/CO/heat detectors, and bed sensor (15min delay between hours of 10pm and 7am).

Outcomes identified at point of assessment:

- Mitigate risk should she fall (reduce risk of long lie)
- Increase safety and wellbeing
- Carer support/reassurance

Outcome

6 week review completed.

JB continues to live at home with support from her carers. No further falls experienced up to now.

Feedback

Daughter advised that they have tested it regularly to increase familiarity but not had to use it. Her mum is wearing it all the time now including when washing. Bed sensor is set for 15min (between 10pm-7am) and has not gone off up to this point.

Daughter advised that she is very pleased with the TEC, it gives her peace of mind especially at night, as this was always her concern overnight, knowing that the TEC is there and if mum doesn't get back into bed someone will check she is ok. Reassurance that falls pendant will go off automatically should she fall and help will come especially due to daughter being 2 1/2 hours away.

'Thrilled at range of TEC available, couldn't be happier due to distance I am away from her. Technician was lovely and patient and got it all sorted for install and explained everything'.

Rothercare standalone case studies:

Case Study

Background

DW lives with her husband, AW. Both have health conditions that can affect their daily living, but they currently remain independent and do not require carers or Assistive Technology. They do, however, have a Rothercare Community Alarm in place and receive strong family support from their son and daughter.

Timeline of Events

4th January 2026

AW activated the Rothercare pendant, reporting that his wife DW was feeling unwell. He explained she had been experiencing fatigue and reduced mobility for several days. The Rothercare operator spoke with both AW and DW via the Rothercare intercom. They agreed that the situation did not warrant an ambulance at that time.

The operator reassured them and advised that NHS 111 would be contacted. NHS 111 later telephoned the couple to discuss DW's symptoms.

A welfare call was made the following shift by Rothercare. The couple reported that a doctor had visited and diagnosed DW with a viral infection, advising them to call 999 if her condition deteriorated.

7th January 2026

AW activated the Rothercare pendant again, stating that DW's viral infection had worsened. Given her decline and her recent medical history, the operator contacted 999 and reassured AW that an ambulance would be arranged.

Rothercare also notified the couple's daughter to make her aware of the situation.

Later that day, AW activated his pendant once more to thank staff for their assistance. He confirmed that DW had been taken to hospital for further assessment.

Outcome and Impact

Having the Rothercare Community Alarm provided essential support and reassurance during this period. AW was deeply concerned about his wife's wellbeing and was unsure of the best course of action. The alarm service offered immediate guidance, helped coordinate appropriate medical responses, and reduced stress for both AW and their family.

Their son and daughter were reassured knowing that help for their parents was always just a pendant press away and very thankful of the support.

JS Case Study

Background:

JW is a 69-year-old lady who experiences several health issues including memory issues and the long-term effects of previous stroke. These conditions impact her daily living and necessitate ongoing support from both formal carers and her daughter on who she relies on.

Current Support in Place

- Formal Carer's 4 x daily
- Rothercare Community Alarm Service
- Assistive technology linked to Rothercare, including:
 - Falls prevention package consisting of a fall detector, bed & chair sensors
 - Environmental package consisting of smoke, carbon monoxide and heat sensors
- Home Monitoring Cameras Installed by Daughter

Benefits of the current support package:

The support outlined above, provides JW with the following:

- A 24/7 emergency response via Rothercare, supporting events such as falls, medical episodes or emotional distress, and offering emotional support and reassurance where needed.
- Peace of mind for JW's daughter that the Rothercare equipment and the self-alerting assistive technology can raise an alert and ensure that her mother receives help promptly.
- A safety net for when carers or family are not present, reducing the risks of independent living
- Additional reassurance via the home monitoring cameras, allowing JW's daughter to visually check her wellbeing when appropriate, particularly when Rothercare are unable to make speech contact with JW after they receive an alert.

Outcomes

The combined use of Rothercare and tailored Assistive Technology, enables JW to remain safely in her own home, whilst maintaining as much independence as possible.

Key outcomes include:

- Reduced risk of hospital admittance particularly in relation to un-witnessed falls and potential long-lies.
- Early detection of environmental hazards, such as smoke or carbon monoxide.
- Avoidance of safeguarding incidents, ensuring JW's welfare is pro-actively monitored.
- Reduced pressure on care services, family support and potential residential placements.
- The proactive alert system allows carers to focus on planned support, while Rothercare provides continuous monitoring between visits.

Case Study JS

Background

JS is an 83-year-old vulnerable adult with learning disabilities. JS lives alone in a local authority bungalow. She has a history of anxiety and low mood and is currently supported by community mental health services alongside her formal carers. She does not have a family network nearby and experiences significant feelings of loneliness and insecurity.

Current Support

JS has access to the Rothercare service and is supported through formal carer's 3 x daily. Mencap visit twice per week on a Monday and Thursday 12-1.

She uses the community alarm to contact Rothercare for emotional support throughout the day and night when she feels anxious or unsafe. Rothercare call handlers support JS with emotional support and reassurance most days, sometimes up to 10 times per day. The calls are typically for reassurance rather than emergencies. Although high in frequency, these calls reflect her ongoing mental-health needs and her reliance on consistent reassurance to manage anxiety symptoms.

Mrs Shaw has been provided with a 'Meno Minder' by Rothercare which plays a recorded message when she approaches the front door. This message reminds JS to her check who is at the door before answering to any visitors, as she has previously experienced unwanted visitors. JS has also been issued a medication cabinet to support her in taking her medication safely and correctly.

JS increased use of the Rothercare service appears to be linked to:

- Heightened anxiety
- Social isolation
- Limited face-to-face contact
- Difficulty in self-regulating when anxious

The calls provide immediate emotional reassurance, helping to stabilise her anxiety and prevent escalation. Without this outlet, there is a risk that her mental health could deteriorate, potentially leading to crisis presentations or hospital admission.

Impact / Outcomes

Although sometimes the interactions are resource-intensive, the current support from the Rothercare service:

- Helps JS feel safer and less alone
- Prevents unnecessary emergency services involvement
- Supports her to remain living independently at home
- Reduces the risk of mental-health deterioration

OT AT case study:

Assistive Technology Case study

Summary.

Client lives with her husband, and her six-year-old and seven-year-old children in an owner/occupier house. Client is currently based in downstairs living room as is hoisted for all transfers via a ceiling track hoist. Client has a hospital profiling bed and commode downstairs. Husband works short shifts a few nights a week. Mother-in-law and father-in-law live locally and provide regular support with childcare particularly when client's husband is at work. Husband and parent-in-laws carry out domestic tasks. Downstairs extension bedroom and shower room being built to support long term downstairs living for the client. Ramped access in place.

Client was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis (MS). Left arm is weak, can lift arm a little. Left hand is dominant hand, fingers contracting into palm. Uses second finger to operate devices such as TV remote as this is functioning the best. Wears a resting splint at night to support fingers stretching out. Right arm weakened. No use of right hand, fingers contracting to palm. Wears a resting splint at night to support fingers stretching out. Legs go into spasm. Wears resting splint boots. Weakened core strength. Short term memory is affected. Long term memory is fine. Becomes fatigued easily. Catheter in situ. Speech is slow and becomes slurred when feeling fatigued. Non weight bearing hoisted for all transfers by home carers who visit four times a day with double handling on each call.

AREA OF ASSESSMENT:

Referral made for a Robotic Neater Eater due to hand and arm function declining resulting in client not being able to grip cutlery or lift her hands or arms to manage to eat and drink independently. Client was having to rely on carers or her husband to assist. Client wanted to be able to eat and drink independently including when she is on her own (short periods of time when husband is on school run) for as and when she feels hungry or thirsty.

Outcome:

Client is confident at using technology and was provided with a Robotic Neater Eater that is programmable to allow adjustment to promote eating and drinking at the right pace for the client and included the below items to support the client managing to eat and drink herself.

Curled-over deep lip ceramic plate with spigot - Large, approx. dimensions: 27cm

Curled-over deep lip ceramic plate with spigot - Small

Flat Front Stainless-Steel Spoon

“Spork” (spoon with fork prongs) – Stainless steel

Neater Steady-Double-Straw - for use with any cup - including 2 flexible straws, bendable support with table clamp, 2 non-return valves, 2 spare straw clips and Straw Cleaning Brush.

With this equipment in place the client can operate the Neater Eater spoon and spork herself using the robotic arm which moves food to reach her mouth at a pace that suits the client. The Neater Eater functions in place of the client's arms, hands, fingers and

thumbs to support her eating. The straw is set up to allow the client to move her head to the straw and access drinks when she wants to. This has given the client independence and allows her to eat and drink when she feels she wants to, promoting her hydration, nutrition and energy levels. Client's mental wellbeing has improved as she is no longer reliant on others to feed her and give her drinks.

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Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – Work Programme 2025-26		
Chair: Councillor Brian Steele		Vice-Chair: Cllr Joshua Bacon
Governance Manager: Barbel Gale		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	
	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

Wednesday 10 December 2025	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	November 2025-26 Financial Monitoring Report – Pre-decision scrutiny
	Andrew Bramidge & Andy Duncan	Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Update – Pre-decision scrutiny
	Judith Badger & Rob Mahon	MTFS Presentation
	Barbel Gale	Work Programme
Barbel Gale	Forward Plan of Key Decisions	
Tuesday 3 February 2026	Judith Badger & Fiona Boden	Inclusion Strategy and Annual Report - Pre-decision Scrutiny
	Ian Spicer	Rotherham Baby Packs – Outcomes and Future Commissioning - Pre-decision Scrutiny
	Kerry Grinsill-Clinton	HSC - Access to Contraception Review Report
	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.
	Judith Badger & Rob Mahon	Budget and Council Tax Report 2026-27 - Pre-decision Scrutiny
Wednesday 11 March 2026	Andrew Bramidge / Nat Porter	Transport Capital Programme 2026/27 – Pre-decision Scrutiny
	Nicola Curley / Helen Sweaton / Niall Devlin / Alex Hawley	Best Start Plan 2026- 2029 – 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 April 2026	Andrew Bramidge	Climate Emergency Annual Report - Pre-decision Scrutiny
	Mike Thomas	Community Governance Review – Pre-decision Scrutiny
	John Edwards	Council Plan Update - Year Ahead Plan 2026/27 – Pre-decision Scrutiny
	Barbel Gale	Work Programme
	Each Governance Advisor	Work in progress from Select Commissions
Barbel Gale	Forward Plan of Key Decisions	
Wednesday 6 May 2026	Jayne Metcalfe	Progress Update on Future Rothercare Model
	Ian Spicer	Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2026 2031 - Pre-decision scrutiny
	Andrew Bramidge	Rotherham Markets and Libraries - Pre-decision scrutiny
	Andrew Bramidge	Selective Licensing Community Impact - Pre-decision scrutiny
	Barbel Gale	Work Programme
	Each Governance Advisor	Work in progress from Select Commissions
Barbel Gale	Forward Plan of Key Decisions	
Substantive Items for Scheduling		
July 2026		Leader Q&A - to be scheduled after Council plan on the agenda.
Jul-26	John Edwards	Council Plan 2025 - 2028 & New Year Ahead Delivery Plan - Pre-decision
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.
Expected September 2026	Mat Dyson	Children's Commissioners Takeover Challenge
Nov-26	Andrew Bramidge / Simon Moss / Fiona Fletcher	Progress update on the implementation of the Pathways to Work Economic Inactivity Trailblazer programme - The programme will be a good way through year 2, therefore members will receive an update on both year 1 outcomes, year 2 developments and target forecasts.
Reviews for Scheduling		
Completed	Sam Barstow	A spotlight review - Life-saving equipment and related byelaws
Items to be Considered by Other Means (e.g. Information briefing, workshop etc)		
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 a method of delivery to be determined.
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 a method of delivery to be determined.

Sep-26	Andrew Bramidge	Replacement of refuse vehicles: Information 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.
June / July 2026	Andrew Bramidge / Sam Barstow	Public on street bin collections: Information 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 join arrangements are in place with Parish Council's, if any, and a list of the locations of bins under RMBC management, if available.
TBC	Luke Sayers	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.
TBC	Fiona Fletcher	Pathways to Work Economic Inactivity Trailblazer programme: Agreed that a briefing be provided to share the details of the commissioned VCSE organisations and their geographic reach with members of OSMB.
Items for Future Consideration		
Cross Commission scrutiny opportunities		
Ongoing	Andrew Bramidge	Town Centre Developments (Markets & Library Redevelopments) - visit completed February 2026. Opportunity for pre-decision scrutiny via OSMB when update submitted to Cabinet.
TBC	Ian Spicer/Sarah Clyde	Energy Efficiency: An information 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.

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Health Select Commission (HSC) Chair's Briefing for the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB) meeting on 6 May 2026

Items covered since the last meeting:

There have been no meetings of the Health Select Commission since the last update to OSMB on 8 April 2026.

Work programme 2025-26 updates:

- **Workshops/Reviews**

Work on preparation of the Menopause Review Report has concluded and this is being formally presented to the Health Select Commission for endorsement and onward referral to OSMB in line with the Scrutiny Protocol at its next scheduled public meeting on 14 May 2026.

- **Quality Accounts**

The Health Select Commission has reviewed Quality Accounts received from Yorkshire Ambulance Service (YAS) and The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust (TRFT). The draft formal response to the YAS Quality Account has been prepared and is with Health Select Commission working group members for endorsement before being provided to YAS. The TRFT Quality Account draft formal response is currently being prepared based on discussions undertaken and will be shared with the working group imminently. The Quality Account for the Rotherham, Doncaster and South Yorkshire NHS Trust has not yet been received, but is expected to be with the working group shortly, and will undergo the same process of consideration and response.

- **Involvement in Consultation and Co-production**

On Tuesday 28 April 2026, Health Select Commission members participated in consultation and co-production in relation to the development of the Adult Social Care Strategy 2027-2032 in late April 2026. This represented a meaningful opportunity for the Commission to put forward its views and help shape the future Strategy that will support Rotherham residents into the next decade. The Commission welcomed the Service's recognition of the value that scrutiny can add to the Strategy's development through this early engagement.

Items to be discussed at the next meeting:

At the HSC meeting on 14 May 2026 the following items are due to be considered:

- NHS 10 Year Plan - Local Implications incorporating NHS Neighbourhood Health Services
- Adult Social Care - CQC Inspection
- Menopause Review Report

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Improving Lives Select Commission Chair's Briefing for the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board meeting on 6 May 2026

Items covered since the last update meeting:

- Improving Lives will be meeting on 28 April 2026 and the following items will be considered:
 - **Corporate Parenting Partnership Board Update**
To receive a verbal update by the Vice-Chair following the Corporate Parenting Partnership Board meeting held on 24 March 2026.
 - **Corporate Parenting Partnership Board Annual Report 2024-2025**
To consider the progress made by the Corporate Parenting Partnership Board in 2025 and to note the areas of focus for 2026.
 - **Child Exploitation Strategy Update**
To note the progress made against the Child Exploitation Strategy 2024-29.

Work programme 2025-26 updates:

- **Children's Capital of Culture Workshop - Impact and Legacy for Children and Young People**
A workshop took place on Tuesday, 21 April 2026 looking at the Impact and Legacy for Children and Young People following the Children's Capital of Culture. An invitation was also extended to Improving Places Select Commission for any interested Members to attend.

Officers provided Members with results of the interim evaluation, showed a short film and followed with a workshop giving members the chance to share their experiences in facilitated groups focused on:
 - Member engagement - what worked well, what could be better.
 - Ward experience - what took place in their wards, what worked well, what could be better.
 Members welcomed the opportunity to discuss at length the evaluation process for the Children's Capital of Culture and fed back their own experiences which would be incorporated into the results and included in the final evaluation report.
- **Children and Young People's Partnership Board**
A pre-decision scrutiny session is now arranged with the Children and Young People's Partnership Board made up of young people who have reviewed their programme of work and who are developing a strategy to underpin their agreed priorities going forward. This

will take place at the next meeting of the Children and Young People's Partnership Board on 28th April 2026 at 4.00 p.m. at the Town Hall.

Items to be discussed at the next meeting:

The next meeting of the Improving Lives Select Commission will be held on 9 June 2026, and the agenda is to be confirmed.

IPSC Chair's Briefing: for OSMB meeting on 6 May 2026

Items covered since the last update meeting:

At the IPSC meeting on 21 April 2026 the following items were considered –

1) Allotments Annual Update 2025

IPSC received an update on the activities of the Rotherham Allotment Alliance Ltd (RAA) over the past year and the recent progress that has been made towards the long-term self-management of Council-owned allotment sites. Councillor Steele attended the meeting as Chair of the RAA and there was discussion around the filling of current vacant spaces on the RAA Board, delays with finalising the lease to RAA and the possibility of the RAA taking over management of other allotments within the Borough.

2) South Yorkshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy

Members were provided with a summary of the current position on the draft South Yorkshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy, which is being launched by the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA). This strategy will be presented to Cabinet in June and is due to be released for formal public consultation to the four South Yorkshire local authorities in June/July 2026.

Members welcomed the work on a co-ordinated response to bio-diversity and habitat loss and the detailed ground-mapping of the whole South Yorkshire region. However, Members expressed concern about the advisory-only nature of the strategy and the lack of any enforcement powers. There was also discussion about Members considering the Strategy when setting their ward priorities.

As a result of the discussions at IPSC, some additional recommendations were agreed by IPSC, as follows:-

- 1) That the following matter be referred to the Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Management Board for presentation to Cabinet, on behalf of the Improving Places Select Commission, when Cabinet considers the South Yorkshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy in June;
 - That, as part of the Council's wider work on bio-diversity net gain, it be requested that the Service gives consideration to prioritising the development of additional habitat banks within the Borough, to ensure that these are established in advance of any large-scale infrastructure projects which could create an urgent requirement to compensate for habitat loss; and
- 2) That the Chair, on behalf of the Improving Places Select Commission, writes to both the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) expressing Members' concerns around the advisory nature of the Strategy and the absence of any associated enforcement powers.

3) Update on Rotherham Pride in Place Programme

Members were provided with an update on progress on the Pride in Place programme for both Rotherham Central and Maltby since the last update to IPSC in October 2025. It was explained to Members that the process for recruiting the Neighbourhood Boards for both areas was underway and was now being led by the local MPs for each area, in consultation with the relevant communities. It was also explained that oversight for the Pride in Place programme within RMBC had now moved to the Neighbourhoods Team rather than Regeneration & Environment, although there would be a period of transition. This was due to revised government guidance on the scheme that was published in December 2026 and made it clear that projects under the programme are to be development with community and residents at the forefront.

Work Programme Updates

- **Draft Neighbourhood Leadership Strategy Workshop**

IPSC and OSMB Members were given the opportunity to engage in scrutiny of the draft Neighbourhood Leadership strategy at an interactive workshop which was delivered on 27 April 2026. This strategy represents the first part of a new iteration of the Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy.

This workshop provided Members with an opportunity to help co-produce the new Neighbourhood Leadership Strategy, which will demonstrate how council services and partners will continue (and improve) the support they provide to Ward Members in their community leadership role. The Strategy is due to come to IPSC for further consideration at June's meeting.

Items to be discussed at the next meeting:

At the next meeting of IPSC on 23 June 2026 Members are due to scrutinise the following items:-

- **Draft Neighbourhood Leadership Strategy;** and
- **Update on Housing Strategy Action Plan.**