

IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION

Date and Time:- Tuesday 1 September 2026 at 1.30 p.m.

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

Membership:- Councillors McKiernan (Chair), Tinsley (Vice-Chair), Adair, Beck, Bennett-Sylvester, C. Carter, Castledine-Dack, Cowen, Duncan, Garnett, Jackson, Jones, Lelliott, Mault, Rashid, Stables, Taylor and Thorp.

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

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

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

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

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

2. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 23 June 2026 (Pages 3 - 24)

To consider and approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on 23 June 2026 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.

6. Review of the Rotherham Investment and Development Office (RiDO) Business Centres (Pages 25 - 42)

To receive the presentation which provides a Review of the Rotherham Investment and Development Office (RiDO) Business Centres.

7. Introducing Housing Improvement and Governance (Pages 43 - 68)

To receive and consider the report and presentation which provide an introduction to the Housing Improvement and Governance team, which was created in February 2025 in response to the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023.

8. Improving Places Select Commission Scrutiny Review – School Road Safety (Pages 69 - 92)

To receive and consider the report on the findings and recommendations of the Improving Places Select Commission Scrutiny Review – School Road Safety.

The report is a result of the in-depth Review completed by a working group of Members of the Improving Places Select Commission, through meetings and evidence gathering sessions conducted between October 2025 and July 2026.

9. Improving Places Select Commission - Work Programme 2026 - 2027 (Pages 93 - 95)

To consider and endorse the outline schedule of scrutiny work for the 2026-2027 municipal year.

10. Urgent Business

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

**The next meeting of the Improving Places Select Commission
will be held on Tuesday 20 October 2026
commencing at 1.30 p.m.
in Rotherham Town Hall.**



John Edwards,
Chief Executive.

IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION
Tuesday 23 June 2026

Present:- Councillor McKiernan (in the Chair); Councillors Adair, Beck, Bennett-Sylvester, C. Carter, Castledine-Dack, Jackson, Jones, Rashid, Stables, Steele, Taylor, Thorp and Tinsley and Co-optees Mrs Kay Bacon and Mrs M Jacques.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Duncan, Garnett, Mault and Lelliott (Councillor Steele attending as substitute).

Councillor Linda Beresford - Cabinet Member for Housing
Andrew Bramidge - Executive Director of Regeneration and Environment
Sarah Clyde - Service Director of Housing
Sarah Watts - Strategic Housing Manager
Garry Newton - Housing Development Intelligence Coordinator
Martin Hughes - Head of Neighbourhoods
Chris Paddock – Interim Director of Policy, Strategy & Engagement
Kristianne Thorogood – Governance Advisor
Barbel Gale – Governance Manager

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

1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 21 APRIL 2026

Resolved:- That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 21 April 2026 be approved as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Bennett-Sylvester declared an interest in Minute No.7 (Housing Strategy 2025-2030 Progress Report Year 1 (2025-26)) on the grounds that they are a council tenant.

3. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

The Chair advised that there were no members of the public or representatives of media organisations present at the meeting and there were no questions in respect of matters on the agenda.

4. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

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

5. IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION - TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Chair informed Members that the Improving Places Select Commission's Terms of Reference had been included in the agenda pack to ensure that new and returning Members were sighted on the Commission's responsibilities and that they be duly considered in relation to work programming and scrutiny activities conducted during the 2026-27 municipal year.

6. HEALTH, WELFARE AND SAFETY PANEL - REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION

The Chair sought a representative from the Improving Places Select Commission to sit as a member on the Health, Welfare and Safety Panel.

Resolved:-

That the Improving Places Select Commission appointed Councillor Thorp as its representative on the Health, Welfare and Safety Panel for the 2026/27 municipal year.

7. HOUSING STRATEGY 2025-30 PROGRESS REPORT YEAR 1 (2025-26)

At the Chair's invitation, Councillor Beresford, Cabinet Member for Housing (Cabinet Member), introduced the item and explained that the Housing Strategy (Strategy) had been approved and published in late 2025, after a period of consultation with residents, tenants, council officers, partners and Members.

The Year One progress report and accompanying presentation highlighted the progress made against key performance indicators to deliver the Strategy and improve the lives of residents across the borough.

The Cabinet Member reminded Members that the Housing Strategy was a cross-tenure strategy and that work delivered under it for was for the benefit of all Rotherham residents, whether they were council tenants, tenants of housing associations, tenants of private landlords or homeowners.

Sarah Clyde, Service Director for Housing (Service Director) took Members through the presentation accompanying the report, highlighting the following points:

Priority 1 – Building high quality, sustainable and affordable homes

It was explained that it was crucially important to have housing growth within the borough to meet current and future housing need. It was

reported that the number of residents on the housing waiting list had reduced over the last six months, largely as a result of the introduction of the new Housing Allocations Policy in December 2025. There were still 5,500 residents on the housing waiting list and many residents in the housing market looking for affordable homes to rent or buy.

One of the key performance indicators (KPIs) under Priority 1 of the Strategy, was to ensure that enough new homes of diverse and affordable nature were built. In the year 2025-26, a total of 778 new homes had been built across the borough. This did not meet the government's new target of 1,111 new homes, but the Service Director commented that current challenging market conditions meant that developers were not building as quickly. The housing targets set were very challenging, and the Service Director assured Members that the Housing team would continue to work with developers to meet housing need, whilst also ensuring a high-quality standard of build.

It was confirmed that in 2025-26, the local planning authority had approved 656 additional homes through the planning process, which evidenced a clear pipeline of sites for development. The Service Director explained that the Local Plan Review would also be carried out over the next couple of years and would form the strategic spatial development plan for Rotherham, linking in with the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA).

Another KPI under Priority 1 was to ensure that a minimum of 25% of new homes were affordable housing. The Council had over-achieved on this KPI as the percentage of new affordable homes in 2025/26 represented 34% of the total delivery. This 34% covered homes built by developer partners, housing associations and the council's own build programme.

The council had committed to delivering 1,000 new council houses by summer 2027. These would not necessarily all be new build properties, but a mix of new homes and older properties converted or brought back to use. By the end of 2025-26, a total of 788 additional council homes had been delivered. There were a further 212 required to reach the target of 1,000, but the Service Director was confident that with increasing numbers of council new-builds, the acquisition of new and existing properties into council stock and a number of new sites being developed (e.g Maltby, Eastwood, Wath & West Melton), this target would be met.

The Service Director confirmed that as well as investment from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), the council had also managed to secure £12 million of grant funding from SYMCA and Homes England to support further new build homes. Rotherham had been one of the first local authorities to draw down the new Social and Affordable Housing Programme (SARP) funding, which became available in 2026-27.

Priority 2 – Improving the safety, quality and energy efficiency of our homes

Priority 2 under the Strategy was concerned with ensuring that the existing stock within the borough (both council housing and the private rental sector) is safe, of high quality and is energy efficient.

The Service Director explained that the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) on council owned properties had been included in the presentation but had not been provided within the IPSC Agenda pack due to publication of the Cabinet report the day prior to the meeting.

The TSMs were reported annually to the Regulator of Social Housing and would be made publicly available on the council website. The Housing service conducted an annual survey to ask council tenants how they felt about their properties on a number of measures, for example:- how satisfied they were, how safe they felt and their views on the quality of repairs.

It was explained that when compared against the benchmarking figure in the middle column of the table on slide 6 (which represented averages across the country for 2024-25), Rotherham's scores for 2025-26, were all in the upper quartile of results. The 25/26 benchmarking would not be available until November, once all data had been collected at a national level.

The exception to this was TP09 (Satisfied with their landlords' approaches to complaints handling), which was still in the median quartile. The Service Director confirmed that this measure was an area of key focus for the Housing Service, who would be working with the Corporate team to ensure that this satisfaction measure could be improved in 2026-27.

The third column on the table represented the 2025-26 survey outcome, where some areas had been marked in red as they had slightly dipped in comparison to the 2024-25 figures, but were still benchmarking in the upper quartile against other local authorities and housing associations.

The Service Director reported that the council had increased the percentage of properties that met the Housing Regulators' Decent Homes Standard to 95.17%. The Service Director explained that the remaining 4.83% of homes that had not met the standard equated to 855 homes within the council's portfolio. There were a number of reasons why these homes had not met the standard, including work currently being carried out and difficulties in obtaining access to the properties.

The council had set a target of achieving EPC C-rating on 100% of its housing stock by 2030. The Service Director reported that at the end of 2025-26, the level of council homes with at least EPC C-rating had reached 61.6% and funding had been set aside within the HRA to meet this target and maximise opportunities to progress the Warm Homes

Programme.

With regard to the transactional and compliance Building Safety Measures which were also reported to the Housing Regulator, the Service Director confirmed that the council had achieved 100% compliance rates in 2025-26 on the following:- fire risk assessments; asbestos management surveys and inspections; legionella risk assessments; and communal lift safety checks. For gas safety checks, the council had 99.9% compliance. This equated to 13 non-compliant properties, of which 6 had appointments scheduled and 7 properties had not provided access. A court process was underway to gain access to these 7 properties to ensure that they were safe.

The Service Director explained to Members that the council had secured £8.8 million of funding via the government's Warm Homes Programme, which would assist in bringing approximately 950 properties up to EPC C-rating. The Housing team had been working closely with SYMCA, as it was understood that monies that had been previously distributed to local authorities by the government directly could in future be devolved and distributed regionally. It was hoped that future funding would enable the council to deliver energy-efficiency measures cross-tenure.

Priority 3 – Preventing homelessness and supporting our residents to live independently

Preventing homelessness and supporting residents to live independently had been an area of key focus for the Housing team in 2025-26. It was explained that significant investment had been provided to improve and increase the caretaking offer within the borough, and to provide an environmental improvement initiative in certain areas of some housing estates.

A new Homelessness Prevention Strategy had been approved and an Action Plan under this was being developed. Delivery under this Strategy would require full system approach with key partners and stakeholders to tackle homelessness and ensure that a clear prevention pathway was in place.

The Service Director outlined that in 2025-26, 3,509 people had approached the Housing Options team for help, and the council owed a duty of care to over 1,900 of those people. There were currently 173 temporary accommodation units, and the aim was to try and reduce that figure over time and continue to reduce hotel usage. The Service Director highlighted the recent development at Castle View in Canklow, which was a joint project with the Adult Social Care team, as an example of where the council had supported residents to live more independently. A range of different properties and units had been developed at this site, which demonstrated how the council was using its evidence base and information on needs requirements to ensure that the right kind of properties were developed. It was hoped this approach would keep

people in their homes for longer and ensure that housing became an enabler rather than a disabler.

As part of its Housing Acquisitions Programme, the council had looked to acquire accommodation to meet specific need, such as larger family accommodation, smaller one-bedroom properties and properties that could be adapted to meet those with specific needs.

Priority 4 – Ensuring that our neighbourhoods are safe, happy and thriving

As part of the work to ensure that neighbourhoods were safe, happy and thriving, investment of £1.9 million had been allocated through the HRA budget. Examples were provided of work which had been undertaken to improve the caretaking service and environmental improvement works, such as additional pavements at St Mary's in Munsborough.

The Service Director confirmed that there had been a focus on anti-social behaviour (ASB) during 2025-26, which had been a key area of concern when IPSC had been consulted on the Housing Strategy in autumn 2025. In 2026-27, the Housing team would be implementing a new NEC council housing system, which would be utilised to track and progress ASB cases more easily. Training had been procured for all staff on the new system, including colleagues within the Community Protection Unit, who worked closely with the Housing team in dealing with ASB. As part of the Housing Transformation Programme, it was key to ensure that there was a smooth pathway in place to accelerate ASB cases, with one key point of contact in place for each case.

It was reported that the council continued to work on bringing empty homes back to use, with a proactive Empty Homes Officer in place. A case study example was provided to Members of an empty, privately-owned property in Swinton which was purchased by Action Housing, a supported housing provider, who worked to convert the property into four one-bedroom affordable, supported living homes for young adults with learning disabilities. This case study demonstrated how the Housing team had worked with partners and stakeholders to deliver improved housing for residents in need, fulfilling all priorities under the Strategy.

Looking forward to 2026-27, the Service Director confirmed that meeting the target of 1,000 new council homes by summer 2027 remained a key focus, and that a further 150 homes were due to be delivered within the financial year 2026-27. With regard to the government's new homes target for the borough, a Housing Growth Framework was being developed, and the Housing team would continue to work with developers to ensure that there was a pipeline of development sites coming forward.

With regard to existing housing stock, a programme of stock condition surveys would continue and inform longer-term investment plans for council houses. An options piece of work would be carried out on the

future of the council's repairs and maintenance contract, as the current one was due to come to an end in 2030. It was planned that a report would be brought to Cabinet in Spring 2027 outlining the options available. Collaborative work would be undertaken with tenants to understand what was important to them with regard to repairs and maintenance.

The Service Director confirmed that a Strategic Housing Market Assessment would be carried out to provide an updated picture of the housing need requirements across the borough, from both a general needs and a supported needs perspective. A Supported Housing Strategy was also being developed to inform plans for future specialist and supported accommodation.

An Energy Crisis Fund had been made available over the last quarter of 2025-26. The council had made a commitment to deliver this kind of funding all year round and as a result, the Crisis Resilience Fund had been recently launched. The Service Director reported that the council had already helped 353 people to make claims, with almost £50,000 allocated.

The Service Director reminded Members that the Housing team was in the middle of a transformation programme, with the aim of ensuring that the council had a fit for purpose service which would deliver against the Housing Strategy and fulfil the goal of being the best council housing provider. As part of this, the Housing team wished to work more closely with tenants to ensure that exemplar status from the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) could be secured.

The Chair thanked officers for the report and presentation and invited Members of IPSC to raise questions and queries on the Housing Strategy 2025-30 Progress Report Year 1 (2025-26), and in the ensuing question and answer session the following points were raised:-

Councillor Bennett-Sylvester asked a question around the issue of under-occupancy across the council housing portfolio. For example, where there were large family homes occupied by only one or two people who would be better suited to a bungalow or retirement accommodation but there was no incentive for them to move. Councillor Bennett-Sylvester asked whether the council planned to tackle the issue of under-occupancy across council housing by creating more quality retirement accommodation or accommodation better suited for people with disabilities.

In response, the Service Director acknowledged that developers often got things wrong and did not necessarily build what residents needed. For example, bungalows were popular but not a favourite of developers due to the "land hungry" nature of them. More money could be made by developers from building flats or smaller properties on the same site.

The Service Director confirmed that in the next tranche of the council's own build programme, there would be a further 500 homes coming forward and a Strategic Market Assessment would be carried out to fully understand what residents want and need from council housing. The market would not deliver everything so it would be the council's job to use the evidence base to fill in the gaps in housing need.

Further, the Service Director explained that the new Housing Allocations Policy was stricter and would not allow people to bid on properties that were larger than their need. There needed to be incentives in place to encourage people to downsize and accommodation available that was attractive enough for people to make the decision to move before it became a crisis situation.

The Service Director commented that when building homes, the council and housing associations needed to lead the way and show developers what residents actually needed to enable them to stay in houses longer-term. For example, factoring in easier adaptations at build stage that would save money later on, such as plumbing in place for level access showers, larger toilet arrangements and accessible and manageable garden space.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Bennett-Sylvester asked about the distribution of workload between Housing Officers and whether there was enough support for them to have sufficient staff on the ground getting to know an area and its residents deeply, given that they were the first port of call for residents.

In response, the Service Director explained that the Housing transformation programme referred to earlier, would involve a review of Housing Management teams and agreements that were in place with the Neighbourhoods teams to deliver additional resources to support, via the HRA.

The Service Director commented that the role of the Housing Officer had changed significantly in recent years, with a lot of time now taken up with dealing with ASB and a small percentage of residents. A lot of other local authorities had started to separate ASB from the Housing Officer's role in order to provide a more streamlined service. If ASB issues could be escalated to a separate team this would free up the Housing Officer's time and enable them to be more visible and spend more time on day-to-day issues on their estates, whilst preserving trust and rapport with residents.

With regard to tracking ASB, the Chair asked whether with improved tracking systems, service anticipated a spike in homelessness figures where repeat offenders had run out of chances with the council and had effectively become homeless due to persistent ASB.

In response, the Service Director commented that there needed to be a balance between supporting people to sustain their tenancies but also

taking enforcement action against those who persistently breached their tenancy agreements. Residents who had reported ASB needed to be assured that action would be taken in order to have faith in the system.

However, the Service Director was keen to stress that any council tenants who were evicted due to ASB would continue to be given support by the council in seeking alternative accommodation via the Homeless team. Whilst there may be an increase in homelessness due to enforcement in ASB issues, the Housing team was also proud of the levels of tenant sustainability and also of the support available to try and prevent homelessness, which would always be a last resort.

Councillor Steele commented that it would be difficult to manage the situation if Housing Officers were asked to dedicate more time to dealing with ASB, particularly given that many estates now had a mix of council tenants and homeowners. The Service Director clarified that service would actually be looking to take the pressure of dealing with ASB away from Housing Officers. Service was looking at working more closely with the CPU team, who currently took on escalated ASB issues, to form a combined team of specialist delivery. This would provide consistency in contact and reporting mechanisms for residents.

The Service Director commented that enhanced cross-directorate working would be required to ensure that the right resources were in the right places to tackle ASB and that HRA money was spent appropriately to support both council and private tenants and homeowners on estates.

Councillor Steele commented that they had seen the difference that could be made on an estate when a good Housing Manager and a good Neighbourhood Coordinator worked together. However, this could be a difficult balance and in a further question, Councillor Steele asked how cross-directorate working would be built in and encouraged when dealing with ASB.

The Service Director responded, commenting that a clear joint policy and pathway would be key, with good understanding of the processes, the escalation routes and the enforcement options. If the ASB process was streamlined, with a dedicated team looking after it, this would free up Housing Management teams to undertake work on building relationships with residents on the ground. The Housing team were working closely with the Service Director of Community Safety & Street Scene and the CPU team to understand how to create a dedicated, cross-tenure resource to ensure that the council had one, consistent approach to ASB.

The Chair asked whether there was a clear exit plan in place to reduce reliance on hotel use as temporary accommodation. Whilst the figures for hotel use had decreased, it still remained high.

The Service Director responded, stating that the number of temporary accommodation units had increased to try and avoid having to use hotels.

However, service also needed to be mindful of the amount of time people were staying in this “temporary” accommodation. One of the delivery plan targets for the year ahead was to ensure that nobody stayed in temporary accommodation for longer than six months. Otherwise, the knock-on effect was that other people could become homeless due to the unavailability of temporary accommodation.

The Service Director confirmed that a current focus was to address those that had been in temporary accommodation for longer periods of time and free up the accommodation that had been unavailable which in turn, should reduce hotel usage. Last year, there had been 6,000 days’ worth of hotel stays used across the council’s Rough Sleeper initiative. The council would also need to make sure that there were enough decant properties available – for example, in emergency situations such as fire – so that these residents were not moved into hotels.

In a supplementary question, the Chair commented that residents had complained when the same houses were consistently used as temporary accommodation as neighbours bear the brunt of the constant change of people living in them. The Chair enquired whether there was any plan to address this and consider rotating the use of properties as temporary council accommodation.

The Service Director confirmed that the temporary accommodation was well dispersed across the borough but acknowledged that where there had been specific issues, the council had taken property back or had looked to reallocate individuals who had been in the property for a longer period of time.

The Housing team intended to significantly reduce the current 173 temporary accommodation units down to a more manageable level as a full-time job member of staff was required to manage these properties, whereas the focus should be moving people on to something more permanent.

Councillor Jones commented that he agreed that it would be appropriate to have a separate ASB team. This would help to improve the public perception that when complaints around ASB are reported, they did not get escalated quickly enough.

In an additional question, Councillor Jones asked whether under the plans for new house building, any thought had been given to the concept of a “cradle to grave” community, whereby suitable housing stock was provided within the same estate for all stages of life. Councillor Jones mentioned empty and disused areas of land within existing housing estates where bungalows could potentially be built.

The Service Director referred again to the planned Housing Needs Assessment and that a survey would be carried out with residents to help the Housing team to understand what residents really want from housing.

A review of council-owned garage sites across the borough would also be conducted to ascertain whether any had reached the end of their usable life and the land they sat on could be used for future building. A call for suitable sites for building would also be made as part of the Local Plan process.

The Service Director commented that on all housing sites coming forward, the council would try and provide a mix of accommodation types, to try and encourage long-term sustainability to the sites. It was stressed that the council should only look to build what the market hadn't already. Developers could build larger family accommodation cheaply and the council should fill in the gaps in availability and provide the smaller, adapted and bungalow-type accommodation that developers generally don't build.

Councillor Thorp asked for confirmation as to the process by which properties are identified for energy efficiency works to get them up to EPC C-rating – whether they would be looked at individually or assessed as a block and works carried out regardless.

The Service Director explained that a programme of stock condition surveys was currently underway on all council properties, with approximately 6,500 carried out in the last year. As part of these surveys, an EPC assessment would be carried out routinely which would identify areas where properties needed work to bring them up to EPC C-rating. Around 61% of housing stock was currently at EPC C-rating. The council had £8.8 million of funding available under the Warm Homes Scheme to assist with energy efficiency improvements. The surveys would also identify where there were opportunities to future-proof properties, such as by adding external wall insulation.

The Service Director explained that the council had to report to the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) under the Warm Homes Programme on the works that had been carried out on each property. An assessment would be carried out at the start and the end of any retrofit by a qualified assessor.

In a follow-on question, Councillor Thorp asked whether reports that the council was removing all gas fires from properties were accurate. The Service Director confirmed that gas fires may have been removed from certain properties if they needed to be upgraded and that any new build properties could no longer be built with gas fires in. It was a government requirement to build with more sustainable energy options, such as air source heat pumps and solar panels. There was no active programme to remove all gas fires and, in some circumstances, gas boilers were being replaced as part of the Decent Homes Programme.

Councillor Jackson asked in relation to Priority 3 (Preventing homelessness and supporting our residents to live independently) whether there had been discussions with NHS partners and social care

regarding the shortage of adapted properties and the cost implications of providing additional care, particularly for people with acute brain injuries.

The Service Director explained that the needs assessment previously referred to, would incorporate the requirements of support and specialist care and that the government had asked councils to produce a Supported Housing Strategy, on which the Housing team would work with Adult Social Care to develop.

The Service Director confirmed that the Housing team worked closely with Occupational Health and Adult Social care to try and match specific needs to specific properties and would look for properties suitable for adaptation when looking to acquire properties from the market. It was acknowledged, however, that there could always be more work done between services to support residents with specific needs.

The Chair asked for more information on future plans for the Repairs & Maintenance contract, which was due for renewal, and whether the council had considered bringing the service back in-house rather than outsourcing it.

The Service Director explained that a report had gone to Cabinet in 2025 that took the decision to extend the current contract with external providers to 2030. However, a review of future options was currently ongoing. The council had engaged an external company, Lumensol, who were specialists in this sector, to assist with this work and engagement with tenants was underway to understand what was important to them with regard to repairs and maintenance. It was hoped that a report would go to Cabinet in Spring 2027, setting out all of the possible options, one of which could be bringing the work back within the council.

Councillor Bennett-Sylvester referred to the issues around under-occupancy of council properties discussed earlier in the meeting and asked IPSC Members to consider making a recommendation asking for a service to provide an update, following the first year of the new Housing Allocation Policy, on whether there had been any impact on levels of under-occupancy. The Chair asked Members to vote on this proposed additional recommendation, and it was approved.

The Chair thanked officers for their input and Members for the questions asked.

Resolved:-

- 1) That the progress made in delivering the priorities and actions set out in Rotherham's Housing Strategy 2025-30 be noted;
- 2) That IPSC agrees to continue to receive annual Housing Strategy Progress Reports;

- 3) That IPSC agrees that future Housing Strategy Progress Reports will be reported to the Improving Places Select Commission in September each year, to ensure that all data is available (for the reasons set out in Section 1.5 of the Report); and

As a further recommendation, the Improving Places Select Commission requested:-

- 4) That an update be provided to IPSC in 6-12 months' time regarding the issue of under-occupancy in council-owned properties and whether implementation of the new Housing Allocations Policy has had an impact on levels of under occupancy.

(Councillor Bennett-Sylvester declared an interest in Minute No.7 (Housing Strategy 2025-2030 Progress Report Year 1 (2025-26)) on the grounds that they are a council tenant.)

8. NEIGHBOURHOOD LEADERSHIP STRATEGY

At the Chair's invitation, Chris Paddock, Interim Director of Policy, Strategy & Engagement (Interim Director) introduced the item and explained that the former Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy had reached the end of its lifespan (2018-2025), which provided an opportunity to review the council's approach to neighbourhood working and how best to make residents feel more connected to council services.

The former Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy had created a new model of working and had enabled Councillors to play a more prominent role in their localities, to have more control over ward budgets and to exert more influence over the local provision of services.

This model of neighbourhood working had been praised in a 2023 Local Government Association (LGA) peer review and recognised as an example of best practise nationally.

The Interim Director explained that the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act had introduced a new statutory duty on local authorities to establish appropriate arrangements for effective neighbourhood governance. The aim of this was to move decision making closer to residents so that it would be led by the people who most understand local needs.

From this position of strength and proven good practice, the council had decided to develop two strategies to sit alongside each other to support neighbourhood working. A new iteration of the Thriving Neighbourhood Strategy would be presented to Cabinet in December and would set out more wide-ranging plans for how the council intended to work with partners to deliver greater impact in neighbourhoods. The Neighbourhood Leadership Strategy would be introduced first and was due to be presented to Cabinet in early July 2026.

The council had worked with Councillors from all parties and officers across the council to develop a more ambitious strategy which would place Councillors, in their role as local leaders, at the heart of a more responsive, resident-led approach to local government.

The Interim Director explained that, to underpin this strength-based approach, a set of characteristics of the “21st Century Rotherham Councillor” had been co-produced. Ward priorities, local budgeting process and Neighbourhood Coordinators would continue to be in place but would be informed by better evidence. Councillors would be given more opportunity to advocate for their residents and communicate local sentiments to the council to enable council services to be more responsive. All Councillors who wanted to participate would be supported to maximise their role as neighbourhood leaders, to help places thrive and to support Rotherham’s residents to live well.

The Interim Director took Members through the presentation on the Neighbourhood Leadership Strategy 2026-2032 (Strategy), highlighting the following points:-

Co-Production

- The Strategy had been developed via co-production with Councillors and officers. A workshop had been held with Members of IPSC and OSMB in April 2026 to obtain their views and opinions on what the Strategy should cover.
- The views of officers across all services at the council were also sought to create the framework for the two strategies and to consider the relationship between Councillors and council services and how they can work together to respond better to local needs.
- There was reported to be strong support for the Neighbourhoods Team and the role that Neighbourhood Coordinators play in supporting Councillors. However, there was a feeling that more could be done to support Councillors to have influence over services, both internally and externally. The top area of priority would be improved communication between departments within the council and also, between specific services and Councillors. It was hoped that the Strategy would help to address this.
- In line with government sentiments, it was clear that Councillors wanted to put residents at the heart of this work and that this would be key to the successful operation of the strategy.

Vision & Ambition

- The Strategy would seek to build on the already strong foundations of neighbourhood working in Rotherham. It would give Councillors an enhanced role as conveners and conduits for residents’ aspirations, helping the council to be more ready to listen, learn and respond to residents’ needs.
- The anticipated outcome of this would be that people felt more connected to the council, building trust and agency in all of

Rotherham's neighbourhoods.

Key Changes

- The new Strategy would provide a more distinct focus on the role of Councillors, not just within Rotherham, but also within the regional context. In designing the Strategy, the council had consulted with SYMCA, who confirmed that they also wanted to work towards a position where local Councillors had a distinct role within the regional system.
- Fundamental to the success of the Strategy would be a stronger and more responsive connection between neighbourhoods and council services.
- To enable Councillors to succeed as neighbourhood leaders, more support would be provided to help Councillors to develop their skills. Stronger arrangements for monitoring and tracking success under the Strategy would also be developed.

The “21st Century Rotherham Councillor”

- Councillors and officers had worked together to come up with a list of characteristics and attributes that they felt defined the “21st Century Councillor” from a Rotherham-specific perspective. These 10 characteristics were set out in the Strategy itself and were provided in the presentation at page 58 of the Agenda pack.

Action Areas

To deliver on the aims of the Strategy, six action areas were identified, as follows:-

1. Ward Priorities and Plan

The intention was to continue the commitment to produce ward priorities and plans every two years, but to improve and enhance the data and evidence used to do that. Alongside this, new protocols would be developed to link the enhanced evidence base to future service delivery and future tracking of impact.

2. Devolved Ward Budgets

A number of different funds were already devolved to wards, but it was intended to enhance ward budgets via more intensive support around seed and match funding. This could offer Councillors the opportunity to explore possible new approaches in engaging residents in funding decisions.

3. Leadership in Support of Council and Partner Services

It was considered fundamental to establish stronger links between neighbourhoods, residents and council services. This would also apply to external services such as the police, health partners, the voluntary and community sector and educational partners. The intention would be to empower the Neighbourhoods Team to have greater influence over the way that council services were delivered and to have strong expectations of quicker and definitive

responses and routes of escalation.

4. Leadership Development

Ongoing support for Councillors around leadership development would be required. Leadership training and coaching was being developed with the Democratic Services and Member Support teams. It was hoped that a stronger team mentality could be developed between Neighbourhood Coordinators and Councillors so that they could support each other in their roles.

5. The Role of Residents in Neighbourhood Leadership

The aim would be for residents to feel that Councillors and Neighbourhood Coordinators were working to provide them with a stronger sense of influence and agency within the areas they live in. Work was underway with colleagues in Communications to support delivery of this message and to consider how best Councillors could best feed residents' views back into service delivery.

6. Monitoring Impact and Feeding Back

This had been identified as a weakness in the previous strategy. As a result, part of the early stages of delivery of this Strategy would be to build stronger structures and processes to supportively reflect on performance and incorporate feedback from residents to support improvement.

The Chair thanked officers for the presentation and invited Members of IPSC to raise questions and queries on Neighbourhood Leadership Strategy, and in the ensuing question and answer session, the following points were raised:-

The Chair asked how the council would ensure that the Strategy delivered tangible outcomes and not just improved processes. In response, the Interim Director explained that the ward plans and priorities would be key in mapping out local need and aspiration. These would also provide key indicators against which tangible outcomes could be assessed. The Interim Director commented that it was hoped that increased trust from residents in the council, democracy and their representation at local level would be a broader tangible outcome.

The Chair commented that outcomes under the Strategy were of crucial importance and asked how the council would ensure that all officers across the council, not just the Neighbourhood Coordinators, would pay heed to the aims of the Strategy.

In response, the Interim Director confirmed that improved processes of escalation and methods of capturing feedback would be implemented to support delivery. Martin Hughes, the Head of Neighbourhoods (Head of Neighbourhoods) further commented that once the Strategy had been approved by Cabinet, service would immediately embark on setting up the

protocols and frameworks to support delivery of the Strategy. For example, meetings with senior leadership across all Directorates would be planned over the summer months, with a view to filtering information regarding the Strategy down to all teams across the council. The Head of Neighbourhoods reminded Councillors that a new Director of Policy, Strategy and Engagement had started at the council that week, but it was hoped that this would not adversely affect the timelines for implementation of the Strategy.

In a further comment, the Interim Director confirmed that the Strategy had already been discussed with the Senior Leadership Team at the council and the expectations on council services under the Strategy had been made very clear.

Councillor Beck commented that whilst the new Strategy represented a good aggregation of existing good practice in neighbourhood working in Rotherham, it didn't demonstrate a huge evolution from the previous strategy. Councillor Beck did acknowledge that the development might become more evident once delivery was underway.

The Interim Director agreed that the Strategy set out the aspirations and that that the improved outcomes would be evident via the delivery. The Interim Director further explained that the second part of this approach, the new Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy, would provide more detail on how Councillors and council services should deal with specific issues within Rotherham neighbourhoods.

The Chair commented that one change that had been recommended in the Member Workshop on the Strategy was that a casework-type system be introduced for neighbourhood issues, which would represent a development from previous practice.

The Head of Neighbourhoods commented that as the council was starting from a position of strength with regard to neighbourhood working, the Strategy sought to take the next steps to build on this. A key area of development which had come out of the Member Workshop and survey, was a strengthened role for Neighbourhood Coordinators to be advocates for Councillors and to be able to push for rapid responses on issues. To assist with this, service would look to implement a casework-type system to more easily track and escalate issues. This would support the Strategy's aims of increased communication and joint working.

The Head of Neighbourhoods explained that it had not been possible to share the full draft Strategy with Councillors prior to the meeting, due to the timing of the publication of the Cabinet Report (Members had been provided with a paper copy of the Strategy in the meeting). The Strategy set out an increased expectation on council services to communicate with Councillors on issues/events/planned works affecting their wards. It also provided for deeper engagement with residents and for wider promotion and understanding of the role of a Councillor, within communities and the

council itself, via internal and external communications campaigns. Further detail on the content of the Strategy could be found within the Cabinet report.

Councillor Thorp commented that whilst they agreed with the aims and aspirations set out within the Strategy, they were of the opinion that more work needed to be done by the council to involve Councillors with the development of strategies at an earlier stage. Councillor Thorp mentioned a number of recent strategies that had been put before Cabinet without any prior consultation with Members.

The Interim Director confirmed that the success of the Strategy would, in part, depend on changes in behaviour and established systems. It was hoped that the introduction of a casework-type system and clearer routes of escalation would help with this, but the Interim Director acknowledged that this could be challenging.

In response, Councillor Thorp expressed the opinion that for the Strategy to be successful, there needed to be a culture change from the top down i.e from Cabinet and the Senior Leadership team within the council. The Interim Director pointed out that the attributes of the “21st Century Rotherham Councillor” would apply to Cabinet members as well.

Councillor Bennett-Sylvester agreed that the Strategy was evolutionary rather than revolutionary but acknowledged that neighbourhood working in the last 10 years had vastly improved from the days of Area Assemblies. Councillor Bennett-Sylvester raised the issue of resource to fund the aspirations of the Strategy, given that ward budgets had not increased and in real terms, were decreasing year on year. Councillor Bennett-Sylvester expressed frustration with the way that funding flowed out to services disproportionately between wards and suggested that Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) monies could be better used towards neighbourhood needs.

Councillor Bennett-Sylvester complimented service on the strengths-based working training that had been delivered in 2025 and requested that this be revisited as it would help Councillors to understand how, as neighbourhood leaders, they could help to empower and enable residents to feel confident to do things for themselves.

The Interim Director responded on the resourcing pressures and agreed that for some wards, the funding would not be enough. The primary mechanism under the Strategy would be to enable services to be more responsive and for every pound to be wisely spent in the right localities due to better information, better communication and better processes.

The Head of Neighbourhoods confirmed the council’s ongoing commitment to the development of staff with regard to strength-based working. A community of practice for council officers had been established, which included going out to wards and talking to Councillors

about strength-based working. Online resources were also available to support staff to utilise strength-base working in their every day practice.

Councillor Bennett-Sylvester was encouraged that strength-based working was becoming part of the working culture and commented that all services across the council needed to have bought into the concept for it to be fully effective.

Councillor Tinsley reflected that, as a member of the Member & Democratic Panel, it was disappointing that the level of take-up for training offered to Councillors remained low. Councillor Tinsley asked whether any customised training was being considered to encourage Councillors to participate more.

The Interim Director confirmed that further conversations were needed with Councillors to tailor a training offer that worked best for them. It was hoped that by offering something more akin to Leadership Support, which was a valuable transferable skill, this would encourage Councillors to engage. However, the intention was to create a supportive environment that Councillors wanted to engage with and not make training compulsory.

The Head of Neighbourhoods added that service would explore different shared development opportunities to engender a “team mentality”. Joint Member-Officer development and training would help to understand each other’s roles and the challenges faced. Such training could be tailored to each ward’s priorities and specific issues, as appropriate.

Councillor Jackson commented that overall, the Strategy represented a good development from a place of strength. However, Councillor Jackson felt uncomfortable with the suggestion within the Strategy that Neighbourhood Coordinators be changed routinely at every all-out election (every 4 years). In Councillor Jackson’s view, there was significant value in the longevity of relationships between Councillors, officers and local groups within each ward that took time to develop.

The Head of Neighbourhoods explained that it had been the intention since the inception of this model of neighbourhood working, that Neighbourhood Coordinators be rotated on a periodic basis. Due to a variety of reasons, such as the pandemic and a change of ward boundaries, that had never been put in place, but the relevant Cabinet Member remained keen to do so.

The Head of Neighbourhoods further commented that the reason why it was felt appropriate to rotate Neighbourhood Coordinators was to maintain the consistency of professional and personal development and that all Councillors were provided with support and experience from other areas. It was acknowledged that there would be some impact from the loss of initial information and contact due to handover periods.

In response, Councillor Jackson appreciated the arguments for the

rotation but felt that the value of good personalities working consistently well together would be of more benefit to communities.

Councillor Jones asked what would happen in a ward with inactive Councillors who did not engage with their community? This would lead to an instant failure of the system of communication that the Strategy relied on. Councillor Jones also commented that there were frequent breakdowns in communication between Councillors and officers within certain departments at the council. Councillor Jones suggested that each ward should have its own up to date plan, with data from different directorates, that would keep Councillors informed on when works were due to take place, service delivery schedules etc. This would prevent Councillors being too reliant on case work or knowing which particular officer to contact. It would also help to provide a personal touch to residents.

The Interim Director acknowledged that there would always be some inactive Councillors and that ultimately, the success of the Strategy was dependent on Councillors wanting to engage with it. However, the Neighbourhoods Team worked hard to engage with all Councillors. If this was unsuccessful, there were formal processes to explore but it was acknowledged that this could compromise successful delivery of the Strategy in that area.

With regard to Councillor Jones' comment on more ward-specific data, the Interim Director agreed that in order to achieve a more responsive structure, more service data needed to be filtered down to ward level. This would take time to put in place but was an aspiration of the Strategy.

The Chair commented that this particular issue demonstrated why it was good to have at least two Councillors in every ward.

Councillor Steele commented that he was in agreement with Councillor Jones on the importance of Councillor engagement and stressed the point that, as elected members, Councillors were ultimately responsible for their wards and for taking the time to meet with their residents to understand what Councillors could deliver for them.

Councillor Steele also expressed support for Councillor Jackson's earlier view regarding the rotation of Neighbourhood Coordinators. Councillor Steele hoped that all Councillors and Officers would work together in a professional manner and did not agree with the suggestion that Neighbourhood Coordinators be moved routinely at election time.

The Interim Director commented that one of the Strategy's aims was to set clear expectations of levels of communication between Councillors and council services. This, together with improved processes, would allow Councillors to get to a quicker, more definitive answer to provide to residents.

Councillor Beck commented that as a number of Members had expressed concern about the proposed rotation of Neighbourhood Coordinators, IPSC should consider making a recommendation to that effect. The Chair asked if other Members were supportive of a recommendation to Cabinet against this rotation. Councillors Thorp, Stables, Tinsley and Steele expressed their support for making such a recommendation. Members commented that the sudden loss of longstanding working relationships and local knowledge at election time, when there was the potential for political change and an influx of new Councillors, could be damaging to communities and lead to instability.

The Interim Director urged Members to exercise an element of caution in relation to such a recommendation, commenting that Councillors would not want to undermine the delivery of service. It was important that the Neighbourhoods Team had the ability to move staff about to suit service need and capacity and to benefit officers' personal development.

Both Councillors Beck and Jackson stated that if Neighbourhood Coordinators needed to be moved for professional development/employment reasons then Members would not wish to interfere with service's ability to take these decisions. However, Members were against the arbitrary, cyclical rotation of Neighbourhood Coordinators at election time, as currently set out within the Strategy.

The Chair asked Members to vote on a recommendation to Cabinet asking them to remove the routine rotation of Neighbourhood Coordinators at election time and Members voted in favour of this.

The Chair thanked officers for their input and Members for the questions asked.

Resolved:-

- 1) That the presentation in relation to the development of the Neighbourhood Leadership Strategy be noted; and
- 2) 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 Neighbourhood Leadership Strategy on 6 July 2026:-
 - a) That Cabinet consider the removal of the following text under "Action Area 4: Ongoing Support and Leadership Development" of the Neighbourhood Leadership Strategy:-
"Within the strategy period, the 2028 local election will be used to reallocate Neighbourhood Coordinators to new wards to ensure Councillors have access to new skills and perspectives. This will be repeated in future electoral cycles."

IPSC Members felt strongly that the proposed introduction of a cyclical rotation of Neighbourhood Coordinators at local elections could be detrimental to neighbourhood working and the aims of the strategy, as significant local knowledge, connections and stability could be lost at a time of potential political change.

9. IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION - WORK PROGRAMME 2026 - 2027

The Chair introduced the work programme report and drew Members attention to the following points:-

- **Work Programme for the new municipal year**

The work programme attached in the Agenda Pack showed the indicative programme for the upcoming municipal year.

The Governance Manager confirmed that any suggested items for scrutiny sent by Members to Councillor Steele, would be reviewed and considered by the OSMB Steering Group at a meeting on 29 June 2026.

- **School Road Safety Review**

The Chair informed Members that a meeting had been set up for the Group to consider their draft recommendations, and a report would be written up for consideration for IPSC at a future meeting, prior to onward presentation at OSMB and then Cabinet.

Resolved:-

- 1) That the current IPSC work programme be noted; and
- 2) That the Governance Advisor be authorised to make any required changes to the work programme in consultation with the Chair/Vice Chair and will report any such changes back at the next meeting for endorsement.

10. URGENT BUSINESS

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

Review of Rotherham Investment and Development Office (RiDO) Business Centres

Improving Places Select Commission

Contents

- Overview
- Economic Impact
- Performance
 - Occupancy
 - Financial performance
- Utilisation of services
- Market Competitiveness
- Building condition and ongoing compliance
- Marketing, promotion and growth opportunities
- Tenant satisfaction / reasons for leaving
- SWOT Analysis – Future direction

Century



Century 2



Moorgate Crofts



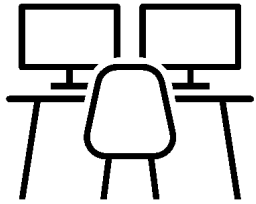
Fusion@Magna



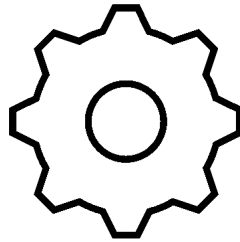
Matrix@Dinnington



Overview - Spaces for business across 5 centres



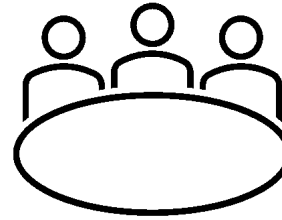
156
offices



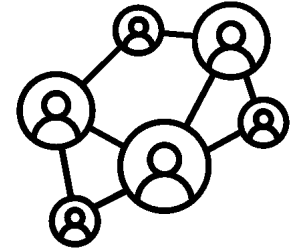
84
workshops



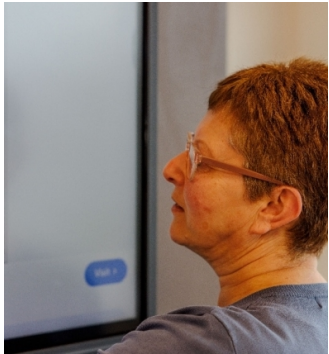
2 flexible
lab spaces



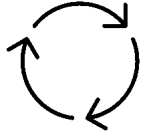
11 meeting
rooms



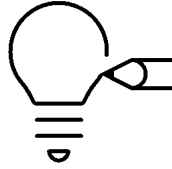
1 start-up
coworking space



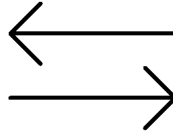
Overview - Supportive places for business



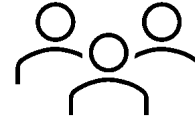
1-month easy-in
easy-out licence
agreements



Develop and test
ideas with
minimum risk



Flex size up or
down to meet
business needs



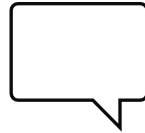
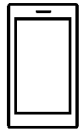
A community of small
businesses with a
similar mindset



Virtual offices offer a
stepping stone for
local businesses



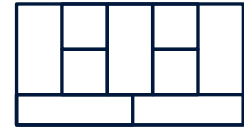
Instant access to cloud voice
services and fast broadband
without contracts



Experienced,
supportive centre
coordinators



High-quality premises
reinforces occupant
brand image



Direct access to
RiDO's innovative
business support

Economic Impact

- 5 purpose-built incubation centres
- 180+ business occupiers, supporting 850 jobs
- 50 virtual offices for local businesses
- Every business connected with RiDO business support, with 50+ workshops held annually
- 40 to 50 businesses move in and out annually
- 1000+ businesses supported over 25 years
- Monthly newsletter to occupants, ex-occupants and partners promotes business support services

Development timeframe

**Century Business
Centre (2000)**



**Moorgate Crofts
Business Centre (2006)**



**Fusion@Magna
Business Centre (2008)**



**Matrix@Dinnington
Business Centre (2009)**



**Century 2 Business
Centre (Nov 2023)**

Economic Impact - Launchpad 4

Apr 25 - Mar 26

The Rotherham Launchpad team assist entrepreneurs, early-stage and micro businesses, from idea stage through to business growth. The innovative support is based on business modelling techniques and delivered through one-to-one sessions and a comprehensive range of expert workshops, embedded in RiDO's Business Centres to benefit the whole of Rotherham.

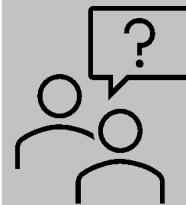
Small start up grants provide a welcome boost in those key early months and increase client engagement in advisory services.

£265k

UK Shared
Prosperity Fund
(UKSPF)



2 advisors +
1 project officer



498

enquiries
supported

+38%
increase
since 2023

55
workshops



437

attendees

£50k

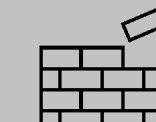
total grants for

54

new
businesses

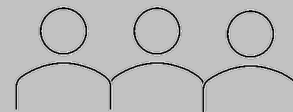


Page 32



41

Businesses created



41

Jobs
created

Business Centres Occupancy



Century

Jun 26: 81%
10yr average: 88%



Moorgate Crofts

Jun 26: 79%
10yr average: 74%



Fusion@Magna

Jun 26: 81%
10yr average: 89%



Matrix@Dinnington

Jun 26: 91%
10yr average: 88%



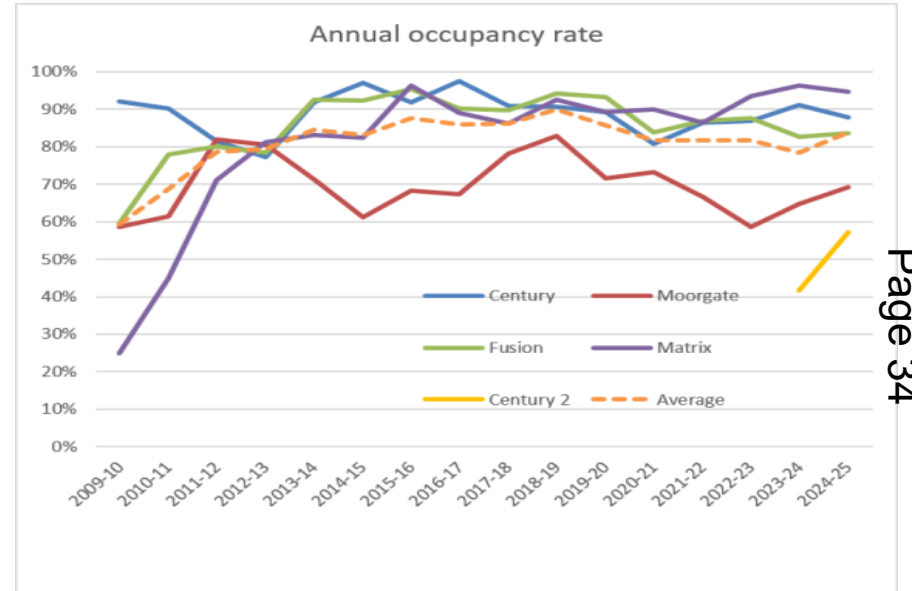
Century 2

Jun 26: 85%
Opened Nov 2023

Target 85% enables
turnover of new businesses

Occupancy

Average from 2012:	89.19%	70.30%	88.51%	89.35%		83.82%
Yearly	Century	Moorgate	Fusion	Matrix	Century 2	Average
2009-10	92.01%	58.71%	59.60%	24.90%		59.43%
2010-11	90.16%	61.54%	77.91%	44.99%		68.79%
2011-12	81.47%	82.07%	80.04%	71.12%		78.74%
2012-13	77.15%	80.62%	78.50%	81.33%		79.39%
2013-14	91.96%	71.37%	92.48%	83.25%		84.58%
2014-15	97.07%	61.32%	92.24%	82.40%		83.07%
2015-16	91.81%	68.33%	95.45%	96.38%		87.67%
2016-17	97.40%	67.29%	90.11%	89.04%		85.86%
2017-18	90.81%	78.27%	89.64%	86.29%		86.17%
2018-19	90.70%	82.85%	94.20%	92.63%		89.95%
2019-20	89.38%	71.60%	93.17%	89.32%		85.71%
2020-21	80.67%	73.14%	83.91%	89.92%		81.76%
2021-22	86.35%	66.68%	86.82%	86.51%		81.61%
2022-23	86.95%	58.53%	87.71%	93.61%		81.70%
2023-24	91.24%	64.77%	82.70%	96.23%	41.56%	78.36%
2024-25	87.97%	69.12%	83.71%	94.60%	57.26%	83.85%



Financial Performance (25-26)



£273k rent revenue



£190k rent revenue



£220k rent revenue



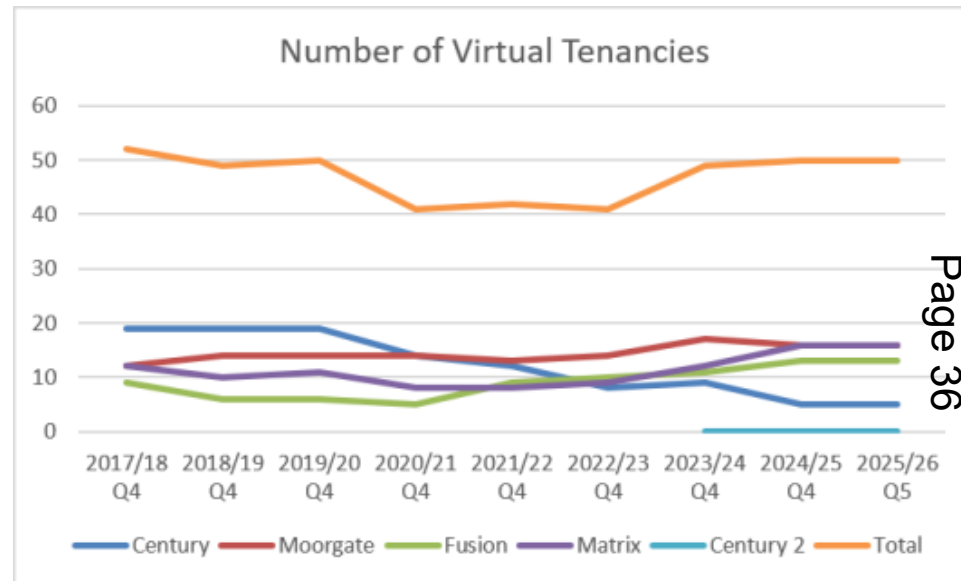
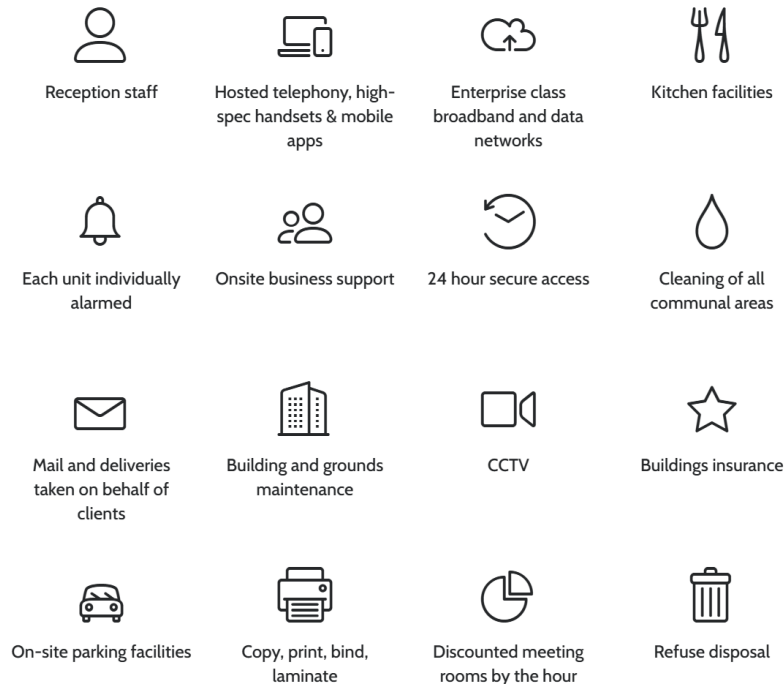
£264k rent revenue



£195k rent revenue

Space rental: £1,153k
Data and telephony: £92k
Meeting space: £18k
Virtual offices: £25k (49 businesses)
Electric recharges: £100k
Services: £14k
Total revenue: £1,403k
Costs: £1,228k
Revenue surplus £175k + £30k UKSPF

Utilisation of Services



Market Competitiveness

- RMBC Business Centres are competitively priced within the South Yorkshire market, offering flexible workspace at rates below many premium serviced office providers whilst maintaining strong occupancy levels.

Provider	Office Rate (£/sq. ft)*
Doncaster Business Centre	£12.00
Bradmarsh Business Park (Rotherham)	£13.56
RMBC Discount Offices (Moorgate)	£15.15
Pennine Five, Sheffield	£18.60
RMBC Average	£19.89
Sheffield Olympic Legacy Park	£21.00
Paternoster Row, Sheffield	£26.40
Eyre Street, Sheffield	£27.60

* Information via desk based research July 2026

Building Condition & Ongoing Compliance

- The first Business centre, Century Business Park, was built in 2000 and requires investment for maintenance issues.
 - New roof £927k
 - Restroom(s) refurbishments £270k
- Annual inspection and compliance

Check	Frequency
Fire Risk Assessment Review	Annual / when changes occur
Fire Alarm Service	6 monthly
Emergency Lighting Full Test	Annual
Gas Safety Inspection	Annual
Lift Thorough Examination	6–12 monthly
Legionella Review	Annual
HVAC/Boiler Service	Annual (or manufacturer schedule)
PAT Testing	Risk based (often annual)
EICR Fixed Wiring	Typically every 5 years
TM44 Air Conditioning Inspection	Every 5 years

Construction

**Century Business
Centre (2000)**



**Moorgate Crofts
Business Centre (2006)**



**Fusion@Magna
Business Centre (2008)**



**Matrix@Dinnington
Business Centre (2009)**



**Century 2 Business
Centre (Nov 2023)**

Marketing, Promotion & Growth Opportunities

Current Position

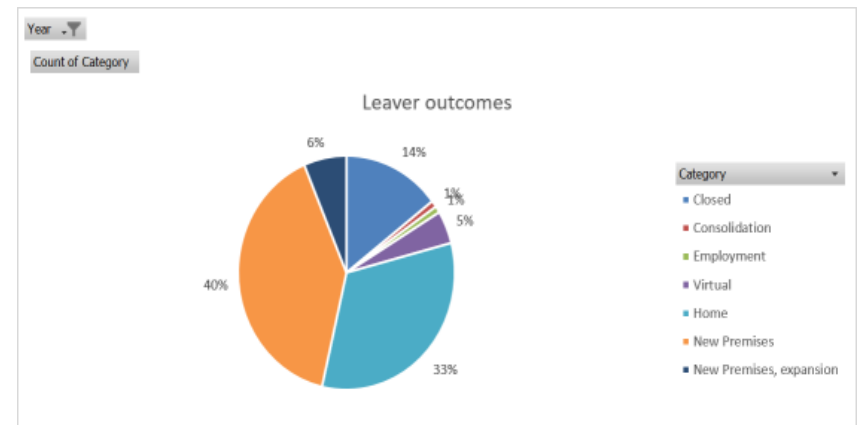
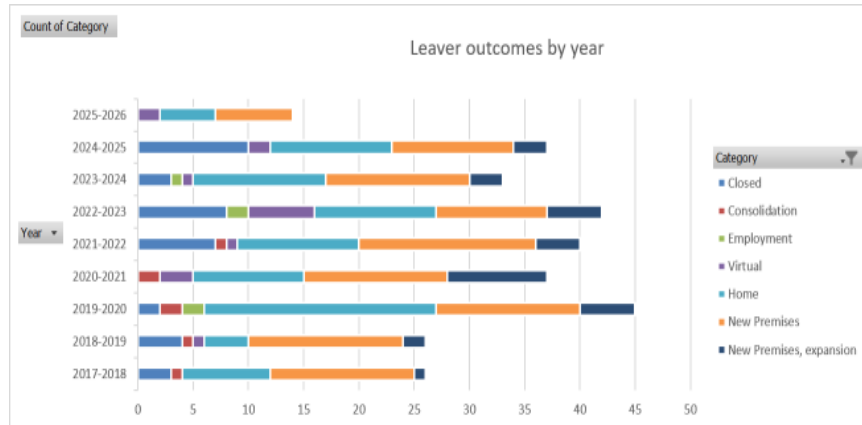
- Strong occupancy has been maintained through the commitment of Business Centre staff, despite no dedicated Business Centre marketing resource.
- Marketing activity is delivered alongside operational responsibilities, supported where possible by Corporate Communications.
- Corporate Communications provide valuable support but have a broad range of Council priorities, limiting capacity for sustained commercial marketing activity.
- Having the current website operating separately from RiDO provides flexibility and allows for a dedicated focus; however, improvements to the main RiDO website and stronger cross-referrals are essential to ensure a seamless customer journey and to drive more enquiries to the Business Centres website

Opportunity for Improvement

- Develop a dedicated Business Centre marketing function and commercial marketing strategy.
- Increase digital marketing, content creation, case studies, social media activity and lead generation campaigns.
- Strengthen brand awareness and competitiveness against increasingly well-marketed workspace providers.
- Provide additional resource to manage the customer journey for Business Centre tenants and Launchpad clients beyond three years of trading, ensuring seamless integration into the wider RiDO business support offer, as current Launchpad and Business Centre staff have limited capacity to undertake ongoing business engagement and referral activity.

Tenant Satisfaction / Reasons for leaving

- While an annual tenant satisfaction survey is not currently undertaken, valuable feedback is gathered through exit interviews, which help identify reasons for tenants leaving and opportunities for improvement.
- In addition, regular one-to-one business growth discussions are held with tenants to better understand their evolving accommodation requirements and support their future development.



SWOT Analysis – Future Direction of RMBC Business Centres

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
• Strong occupancy levels across the business centre portfolio. • Established reputation and long-standing tenant relationships. • Diverse accommodation offer including offices, workshops, laboratories and meeting facilities. • Launchpad provides a proven accommodation ladder for growing businesses. • Dedicated and experienced team with strong local business knowledge. • Links to wider RiDO business growth and support services. • Council-owned assets generating income whilst supporting economic growth. • Flexible tenancy options supporting start-ups, SMEs and growing businesses. • Existing tenant community provides networking and peer-support opportunities. • Business Centres remain fit for purpose, continue to attract demand and are well-known within the local business community.	• No dedicated Business Centres marketing resource. • Lack of a formal commercial marketing strategy and annual campaign plan. • RiDO website and branding are not fully integrated with the wider Business Centres offer. • Very lean staffing structure across Business Centres and Markets. • Limited capacity for proactive business development and lead generation. • Reliance on operational staff undertaking marketing activities in addition to core duties. • Ageing assets will require ongoing maintenance and future investment. • Annual tenant survey has paused since Covid this needs to be reinstated and/or exit interviews take place where possible. • Lack of free / available parking (Moorgate Crofts) suppresses occupancy. • The centres operate within Council governance, procurement and financial frameworks, which provide important controls but may limit flexibility compared with some private sector competitors.

SWOT Analysis – Future Direction of RMBC Business Centres

OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS / CHALLENGES
• Opportunity to explore an additional Business Centre at Rotherham Gateway. • Dedicated marketing resource could increase awareness, enquiries and occupancy. • Maximising the CRM system could improve reporting, lead management and performance monitoring. • Increased utilisation (through marketing / promotion) of meeting rooms and conference facilities to generate additional income. • Further promotion of tenant success stories and case studies to support business attraction and retention. • Feedback from tenants through exit interviews / annual surveys could help improve the service.	• Future funding uncertainty for business support and economic development activity. • Growing competition from private-sector serviced office and flexible workspace providers. • Pay Ahead requirements may create barriers for some start-ups and early-stage businesses. • Rising maintenance, utilities and operating costs. • Hybrid working trends continue to influence workspace demand. • Increasing customer expectations around building quality, digital services and flexibility. • Limited staffing capacity may restrict future growth opportunities. • Failure to invest in promotion and marketing could reduce visibility and competitiveness. • Increased use of Business Centre accommodation by Council services could dilute the commercial identity of the centres and reduce their attractiveness to private-sector businesses seeking a dedicated business environment

Public Report
Improving Places Select Commission

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Improving Places Select Commission – 01 September 2026

Report Title

Introducing Housing Improvement and Governance

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)

Wendy G Foster, Governance and Involvement Manager
Wendy-regen.foster@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

The report introduces the Housing Improvement and Governance Team, a team which was created in February 2025 in response to the Social Housing (Regulation) Act, 2023.

A brief explanation of the role of the Housing Regulatory Assurance Board is given, and the associated terms of reference attached.

Finally, the report offers an update on the agreed changes to Tenant Scrutiny reporting arrangements to Improving Places Select Commission (IPSC).

Recommendations

That Improving Places Select Commission:

1. Note the content of the report and presentation.
2. Agrees the proposed changes to reporting arrangements for Tenancy Scrutiny reports.

List of Appendices Included

- Appendix 1 Housing Improvement and Governance team structure
Appendix 2 Housing Regulatory Assurance Board, Terms of Reference
Appendix 3 Changes to reporting Tenant Scrutiny Panel findings

Background Papers

There are no background papers to this report

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

No.

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Introducing Housing Improvement and Governance

1. Background

- 1.1 In response to the fire at Grenfell Tower in June 2017, and the death of Awaab Ishak from prolonged exposure to damp and mould in December 2020, the Government introduced the [Social Housing \(Regulation\) Act 2023](#).
- 1.2 The Act introduced a robust performance framework to which all social housing landlords in the UK must adhere. The Act gives the Regulator of Social Housing (RoSH) and the Housing Ombudsman greater powers to oversee and drive-up standards, making social housing homes safer, and giving tenants the opportunity to influence policy and services. Regulation includes:
 - In person inspections (including an online review and a request to submit material evidence of delivering against expectations), at least once every four years, to gauge performance against the expectations stated in six [consumer standards](#)
 - Safety and Quality
 - Transparency, Influence and Accountability
 - Neighbourhood and Community
 - Tenancy
 - Rent
 - Competence and Conduct (to be introduced in October 2026)
 - The annual submission, and publication, of [Tenant Satisfaction Measures](#).

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 The Council created the Housing Improvement and Governance (HIG) Team in February 2025, in response to the new regulatory environment introduced through the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023.
- 2.2 Four services sit within Housing Improvement and Governance:
 - a) Governance and Involvement Team;
 - b) Business Development Team;
 - c) Programme Management Team; and
 - d) Housing Transformation Programme.

The Team structure can be found in **Appendix 1**.

2.3 Governance and Involvement Team

- 2.4 Governance and Involvement comprise:
 - housing governance, in terms of aligning with and offering assurance against the Regulator of Social Housing's consumer standards, and
 - tenant engagement.
- 2.5 The focus of the Governance team is ensuring Housing services are well-governed, legally compliant, and able to demonstrate compliance with

regulatory requirements. This is done through identifying areas to strengthen, coordinating actions plans, the monitoring of key documents such as policies and strategies, collating evidence of activity, reviewing publicly accessible information and data, and providing assurance to senior officers and members. The latter is main achieved through servicing the monthly Housing Regulatory Assurance Board.

- 2.6 The Housing Regulatory Assurance Board is chaired by the Council's Chief Executive, the deputy chair is the Strategic Director of Adult Care, Housing and Public Health. The meeting is attended by senior officers across Finance and Legal, as well as the Head of Policy, Performance and Intelligence, the Executive Director (of Adult Care, Housing and Public Health), Service Director for Housing and Housing Heads of Service.
- 2.7 The terms of reference of the Housing Regulatory Assurance Board have been attached as **Appendix 2**.
- 2.8 **The Tenant Engagement Team (sits within the Governance and Involvement Team)**
- 2.9 Tenant engagement at Rotherham Council is a shared responsibility across all of housing services. It is a key requirement of the "Transparency, Influence and Accountability" Consumer Standard.
- 2.10 As well as supporting teams within the Housing Service to engage effectively with tenants, the Tenant Engagement Team manages the contract with RotherFed, the third sector organisation which successfully tendered to deliver some elements of tenant engagement. The Council offers [a range of opportunities](#) for tenants to influence the shape of housing services.
- 2.11 The Tenant Engagement Team:
 - provides a wide range of opportunities for tenants to get involved, helping them influence decisions about their homes and shape council housing services
 - supports tenants to scrutinise council housing services and work with housing teams to respond to their recommendations, driving service improvements where needed
 - supports a pool of over 200 tenants in the Connectors Pool, who can engage with Housing Services flexibly, and on the topics which interest them the most.
 - works with the Housing and Estates and Neighbourhoods Team to deliver community engagement activities.
- 2.12 The Tenant Scrutiny Panel, which carries out scrutiny investigations and makes recommendations for improvements, is one example of the opportunities. Other examples are:
 - Housing Involvement Panel - a regular forum where tenants discuss housing services direction, provide feedback, and challenge performance.

- Screen Team – an online group that works with us to improve tenant communications.
- Learning from Complaints Panel – a forum where tenants work with officers to ensure the Council learns from complaints and use the learning to improve services.

2.13 The Tenant Scrutiny Panel has recently conducted a review of its own process. **Appendix 3** outlines the recent changes made to the way in which Tenant Scrutiny will report to IPSC.

2.14 Tenant engagement activity is guided by the recently launched [Tenant Engagement Framework](#) 2026 - 2030. The framework has been co-designed with tenants and leaseholders and focuses on making sure tenants' and residents' voices continue to influence decisions about the homes in which they live, services and neighbourhoods. The framework sets out how the Council will work with tenants and leaseholders over the next four years, the outcomes we aim to achieve, and how progress will be measured and demonstrated. Delivery is supported by an action plan that translates these ambitions into practical actions.

2.15 In July 2026, we were pleased to receive confirmation that Rotherham Council had achieved [Tpas Exemplar accreditation](#). This nationally recognised accreditation is awarded to organisations that demonstrate the highest standards of tenant engagement and a strong commitment to involving tenants in shaping services.

2.16 The Programme Management Team

2.17 The Programme Management Team acts as the link between Housing, Services, and external suppliers, ensuring that digital solutions support service delivery, regulatory compliance, and positive outcomes for tenants and residents. The team leads the implementation, development, and continuous improvement of Housing systems, working closely with service areas to understand operational requirements and translate them into effective digital solutions.

2.18 Workstream Leads manage projects from initial scoping through to implementation and benefits realisation. This includes solution design, system configuration, testing, training, and ongoing support, enabling them to become subject matter experts for the systems they deliver. The team also leads service improvement initiatives, supporting Housing colleagues to maximise the value of technology and ensure systems remain aligned to changing business needs.

2.19 The team has successfully delivered several significant projects and system builds, enabling housing services to operate more efficiently, make better use of data, improve tenant experiences and provide robust evidence of compliance with Consumer Standards.

2.20 Current priorities include:

- preparing Housing Services for Awaab's Law Phase 2;

- implementing the Anti-Social Behaviour and Customer Relationship Management modules;
- enhancing Housing Online to better record customers' diverse needs;
- improving customer access through automated SMS repair confirmations; and
- developing a more consistent approach to service-specific customer satisfaction surveys.

These projects are focused on improving customer outcomes, increasing efficiency, and ensuring Housing systems continue to meet the evolving needs of both residents and colleagues.

2.21 Business Development Team

2.22 The Business Development Team has formed part of the Housing Improvement and Governance Service since February 2025. The creation of this service has sharpened the strategic focus on delivering improvement projects that drive compliance with the Consumer Standards, enhance the customer experience, and streamline housing service processes.

2.23 Working collaboratively with the Governance and Involvement Team, the team ensures that tenant voice is embedded throughout project design and delivery. The team also partners closely with the Programme Management Team to implement the system changes required to support new ways of working and deliver sustainable service improvements.

2.24 In addition, the team is responsible for the management and delivery of the annual Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) survey, as well as the production of the associated bi-annual Cabinet reports. The team plays a key role in analysing data and translating customer feedback into targeted service improvements that enhance performance and tenant satisfaction.

2.25 Within the team there is a dedicated Project Lead role, working alongside the Housing Repairs Service. The role currently leads the options appraisal for the future delivery model of the repairs and maintenance service, working with specialist consultants to evaluate service delivery, identify improvements and develop a sustainable operating model. Through effective project and change management, stakeholder engagement and performance oversight, the post ensures service improvements are aligned with regulatory requirements, consumer standards and the Council's ambition to deliver a compliant, efficient and value-for-money housing service.

2.26 Housing Transformation Programme

2.27 The Housing Transformation Programme is a two-year initiative designed to fundamentally reshape the Housing Service, with the ambition of becoming a best-in-class landlord and achieving a compliant regulatory grading (C1 or C2) from the Regulator of Social Housing. The programme is being delivered in response to an increasingly robust regulatory landscape, including the introduction of routine inspections by the Regulator of Social Housing every four years.

- 2.28 A series of service reviews identified significant opportunities to improve service design, strengthen collaboration across enabling services, and deliver a smooth customer journey that supports positive outcomes and long-term tenancy sustainability. The programme also seeks to create greater consistency across the service through aligned organisational structures, spans of control, team sizes, and grading arrangements.
- 2.29 Success will be measured through the delivery of a modern, high-performing housing service where:
- employees are equipped with the skills, knowledge and development opportunities needed to thrive;
 - processes are efficient, customer-focused and aligned to strategic priorities; and
 - resources are used effectively to deliver greater value for money.

Ultimately, the programme aims to improve services for customers, increase tenant satisfaction, and provide a coherent, end-to-end customer journey that meets both current and future housing need.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

The report is presented for information.

4. Consultation on proposal

The report is presented for information.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

The report is presented for information.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications resulting from the information detailed in the report. The formation of the Housing Improvement and Governance Team was included within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

There are no substantive legal issues arising from the content of this report.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

There are no human resource implications specific to this report.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 9.1 It is a regulatory expectation that social housing landlords know 'who is behind the door'.

- 9.2 The Housing Business Development Team, with support from the Programme Management Team, have introduced the facility for Housing Service teams and Customer Service teams to collate diverse needs information to better understand tenants' needs and tailor housing services accordingly.
- 9.3 The Tenant Engagement Team monitors the diverse needs and protected characteristics of its engaged tenants. The demographics of involved tenants reflects that of Rotherham's wider population

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

- 10.1 The Housing Improvement and Governance team play a crucial role to ensure Housing Services can demonstrate access to good quality and affordable homes and services for all the borough's diverse communities. The team analyses information collected to demonstrate tenants and prospective tenants are treated with fairness and respect. This is achieved by understanding the diverse needs of tenants, including those arising from protected characteristics, language barriers, and additional support needs.

The team also works alongside our Tenant Screen Team and wider service teams to ensure that communication with and information for tenants is clear, accessible, relevant, timely and appropriate to individual and diverse needs of tenants.

11. Implications for CO₂ Emissions and Climate Change

The report is presented for information and does not have any implications for CO₂ Emissions and Climate Change

12. Implications for Partners

The report is presented for information only and does not have any implications for any partners.

13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 There are no Risks arising from this report as it is for information only. However, the formation of the Housing Improvement and Governance Team plays a critical role in ensuring the Housing Service remains compliant, effective, tenant-focused and inspection-ready. Without such a team, organisations face a range of strategic, operational and regulatory risks.

Accountable Officer

Sarah Clyde, Service Director for Housing

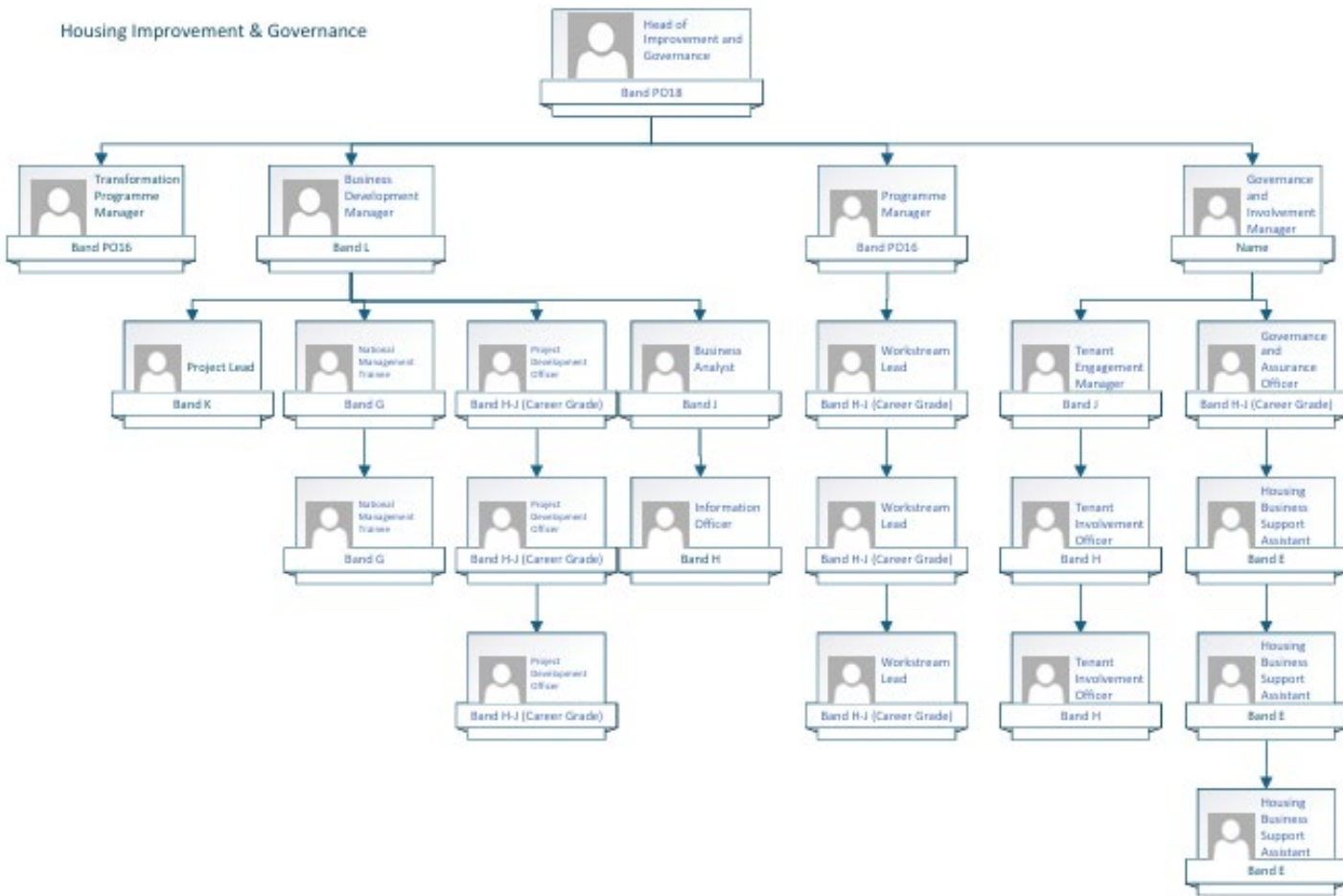
Louise Robson, Head of Service for Housing, Improvement and Governance

Wendy G Foster, Governance and Involvement Manager

Report Author: Wendy G Foster, Governance and Involvement Manager
Wendy-regen.foster@rotherham.gov.uk

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

HOUSING IMPROVEMENT AND GOVERNANCE TEAM STRUCTURE



APPENDIX 2**HOUSING REGULATORY ASSURANCE BOARD, TERMS OF REFERENCE****1. Membership**

1.1 Members of the Board will be:

Name	Job title	Role
Cllr Linda Beresford	Cabinet Member for Housing	
John Edwards	Chief Executive	Chair
Ian Spicer	Executive Director of Adult Care, Housing and Public Health	Deputy chair
Sarah Clyde	Service Director of Housing	
Philip Horsfield	Service Director of Legal, Elections and Registration Services	
Rob Mahon	Service Director of Financial Services	
Fiona Boden	Head of Policy, Performance and Intelligence	
Paul Walsh	Head of Housing and Estates Services	
Louise Robson	Head of Housing Improvement and Governance	
Lynsey Stephenson	Head of Housing Property Services	
Wendy Foster	Governance and Involvement Manager	Inspection preparation lead
Louise Young	Governance and Assurance Officer	Secretariat
Charlotte Buckingham	Housing Business Support Assistant	Secretariat

- 1.2 Only members of the Board will have the right to attend. However, other individuals can be invited to any meeting as and when appropriate.
- 1.3 Members should nominate a relevant substitute if they are unavailable to attend a meeting.
- 1.4 The composition and terms of reference of the Board will be reviewed by the Board every 12 months or more frequently, if appropriate.
- 1.5 The Board will be chaired by the Chief Executive. If the Chair is not present at any of the meetings of the Board, then the meeting will be chaired by Executive Director of Adult Care, Housing and Public Health.
- 1.6 The Board may look to increase membership over time to include:
- Other Council functions in scope of housing regulation (e.g. community protection, asset management, health and safety, neighbourhoods, street scene)
 - An external 'critical friend' role

- c) Customer voice.

2. Purpose and scope

- 2.1 The purpose of the Board is to provide the Council with assurance that it is acting in accordance with all relevant social housing landlord regulations. It will achieve this by
- receiving and scrutinising reports and management information relating to compliance of landlord functions with regulations
 - overseeing actions being taken to strengthen assurance that regulations are being met
 - overseeing the Council's relationship with the Regulator of Social Housing including preparation for inspections, self-referrals, submission of data returns and management information.
- 2.2 The main purpose of the Board will be to ensure compliance with the Regulator of Social Housing's consumer standards. Other relevant statutory and regulatory requirements may be considered where the Board considers this necessary.
- 2.3 The focus of the Board is on the Council's housing landlord functions. The following are out of scope: homelessness (apart from where the Council provides its own accommodation under a homelessness duty), private sector housing, housing development and Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs).
- 2.4 The Board Forward Plan will be based on the following key items:
- Performance and assurance
 - Statutory returns and regulatory engagement
 - Tenant insights and involvement activity
 - Complaint handling
- 2.5 Other areas of focus may be requested by the Board for a deep dive, with key examples including deep dives into the Safety and Quality Standard (health and safety, stock quality) and meeting diverse needs.
- 2.6 The Chair may agree other items to be added to the forward plan by exception, for example issues arising from a self-assessment or audit, or if a Board member wishes to escalate an issue in their area of responsibility.
- 2.7 Board members who present items will ensure this aligns with the specific consumer standard and required outcome to which it relates, always being clear on the purpose of the item.

3. Frequency of meetings and secretariat

- 3.1 The Board shall meet every calendar month for one hour, and for two hours from November 2025.

- 3.2 The secretariat function will be provided by Housing Services' Governance and Improvement Team. Minutes will be taken, and an action log will be maintained.
- 3.3 The Service Director of Housing, in consultation with the Chair, will be responsible for agreeing agendas, meeting papers, minutes and the forward plan.
- 3.3 Meeting papers will be circulated at least five working days before the meetings.
- 3.4 Meetings will take place in person with an option of joining via Teams (hybrid).

APPENDIX 3**CHANGES TO REPORTING TENANT SCRUTINY PANEL FINDINGS****Revised arrangements for tenant scrutiny reports**

The Improving Places Select Commission receives reports on Tenant Scrutiny Panel (TSP) investigations and provides challenge and feedback on the Council's response to recommendations arising from those investigations.

In 2025, the Tenant Engagement Team (TET), within the Housing Improvement and Governance Team, undertook a review of the Council's arrangements for responding to recommendations made by the Tenant Scrutiny Panel. The review identified opportunities to strengthen the consistency, transparency and timeliness of the process.

With approval from the Housing Senior Management Team, the TET discussed proposed changes to the reporting arrangements with the Corporate Governance Team. The aim was to ensure that the Improving Places Select Commission (IPSC) receives scrutiny reports at a more consistent and appropriate stage in the process, enabling members' comments and feedback to be considered and acted upon effectively.

Historically, reports arising from tenant scrutiny investigations have been presented to IPSC on an ad hoc basis. This has not always allowed the opportunity to programme reports into committee agendas in a timely manner. It has also resulted in the IPSC being asked to provide scrutiny at different stages of the Council's response process, leading to inconsistency in approach.

The TSP now aims to complete two investigations each year and has agreed a timetable for the submission of its reports. This enables reports to be scheduled into the IPSC agenda programme well in advance.

In addition, the TET has reviewed the timescales within which Housing Services is expected to respond to scrutiny investigation recommendations. Housing Services is now expected to produce a response action plan within two months of receiving a scrutiny report and implement the agreed actions within twelve months.

Previously, these timescales were open-ended. Introducing clear timescale parameters provides greater certainty for the TSP regarding how and when recommendations will be addressed. It also enables the IPSC to receive progress reports at an appropriate point to assess whether recommendations have been implemented effectively and within a reasonable timeframe. The table below offers an overview of the timescales.

Scrutiny Investigation Reports Received	Response Action Plan Completed and Shared	Response Actions to be Completed by	IPSC Receive Report
October	December	The following December	The next available IPSC meeting from January onwards

Scrutiny Investigation Reports Received	Response Action Plan Completed and Shared	Response Actions to be Completed by	IPSC Receive Report
April	June	The following June	The next available IPSC meeting from July onwards

The proposed arrangements were discussed in March 2026 with the Head of Democratic Services, the Monitoring Officer, and the Chair of IPSC, all of whom supported the revised approach.

Under the revised arrangements, IPSC will receive two tenant scrutiny reports each year. These reports will be presented following the completion of the Council's response and implementation period and will focus on the outcomes achieved, enabling IPSC members to provide informed scrutiny, challenge and feedback on the effectiveness of the actions taken.

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Housing Improvement and Governance (HIG)

September 2026

Louise Robson – Head of Housing Improvement and Governance



Background - Housing Regulation

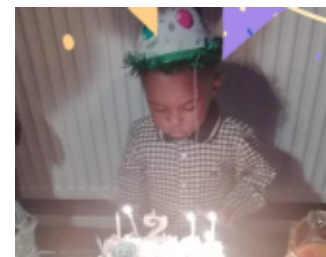


Regulator of
Social Housing

Housing
Ombudsman Service

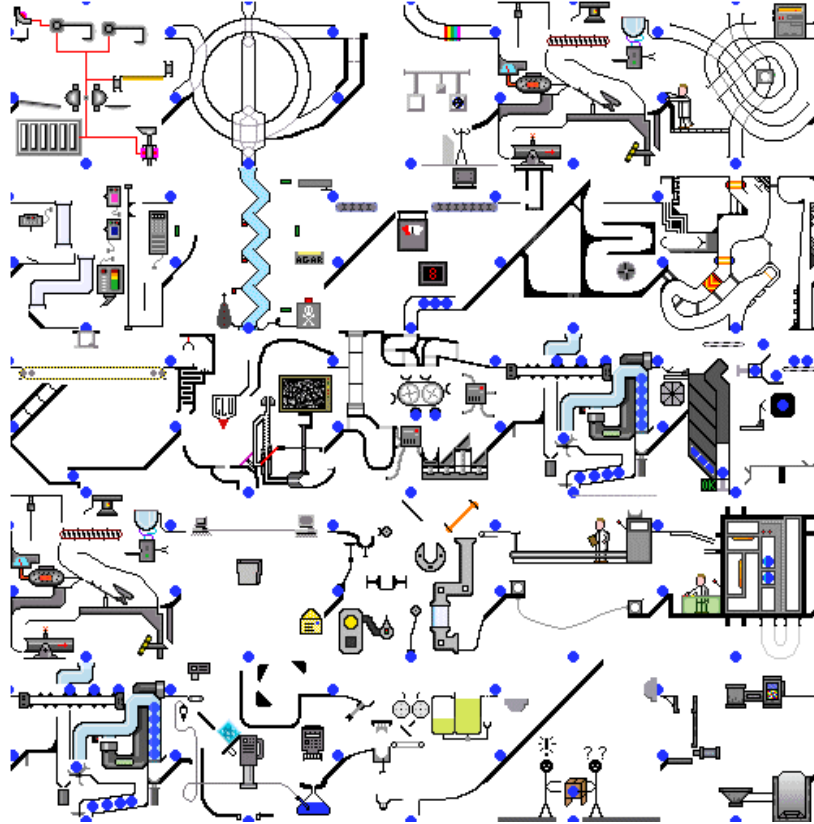


- Regulated service by the Regulator of Social Housing - post Grenfell
 - Housing Regulation Act 2023
 - Inspection within the next 18 months
 - <https://youtu.be/cQLz3JnC2dA>
 - 5 Consumer standards:
 - Safety and Quality
 - Transparency, Influence and Accountability
 - Neighbourhood and Community
 - Tenancy
 - Competence and Conduct from Oct 2026
 - Gradings - C1, C2, C3, C4
 - Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM's)
- Housing Ombudsman - Complaints
- Awaab's Law – *'How, in the UK in 2020, does a two-year old child die from exposure to mould in his home?'*

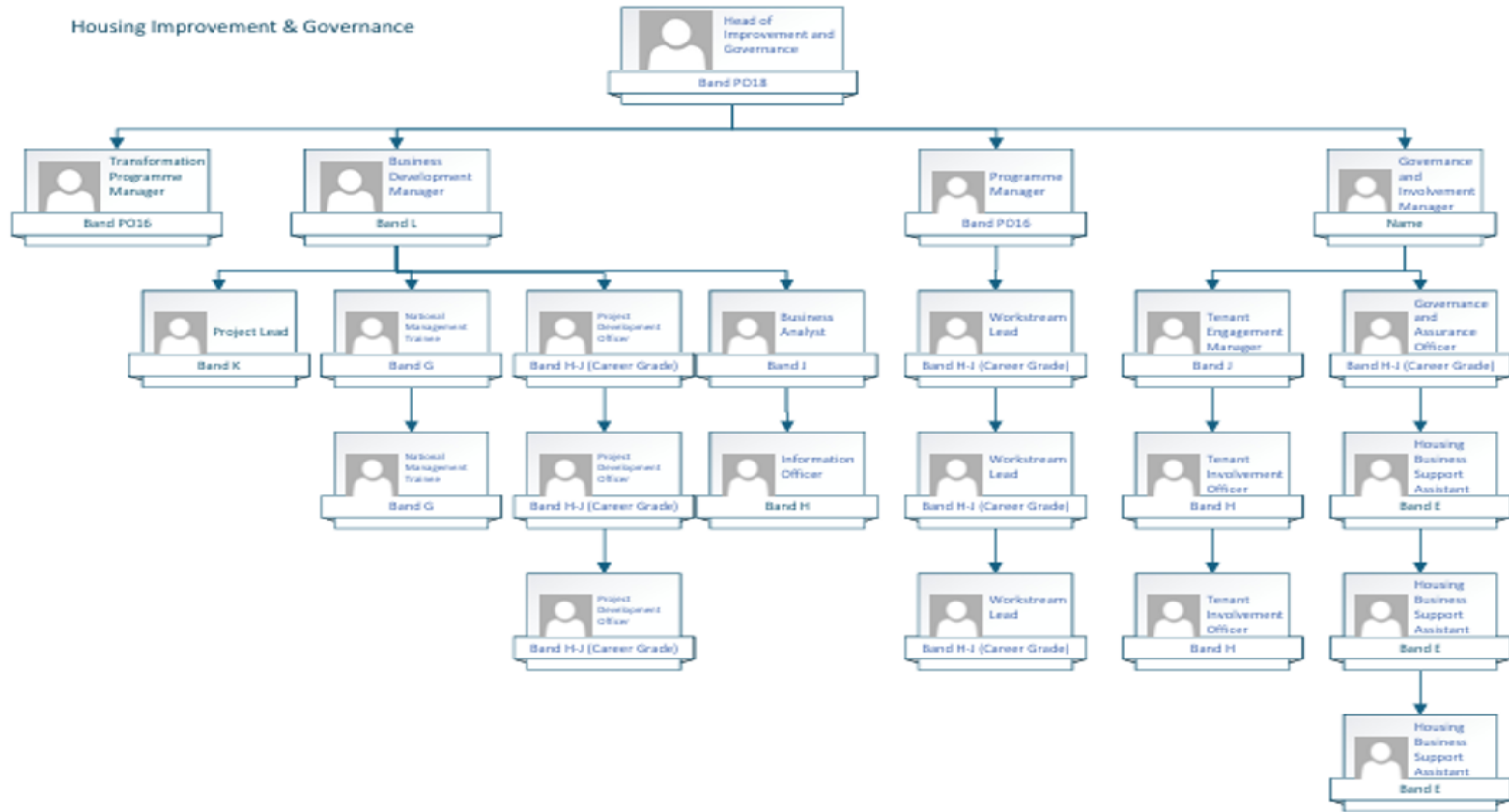


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Introduction – Core functions of HIG



Team structure



Governance



Compliance with Consumer standards and Link with the Regulator of Social Housing



Assurance to Senior Staff and Cabinet Member



Housing Inspection readiness



General governance and risk management

Business Development



Service Planning



Policy and strategy development



Tenant Satisfaction Measures



Cross-service improvement projects



Programme Management



New System Implementation



NEC System Development

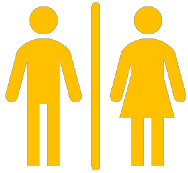


Housing Online development

Housing Transformation



Organisational re-design



Role Redefinition and Workforce Alignment

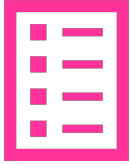


Consultation and Engagement



Location

Tenant Engagement



Tenant Engagement Framework



Range of involvement opportunities



Tenant Scrutiny



Tpas Accreditation



Questions

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Public Report
Improving Places Select Commission

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Improving Places Select Commission – 01 September 2026

Report Title

Improving Places Select Commission Scrutiny Review – School Road Safety

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

Jane Maxwell, Director of Policy Strategy and Engagement

Report Author(s)

Kristianne Thorogood, Governance Advisor
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Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

This report summarises the findings and recommendations of the Improving Places Select Commission scrutiny review in respect of school road safety across the borough of Rotherham.

List of Appendices Included

None

Background Papers

Council Meeting 29 November 2023 - [Notice of Motion School Road Safety and Street Motion \(Minute 64\)](#)

Council Meeting 14 January 2026 – [Petition relating to a pedestrian crossing in Brampton Bierlow](#)

Council Meeting 22 April 2026 – [Petition Improved Road Safety and School Crossing - Thorpe Hesley Primary School](#)

[Department for Transport – Road Safety Strategy](#)

[Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy \(CWIS3\)](#)

[South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority – Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy](#)

Press Release (June 2026) - [£4.5 billion central government Active Travel investment Guidance Note on Setting up a School Streets Scheme](#)

BBC News Article June 2026 - [Ministers want 60% of children walking or cycling to school by 2035](#)

Rotherham Advertiser article – [Thorpe Hesley petition](#)

Sheffield Star article – [Deepcar St John's School to start "ticketing" inconsiderate drivers](#)

Recommendations

That the Improving Places Select Commission:

- 1) Note the contents of the report; and
- 2) Agree that the following recommendations be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board for onward endorsement to Cabinet:

a) Improved Cross-Directorate Working

- i) Develop a cross-directorate map of roles and responsibilities (e.g. highways, school engagement, enforcement, crossing patrol) to establish and embed stronger partnership working across Council services, including improvements to internal reporting and decision-making systems and processes aligned across directorates.
- ii) Consider the feasibility of establishing a cross-directorate working group (that meets regularly, with clear terms of reference and a governance structure) to oversee school road safety in Rotherham. The aim of this working group would be to drive and coordinate delivery and provide increased accountability and visibility.
- iii) Any established school road safety working group should be launched as the front-facing, main point of contact for collaboration with residents, schools, Councillors, and partners related to school road safety, to ensure the Council's commitment to school road safety is both visible and accessible. Consider the creation of a dedicated section of the Council website on school road safety to support this.
- iv) Work together with ward Councillors to progress the development of ward-specific road safety plans, each to contain a section on road safety issues around local schools. These plans would inform each ward's CAP development plans.
- v) In the spirit of the new Neighbourhood Leadership Strategy, council services should endeavour to keep Councillors regularly informed on any new plans relating to transport and school road safety and/or works due to be carried out within their wards at the earliest possible opportunity.

b) Data, Monitoring and Strategic Alignment

- i) Take steps to improve baseline data collection around schools (e.g traffic, parking, reported incidents, travel behaviours). Establishment of centralised, cross-directorate incident reporting and escalation processes would help to identify areas of concern and need, which in turn, would inform the prioritisation of potential projects and pilot school locations.
- ii) Develop a coordinated, borough-wide School Road Safety Strategy, to be aligned with SYMCA's regional action plans and travel strategies – such as the new South Yorkshire Transport Strategy and the Walking, Wheeling & Cycling Strategy.
- iii) Explore what regional support may be available via the Safer Roads Partnership and the Active Lives & Safer Roads teams at SYMCA, for example, access to shared data mapping tools/systems and funding opportunities.
- iv) Consider the coordination of projects with neighbouring local authorities via SYMCA, which would provide opportunities for enhanced economies of scale.

c) Funding Development

- i) Establish a defined and protected allocation for school road safety projects within wider capital transport funding to ensure longer-term funding streams that can support the shift to a more proactive and co-ordinated approach.
- ii) Use the recommended enhanced data collection models to strengthen the evidence base to support future funding bids. Develop a clear pipeline of projects to maximise use of Transport for City Regions and Integrated Settlement Active Travel funding via SYMCA to support school road safety.
- iii) Work with SYMCA to explore how Rotherham could benefit from the government's new Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy and the projected £4.5 billion of investment to be made available over the next 5 years.
- iv) Develop a balanced programme of low-cost interventions (signage, markings, speed reduction measures) and targeted higher-cost schemes, using the suggested enhanced data collection models to provide evidence to inform and justify the prioritisation of certain schools and schemes.
- v) Develop a funding stream to support opportunities for increased work with and support for schools across the borough (see d) School Engagement & Active Travel below).
- vi) Strengthen existing work with the Planning team to ensure early identification of any potential section 106 developer funding for specific road safety improvements/schemes.

d) School Engagement & Active Travel

- i) Urgently undertake a borough-wide survey of all schools to better understand their concerns and needs regarding school road safety.
- ii) Using the results of the survey and enhanced data mapping models (alongside existing knowledge and data), identify a priority list of schools in the borough for targeted intervention (e.g. top 10/20/30).
- iii) Give consideration to the provision of additional dedicated School Engagement Officers/Active Travel Officers to strengthen trust and engagement with school leaders and governors. Such officers would be able to support enhanced engagement activities, such as assemblies, parent consultation and the promotion of Active Travel initiatives. This in turn, would help to encourage overall behaviour change from both pedestrians, drivers, and other road users around schools.
- iv) Consider the creation of a borough-wide “Junior Road Safety Officer Programme” to allow schools and their pupils to lead on initiatives appropriate to their school settings. This would engage and benefit pupils in taking ownership of schemes to support their schools.
- v) Conduct a full exploration of the different Active Travel schemes that are available (e.g Mode Shift Stars) and identify which schools already have an Active Travel Plan in place. Schools need support in applying for accreditation to such schemes and in implementing them, which should form part of the role of any additional School Engagement/Active Travel Officers.
- vi) Identify any schools which may be suitable for the establishment of a School Streets pilot scheme, bearing in mind the fact that any School Streets scheme would need to be supported by proven prior active travel initiatives, and an engaged and committed senior leadership team and parent community.
- vii) Work towards coordinating any existing initiatives (e.g Bikeability) into a single, coherent offer, introducing more child-centred, “fun first” campaigns. Invite external experts and teams from SYMCA and neighbouring local authorities to share best practice and success stories.

e) Enforcement & Crossing Patrol

- i) Establish better cross-directorate data-sharing systems (as per a) above), to ensure that data collected by the Crossing Patrol and Parking Enforcement teams regarding incidents/near-misses and offences are monitored and used to inform decisions on priority sites and projects.
- ii) Consider opportunities for the pilot use of body-cameras by crossing patrollers, giving due regard to safeguarding and data protection concerns.

- iii) Conduct a detailed feasibility review into wider camera enforcement rollout of redeployable/static ANPR cameras, including a cost-benefit analysis and identification of suitable pilot locations.
- iv) Consider further investment in roaming CCTV vehicles to support compliance and enforcement for parking offences around schools. Capacity for enforcement is currently limited to one CCTV van for all 200+ schools in the borough. A lack of a regular presence leads to inconsistent and ineffective enforcement.
- v) Explore the potential for increased engagement with South Yorkshire Police, including a possible joint approach to promoting local anti-parking campaigns and joint responses at problem locations.
- vi) Monitor and review forthcoming government guidance on footway parking powers. Consider any opportunities to tie the local enforcement approach into any future RMBC Pavement Parking Policy.

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

None.

Council Approval Required

No.

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Improving Places Select Commission Scrutiny Review – School Road Safety

1. Background

1.1 In November 2023, a Motion was brought to Full Council by Councillor Tinsley (Chair of the Review Group) asking the Council to take a number of steps to improve school road safety across the borough. In an agreed amendment to this Motion, Improving Places Select Commission (IPSC) were asked to consider making recommendations in relation to the following suggested steps:

- 1) Enhance and improve the process and reporting of near miss incidents for Crossing Patrol Operatives. Provide body worn cameras to aid documenting and prosecuting non-compliance of stop signs.
- 2) Explore technologies that can aid in enforcing School Crossings (Zig Zag Lines) Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs). Analyse and put into action appropriate parking and road markings around school entrances to guarantee an unobstructed, safe view for pedestrians crossing.
- 3) Commit to work with schools and Ward Councillors within our Authority that would benefit from a school street and compile a list of schools where school street trials could be launched as soon as practically possible, once the Council has the relevant powers to enforce them, fast tracking where experimental Traffic Orders could be used.
- 4) Continue to work with all schools in the Rotherham Borough to develop accredited Travel Plans, which will include enforceable No Idling Zones and “school streets” schemes. Providing a Members’ session to inform Members of the support available to Schools.

1.2 After the Motion had been carried, a Review Group of IPSC Members was established, and a number of scoping meetings took place to agree the key lines of enquiry that the Review should consider. Some delays were experienced in getting the Review going due to personnel changes and the local elections in 2024, but in early 2025 the scope of the Review was agreed and a series of meetings and information gathering sessions began in October 2025, concluding in July 2026.

1.3 The issue of school road safety arguably encompasses a broad range of Council directorates and services. Members acknowledged that there were a number of wider issues that contribute to the pressures experienced with regard to school road safety, such as home to school transport, the issues of school placement and catchment areas and public health considerations relating to active travel. However, in order to keep this Review focused, it was agreed that these issues would fall outside of the scope of this Review.

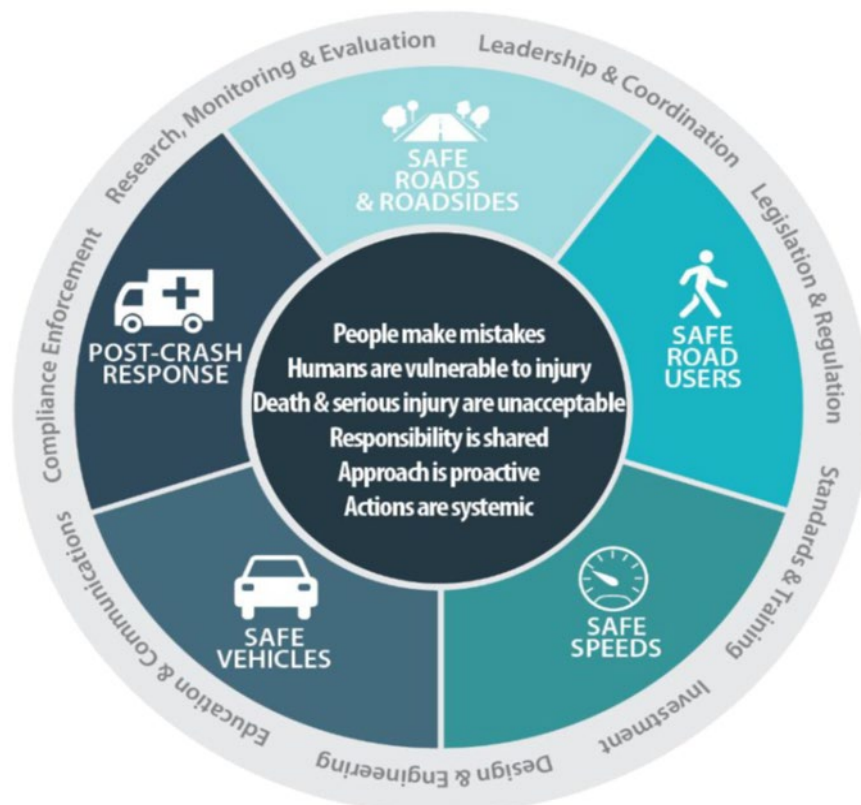
1.4 The issue of school road safety is currently both a national and regional priority. On 7 January 2026, the Government published the first National Road Safety Strategy in over a decade, which has set the ambitious targets of:

- aiming to cut road deaths and serious injuries by 65% by 2035; and

- a 70% reduction target in deaths and serious injuries for children under 16.

In June 2026, the government announced investment of £4.5 billion in active travel initiatives via Active Travel England.

- 1.5 From a regional perspective, to reflect this ambition, the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) has committed to work towards a reduction of 20% in both targets by 2029. SYMCA is currently working on a new South Yorkshire Transport Strategy. This will support the “Vision Zero” strategy, which was launched in 2023 by the South Yorkshire Safer Roads Partnership (SYSRP), with the aim to end all death and serious injury on South Yorkshire roads by 2050. The SYSRP promotes the “Safe System method” - a multi-agency, holistic approach that acknowledges that human error is inevitable and seeks to minimise the consequences through safer roads, safer speeds, safer vehicles, safer behaviours and effective post-collision responses.
- 1.6 The five pillars and eight enablers of the Safe System method (as depicted in the graphic below) are underpinned by targets and Safety Performance Indicators to create a framework for government leadership and local flexibility which prioritises safer travel.



- 1.7 SYMCA’s Walking Wheeling and Cycling Strategy has already been launched with the aim to “*Make South Yorkshire the best place to walk, wheel and cycle*”. In launching the strategy, Mayor Coppard stated that “*young people in South Yorkshire deserve the best start in life, to feel safe*”

and confident to move more. And parents deserve the peace of mind that their child can do that safely."

- 1.8 Road casualty statistics are released every September by the Department for Transport and data therefore lags by a year. The current data available for 2024 for Rotherham is as follows:

2024 data	Rotherham numbers
Fatal	6
Serious Injury	149
Total killed or seriously injured (KSI)	155

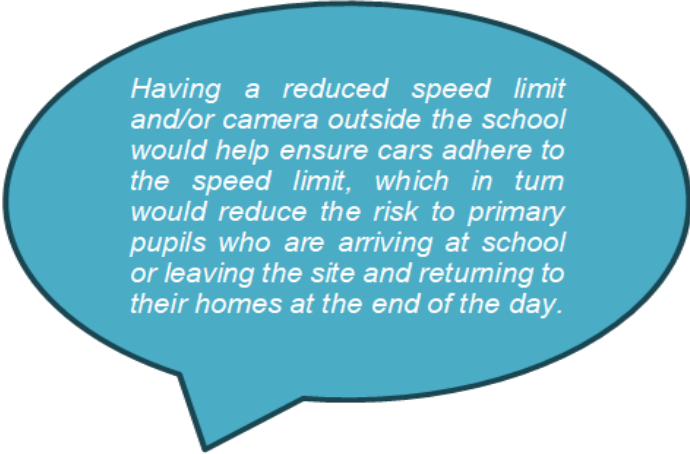
- 1.9 In 2026, there have been two petitions presented to Full Council in Rotherham in relation to school road safety around local schools at Thorpe Hesley and Brampton Bierlow. There have also been a number of recent local news stories involving parent and school communities campaigning for better road safety around their schools or taking matters into their own hands. This demonstrates a growing frustration with the current situation and perceived lack of focused improvement.

- 1.10 From the limited engagement the Review Group has undertaken with local schools as part of this Review, the following issues have been frequently reported:

- parents parking dangerously around and outside school;
- parents pulling up to school late and letting their children out of the car door to cross the road in a dangerous fashion; and
- risk of children getting injured by vehicles when they arrive and leave school.

We would welcome more investment in road safety provision, especially during start and end times for pupils."

We often have complaints from local residents that parents block their driveways in an unsafe manner.



Having a reduced speed limit and/or camera outside the school would help ensure cars adhere to the speed limit, which in turn would reduce the risk to primary pupils who are arriving at school or leaving the site and returning to their homes at the end of the day.

- 1.11 The current national and regional focus on issues around school road safety demonstrates that this Review marks a timely examination of issues within Rotherham and represents an opportunity for the Council to capitalise on potential new funding streams and strategies to support local interventions and improvements.

2. Key Issues

2.1 Alignment with the Council Plan

The Review is aligned with the following priorities under the Council Plan (2025-2030), as set out below.

2.1.1 Places are Thriving, Safe and Clean

The Council Plan states a commitment to *“building a borough where every neighbourhood thrives, green spaces are clean and accessible, and people feel safe – creating a space that residents can take pride in.”*

- 2.1.2 As part of helping people to feel safe in their communities, the Council has committed to deliver *“Safer roads schemes and initiatives which contribute to Vision Zero and help to improve road safety across the borough.”*

- 2.1.3 Members of the Review Group felt that the traffic and parking problems experienced around schools across the borough at school drop off and pick up times impact significantly on feelings of safety for residents, especially children. This is supported by recent petitions received by the Council requesting implementation of further road safety measures outside schools. Both pedestrians and road users are impacted, along with school staff and those who work to support road safety (such as Crossing Patrollers). The persistent congestion around schools and surrounding areas at key times also contributes to a growing sense of frustration with existing road networks and leads to a deterioration in feelings of pride residents may have for the area they live and go to school in.

2.1.4 **Children and Young People Achieve:**

The Council Plan states that *“We want Rotherham to be a great place to grow up; where all children and young people are safe, valued, and are able to achieve their aspirations”*.

2.1.5 One of the key ways in which children are able to achieve their aspirations is by consistent attendance at a local school that meets their needs. Providing support to facilitate an enjoyable, stress-free and healthy journey to their school setting will help children to make the most of their education and get the best start in life through adopting an active lifestyle.

2.1.6 The Council is committed to *“building a safer Rotherham where every child feels safe, secure and supported”* and developing improved road safety around schools across the borough will contribute to this aim.

2.2 **Review Methodology**

2.2.1 A working group was convened which included the following Improving Places Select Commission Members:

- Councillor Adam Tinsley (Chair)
- Councillor Cameron McKiernan
- Councillor Jamie Baggaley
- Councillor Paul Thorp
- Councillor Lynda Stables
- Councillor Dominic Beck
- Councillor Ian Jones

(together, the Review Group)

2.2.2 Evidence gathering, round-table discussions and the development of agreed recommendations was undertaken between October 2025 and July 2026. A number of Council Officers and representatives from external partners were invited to participate in both in-person and virtual meetings, with representation from:

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council (Council)

- Lucy Hudson - Head of Service, Transportation & Highways Design
- Nat Porter - Service Manager, Transport Planning & Policy
- Kevin Fisher - Service Director, Property and Facilities Services
- Qadir Karim - Facilities Resources Officer (Crossing Patrol)
- Martin Beard - Parking Services Manager
- Marc Hill - Engagement & Technical Support Manager
- Ellie Coote - Road Safety Education Officer, Training and Publicity

External Partners

- Kathryn Harrison - Senior Transport Planner, Sheffield City Council
- Mark Smith - Safer Roads Partnership Manager, SYMCA
- Nicola Marshall - Director of Active Lives and Safer Roads, SYMCA

- 2.2.3 The Review Group would like to put on record their thanks for the contribution of each Council Officer and external participant to the work of the Review Group, which provided valuable context and insight.

2.3 Discussion themes and key insights

- 2.3.1 Discussions at the meetings centred around the following themes:

2.4 Cross-Directorate Working

- 2.4.1 The first meeting of the Review involved Officers from Transportation & Highways and Property & Facilities Services, who manage the school Crossing Patrol service. This highlighted to Members that work undertaken to oversee school road safety cuts across a number of different Council directorates and services. Wider responsibility for school road safety is also spread across other external partners and organisations, such as the schools themselves and South Yorkshire Police (SY Police). It was acknowledged by Officers that current systems and processes would benefit from a review to ensure effective and timely incident reporting and data sharing. It was further acknowledged that clarity regarding enforcement responsibilities for certain parking and traffic offences could be improved.

- 2.4.2 It was highlighted to Members that road safety challenges outside schools are widespread and not confined to a small number of locations. Common issues reported include:

- Illegal and inappropriate parking;
- Traffic congestion during school arrival and departure times;
- Unsafe crossing conditions; and
- Near-miss incidents involving children and families.

- 2.4.3 Members noted that many concerns relate to perceived and actual risk rather than recorded collisions, meaning that existing accident data does not accurately reflect the scale of the problem.

- 2.4.4 Members and Officers discussed a range of behavioural and systemic factors that can contribute to road safety issues around schools, including:

- Increased reliance on private vehicles for school journeys rather than pedestrian use;
- School admissions patterns potentially creating longer travel distances for families out of catchment areas;
- Road and school site layouts that are not designed to accommodate current traffic volumes; and
- Parental convenience and the time pressures on busy working parents influencing travel choices.

- 2.4.5 A significant challenge identified by Officers was the absence of a comprehensive and consistent dataset to determine which schools within

the borough are at greatest risk and should therefore have highest priority in terms of any interventions.

- 2.4.6 It was reported that current evidence sources, such as collision records and complaints data were fragmented and incomplete. While a borough-wide traffic survey covering approximately 140 schools was underway, it would primarily provide quantitative traffic information rather than capturing qualitative concerns such as near misses or unsafe behaviours.
- 2.4.7 Members were informed that there were limited funding streams available for specific initiatives, and Officers advised that substantial investment would be required to deliver borough-wide improvements through infrastructure changes, enforcement measures and behavioural initiatives.
- 2.4.8 Improved co-ordination and information sharing between Council directorates and external partners (such as SY Police) were identified as key requirements for future progress, alongside improved data collection and near-miss reporting systems. Members and Officers discussed the benefits of developing a cross-directorate map of roles and responsibilities in respect of school road safety.
- 2.4.9 Members shared anecdotal evidence of the common issues and complaints experienced by schools and families/road users within their wards. The need to conduct a thorough survey of all schools within the borough was discussed but as this would be a significant undertaking, with over 120 schools within the borough, it was agreed that for the purposes of this Review, limited engagement with schools would be preferable so as not to create unrealistic expectations.
- 2.4.10 In summary, this initial meeting highlighted that school road safety issues are widespread, complex and influenced by a combination of behavioural, environmental and organisational factors, as set out in paragraphs 2.4.1 to 2.4.9 above. While current evidence and resources are limited, the Review represented a clear opportunity to improve understanding of the issues, strengthen partnership working and identify targeted interventions that could enhance safety for children, families and school communities across the borough.

2.5 **School Support & Active Travel Engagement**

- 2.5.1 Members met with Officers from Highways & Transportation who work in school engagement and provide schools with support with Active Travel initiatives. There is currently the equivalent of one full-time equivalent Officer in this role. These Officers are the most familiar with the common issues experienced outside and around schools within the borough and provide the main point of contact and relationship with schools and school leaders. A discussion was held regarding road safety concerns around schools, with a particular focus on parking issues.
- 2.5.2 It was reported to Members that the principal road safety concern around schools relates to parking behaviour, including:

- Parking on school keep-clear markings and zigzag areas;
- Obstruction of junctions, driveways, and footways;
- Unsafe drop-off and pick-up practices; and
- Increased congestion during school arrival and departure times.

- 2.5.3 Members heard that unsafe and inconsiderate parking can present a greater risk than speeding in many school environments. These issues have existed for many years and have become more pronounced over time due to increased vehicle usage, both in general terms and for the school commute. Parking issues outside schools can have a significant impact on local communities and can lead to conflict between residents and parents.
- 2.5.4 The enforcement resources required to effectively manage parking issues, are currently too limited to provide a regular presence across schools. It was reported that enforcement of parking issues is most effective when a joint approach is undertaken by the Council and SY Police, but both are insufficiently resourced. Remote, camera-based enforcement can be effective but is costly to implement and can sometimes have the effect of relocating parking problems to nearby areas.
- 2.5.5 Members and Officers discussed the current traffic management measures and interventions that are used around schools, including:
- “School Keep-Clear” zig-zag markings;
 - Yellow line restrictions; and
 - Advisory 20 mph zones.
- 2.5.6 However, it was commented that physical measures alone have proven insufficient without effective enforcement to support them.
- 2.5.7 Current and potential Active Travel measures and schemes were discussed, including:
- Walking buses;
 - Improved cycling infrastructure; and
 - Improved parking facilities for bikes at schools.
- 2.5.8 Officers expressed the opinion that whilst such initiatives had achieved varying levels of success, there is a need for stronger engagement with parents, whose travel choices largely determine transport pressures around schools.
- 2.5.9 The potential benefits of the “School Street” schemes which had been piloted in other local areas (such as Sheffield), whereby temporary road closures are put in place at key times around schools, were discussed. These schemes could deliver the combined aims of reduced vehicle activity around schools during school peak periods, improved pedestrian safety and encouragement of active travel. However, it was noted that the potential displacement of traffic and parking problems to surrounding roads remained a concern and something to monitor with existing schemes.

- 2.5.10 The importance of school and community engagement was highlighted, along with work that could be done to support schools to develop consistent messaging for parents and local residents regarding safe and considerate travel behaviour. It was noted that encouraging schools to take a more active role in addressing issues beyond school boundaries would be challenging without a better offer of support from the Council and SY Police alongside them.
- 2.5.11 Discussions at this meeting concluded that no single intervention would be able to resolve school-related parking and road safety problems. A long-term sustainable solution would require a more coordinated, multi-agency approach to enforcement, coupled with enhanced education, behaviour change initiatives and improved support for community engagement around schools.

2.6 **Consideration of the School Streets Scheme**

- 2.6.1 At the next meeting of the Review Group, Members were joined by an Officer from Sheffield City Council who had been involved in the implementation of School Streets schemes within Sheffield. The objective of this meeting was to identify lessons and opportunities to inform a potential School Streets approach within Rotherham.
- 2.6.2 Members were told that Sheffield had adopted a phased, school-led approach to School Streets implementation. The programme commenced in 2021 with four pilot schemes and had since expanded to include 12 permanent schemes and seven trial schemes. The pilot schemes were partially funded by income generated from the introduction of charges for certain vehicles within designated Clean Air Zones.
- 2.6.3 A key principle of Sheffield's approach had been that the schemes were initiated and "owned" by schools rather than imposed by the local authority. This "buy in" to the scheme by the school and its leadership was seen to be key to the success. The importance of early consultation with schools and surrounding communities in relation to any pilot scheme was also stressed, in order to identify any potential pitfalls or opposition.
- 2.6.4 It was explained to Members that in Sheffield, for a school to be considered a School Streets scheme, it must be able to demonstrate existing commitment to sustainable travel initiatives, such as working towards Mode Shift Stars accreditation, along with strong existing engagement with pupils, parents and staff on Active Travel initiatives. Schools would then be evaluated against a range of evidence-based criteria, such as local air quality concerns, collision and accident history and traffic volumes and road layout.
- 2.6.5 Most School Streets schemes are initially introduced through Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders (ETROs), allowing a trial period of between six and eighteen months. This provides flexibility to make adjustments and gather evidence before deciding whether to make a scheme permanent.

- 2.6.6 School Streets are typically delivered using temporary and low-cost infrastructure, such as planters, barrier tape and signage. They are also highly dependent on ongoing operational support from committed school staff or volunteer marshals to patrol the road closures at the relevant times. Typical indicative costs for the implementation of a trial scheme were reported to be between £3,000-£5,000, depending on the complexity of the site and surrounding road network.



- 2.6.7 The Sheffield Officer reported a range of potential positive outcomes from School Streets schemes, such as

Road Safety and Environmental Benefits

- Significant reductions in vehicle traffic around school entrances.
- Improved safety for children and families.
- Improved local air quality.

Behaviour Change

- Noted increases in walking and cycling.
- Greater uptake of active travel modes.

Wider Community Benefits

- Calmer and more welcoming environments around schools at key times.
- Improved relationships between school staff and parents.
- Increased community involvement and engagement, due to a sense of “ownership” of the scheme.

- 2.6.8 Potential operational risks and challenges were highlighted to Members. For example, successful operation is heavily reliant on sustained school

commitment, which could be significantly impacted by a change in school leadership and/or staff and volunteer availability.

Additionally, whilst traffic levels should be reduced around the immediate school area, vehicle movements can often be displaced to neighbouring streets, which has the potential to create new resident concerns that may require additional mitigation measures.

- 2.6.9 Members learnt from this informative session that Sheffield's experience demonstrates that School Streets can deliver measurable improvements in road safety, air quality and active travel behaviour. However, successful implementation depends on strong school leadership, sustained stakeholder engagement, effective monitoring and a flexible trial-based approach. For Rotherham, it would be necessary to first establish stronger foundations of school engagement, travel planning and evidence gathering before pursuing any pilot School Streets schemes.

2.7 **The Operation of Crossing Patrol across Rotherham**

- 2.7.1 The operation of Crossing Patrols at schools across Rotherham had been touched upon in previous meetings and Members had commented on the issues facing the service, such as recruitment and retention difficulties, an ageing workforce and safety concerns arising from poor driver behaviour at crossings.
- 2.7.2 A meeting with the Facilities Resources Officer, who manages Crossing Patrol in Rotherham, allowed Members to focus on the current position of the School Crossing Patrol Service, workforce recruitment and retention, operational improvements, key safety concerns, and future opportunities to enhance road safety around schools.
- 2.7.3 Members were informed that the School Crossing Patrol Service currently operates across 63 crossing sites throughout the borough, with approximately eight sites funded through Service Level Agreements where locations do not meet the standard eligibility criteria.
- 2.7.4 Eligibility for crossing patrol provision is assessed using the PV^2 formula, a calculation which considers both pedestrian and vehicle volumes to measure risk ($P \times V^2$ - *Pedestrians multiplied by vehicles squared*). A borough-wide survey of Crossing Patrol sites is currently underway, with some possible additional sites being reviewed.
- 2.7.5 Members were informed that the service had made notable progress in addressing workforce shortages in recent months, with the number of vacancies reduced and operational support strengthened.
- 2.7.6 The following improvements to recruitment processes were highlighted:
- Allowing offline application methods to improve accessibility;
 - Enhanced advertising and promotional activity for the Crossing Patrol Service, including posters and attendance at job fairs; and

- Efforts to broaden the workforce profile, resulting in an increase in younger applicants entering the service.
- 2.7.7 However, despite these improvements, it was noted that recruitment and retention continue to be challenging due to the nature of the Crossing Patrol role, with split-shift working arrangements, limited contracted hours and concerns relating to road safety risks and day-to-day working conditions.
- 2.7.8 Members were informed that persistent driver non-compliance with parking restrictions and poor driver behaviour continues to affect feelings of safety around schools, for both pedestrians and the Crossing Patrollers helping them.
- 2.7.9 A number of measures had been recently introduced to strengthen service delivery and provide increased support to Crossing Patrol staff, including:
- The appointment of part-time supervisors to provide site visits, welfare support and operational oversight;
 - The introduction of a more structured induction process for new recruits;
 - Implementation of a formal incident reporting and escalation procedure; and
 - Improved partnership working with SY Police and the Parking Enforcement and Transportation & Highways teams at the Council.
- 2.7.10 The potential introduction of body-worn cameras for Crossing Patrol staff was discussed in detail. The potential benefits identified of such equipment included improved evidence gathering, greater protection for Crossing Patrol staff experiencing challenging behaviours and enhanced reporting of safety incidents. There was, however, uncertainty over whether footage obtained from body-worn cameras could be used for enforcement purposes.
- 2.7.11 Members were informed that consideration had previously been given to the implementation of body-worn cameras but this had not been progressed due to concerns relating to safeguarding and data protection. However, Members were aware of examples where other local authorities had introduced body-worn cameras, and a desktop-based research and benchmarking exercise confirmed that workable models with regard to safeguarding and data protection were available.
- 2.7.12 Enquiries of Officers at City of Doncaster Council revealed that whilst they had been looking to introduce body-worn cameras, this was currently on hold due to financial constraints.
- 2.7.13 Members were reassured that the School Crossing Patrol Service had made measurable progress in workforce recruitment and operational improvements in recent months. However, it was clear that significant challenges remain, particularly around driver behaviour, illegal parking, infrastructure constraints and funding availability. Members were keen that the Council undertake further exploration of the possible implementation of body-worn cameras and undertake assessment of the associated costs and potential funding options.

2.8 **Parking Issues and Enforcement**

- 2.8.1 In the next meeting of the Review Group, Members met with the Parking Services Manager, who provided a summary of how parking enforcement activity around schools is delivered in Rotherham.
- 2.8.2 Members were informed that parking enforcement outside schools is primarily undertaken via one mobile CCTV vehicle, which monitors vehicles stopping on school entrance “Keep Clear” zigzag markings. Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) are issued by post following evidence captured by the vehicle.
- 2.8.3 The borough contains more than 200 school access locations, making comprehensive coverage with limited resource challenging. Enforcement activity using a single mobile CCTV vehicle is therefore undertaken on a cyclical basis and targeted towards locations where complaints or concerns have been identified.
- 2.8.4 The service is supported by approximately nine Enforcement Officers and supervisory staff, with additional support provided periodically through contracted Environmental Enforcement Officers.
- 2.8.5 Since the introduction of CCTV-based enforcement in 2013, it was reported that compliance levels around schools had improved considerably. Current enforcement data demonstrated a decrease in the number of PCNs being issued. It was commented that this could reflect improved driver compliance but also acknowledged that limited enforcement coverage may also influence these decreasing figures.

Year	Number of PCNs issued for parking contravention outside schools
2015	223
2016	302
2017	259
2018	300
2019	267
2020	61 *pandemic
2021	156
2022	108
2023	132
2024	107
2025	96

- 2.8.6 A number of key challenges to parking enforcement outside schools were highlighted to Members, including:

Resource and Funding Constraints

- A single CCTV enforcement vehicle and limited staffing capacity currently restricts the Council’s ability to maintain a visible and

consistent enforcement presence across all school locations or to respond to emerging pressure points quickly.

Legislative Limitations

- Current legislation places restrictions on enforcement activity, such as the inability of the Council to use third-party evidence submitted by members of the public (see earlier concerns regarding footage from any body-cameras worn by Crossing Patrol operatives).
- For the Council to be able to take enforcement action, the evidence used must have been gathered either by Council Officers or by the Council's certified CCTV equipment.
- Use of PCN income is subject to statutory restrictions. Revenue must first cover the costs of operating the enforcement service, with any surplus required to be reinvested in Transport and Highways-related activities.

Pavement Parking

- Inappropriate parking on pavements and footways around schools is a frequent concern around schools. However, outside of London, local authorities currently have limited powers to enforce against this behaviour. The government is currently considering introducing legislation which would increase powers relating to pavement parking. Members expressed the hope that any future Council policy on Pavement Parking could benefit the parking situation around schools.

- 2.8.7 Members and Officers discussed the possible use of other CCTV technology, such as static or redeployable Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras at school sites. This could improve compliance and expand enforcement capacity. However, it was noted that estimated costs were prohibitive at approximately £20,000 per camera, in addition to installation and licensing costs. It was suggested that cameras could be rotated between key locations to maximise effectiveness.
- 2.8.8 Members were keen that the service explore further the feasibility of deploying static or redeployable ANPR cameras to increase enforcement opportunities, with discussions around identifying pilot locations and potentially utilising ward budgets to support delivery.
- 2.8.9 The Parking Services Manager confirmed that body-worn cameras are already in use by Enforcement Officers and that their use was reported to have benefits for both evidential purposes and for staff safety.
- 2.8.10 Members were informed that some partnership working already takes place with SY Police on enforcement, although responsibilities and powers remain distinct. The meeting explored opportunities for greater collaboration with SY Police, including advisory letters and joint communications initiatives at problem locations.
- 2.8.11 The information presented to Members suggests that parking enforcement activity has contributed positively to improving compliance and road safety

around schools, particularly through the use of CCTV enforcement. However, the effectiveness and reach of the service is constrained by limited resources, legislative restrictions, and the scale of the borough's school estate. As with the other areas considered above, it is clear that increased investment in infrastructure and collaborative multi-agency working will be key to ongoing progress in this area.

2.9 **Engagement with SYMCA**

- 2.9.1 In the final meeting of the Review Group, Members met with representatives from SYMCA to discuss regional strategic priorities and opportunities for improving road safety around schools in South Yorkshire. SYMCA advocated a move towards a more strategic, data-led and collaborative approach to road safety, underpinned by the Safe System approach (see 1.6 above) and supported by strategic Action Plans in each constituent local authority.
- 2.9.2 SYMCA shared regional data on KSIs in South Yorkshire and highlighted significant concerns regarding child casualty rates. South Yorkshire experiences high levels of child casualties, particularly involving pedestrians, with outcomes currently worse than the national average. It was explained to Members that there are limitations in the availability and timeliness of official road safety data. This can restrict the ability of local authorities to identify and respond quickly to emerging risks and trends.
- 2.9.3 SYMCA's strategic approach to road safety is intended to align with the developing National Road Safety Strategy to support reductions in deaths and serious injuries, including those involving children. SYMCA is also developing a regional strategic action plan aimed at creating greater consistency across South Yorkshire authorities and addressing historical variations in local approaches.
- 2.9.4 SYMCA advocated for the move to a more holistic approach going forward, combining infrastructure improvements, behavioural change, Active Travel initiatives and enforcement measures. This would help the region to break the cycle of increasing school-related car use, whereby concerns about road safety lead to more children being driven to school, which in turn, increases congestion and creates further safety risks.
- 2.9.5 SYMCA identified that delivery of school road safety initiatives across the region had previously been fragmented, with no consistent process for prioritising schools for intervention. The discussion emphasised the importance of moving away from isolated, one-off schemes towards more coordinated programmes supported by evidence and data. Use of mapping tools, travel route analysis and collision data was identified as essential for prioritising investment and intervention. Members were informed that SYMCA may be able to support Rotherham in accessing such tools by utilising economies of scale through SYMCA-led procurement processes.
- 2.9.6 Two principal funding streams available to Rotherham via SYMCA were discussed:

- Transport for City Regions (TCR) – this would primarily support larger-scale infrastructure schemes.
- Active Travel Funding – this would be intended to support smaller, place-based interventions, particularly in and around schools.

2.9.7 Discussions took place between Members and SYMCA Officers around the challenges currently faced in respect of the delivery of school road safety initiatives in Rotherham, including limited dedicated resources and funding pipelines. It was reflected that there is also the ongoing need to balance investment in major transport and infrastructure projects with smaller-scale local road safety improvements.

2.9.8 SYMCA stressed the potential benefits of Rotherham considering a systemic, cultural shift towards integrated working and a more collaborative programme of delivery across Council services and with regional partners. This strengthened coordination, coupled with improved data utilisation could help the Council to better prioritise road safety schemes and develop more robust business cases to maximise funding opportunities.

2.9.9 This very informative meeting provided a useful overview of regional priorities for Members and highlighted a clear opportunity for Rotherham to strengthen its approach to school road safety through improved strategic coordination and an enhanced use of data to aid the development of a structured programme of interventions. Members found it encouraging that SYMCA's regional approach could offer a framework for greater consistency, better partnership working and improved access to resources.

2.10 **Conclusion**

2.10.1 From the information provided, and the discussions that took place as part of this Review, it was clear to Members that a number of longstanding challenges to delivery, combined with limited resource for enforcement and engagement, have had the impact of minimising the effectiveness of current interventions with regard to school road safety in Rotherham. The meetings highlighted the need for a more co-ordinated, longer-term, holistic approach to school road safety, with better coordination across Council directorates and regional partners to drive improvement.

2.10.2 To effectively address school-related parking and road safety concerns, sustained partnership working from all stakeholders will be required to develop and embed the necessary:

- infrastructure improvements;
- targeted enforcement;
- increased education and awareness;
- better community engagement;
- support for schools and school leaders; and
- wider behaviour change programmes for road users.

Ongoing and improved programmes and processes for monitoring and robust evaluation will also be required to ensure that measurable

improvements and safer environments are delivered for children and residents around schools.

- 2.10.3 Members are of the opinion that the timing of this Review and its recommendations represent an opportunity for Rotherham to capitalise on the current national and regional support and appetite for widespread improvements to school road safety and the promotion of Active Travel initiatives.

2.11 Options considered and recommended proposal

2.11.1 Option A: Do nothing. (Not recommended)

The option of not accepting any of the proposed recommendations is not recommended as this would arguably not lead to any improvement in the road safety situation around schools. Members feel that this option would not be in the best interests of Rotherham residents, especially children, and would not contribute to achieving the commitments identified in the Council Plan.

Option B: Support the recommendations outlined in this report. (Preferred Option)

Members are of the opinion that by supporting and implementing the recommendations suggested within this report, demonstrable and sustained improvements can be made in school road safety across the borough for Rotherham residents. Members acknowledge that a long-term, sustainable solution will require a coordinated, multi-agency approach across a number of directorates and services across the Council, together with external partners and agencies. However, Members feel that there is a distinct opportunity at the present time, to realise meaningful and lasting improvements by committing to the delivery of the identified recommendations. Supporting these recommendations would also contribute to achieving the Council Plan commitments referred to above.

3. Consultation on proposal

- 3.1 In its review, the working group considered evidence from Council Officers and representatives from key external partners. Those who participated are outlined in paragraph 2.2.2. Feedback from a small number of schools across the borough was requested, but only a limited response received.
- 3.2 In their role as elected representatives of Rotherham residents, Members also paid regard to the expressed views and lived experience of their constituents in conducting this Review.

4. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 4.1 The accountability for implementing recommendations arising from this report will sit with Cabinet and relevant Officers.

- 4.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules require Cabinet to consider and respond to recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny Management Board and the Select Commissions in no more than two months from the date that Cabinet receives this report.

5. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 5.1 No financial implications arise directly from this report. Cabinet's response to the Review will need to take into account any financial implications arising from implementation of the scrutiny recommendations.

6. Legal Advice and Implications

- 6.1 There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

7. Human Resources Advice and Implications

- 7.1 There are no human resources implications directly arising from this report.

8. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 8.1 Implications for Children, Young People, and Vulnerable Adults are set out in the main body of the report. As set out in 2.1.2 above, the proposed recommendations support the Council Plan objective that "*Children and Young People Achieve*".

9. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

- 9.1 Furthering equalities and human rights are scrutiny objectives. Members have paid due regard to equalities and human rights in the development of these recommendations, which are designed to support the Council Plan and improve the delivery of council services for residents.

10. Implications for CO₂ Emissions and Climate Change

- 10.1 There are no climate or emissions implications directly associated with this report. However, support and encouragement of Active Travel initiatives and reducing car use for journeys to school will contribute to the Council's Net Zero targets.

11. Implications for Partners

- 11.1 Implications for partners, such as SYMCA and SY Police, are set out in the main section of the report outlining the Commission's findings. Members have had regard to the fact that a number of the recommendations involve increased partnership and multi-agency working with outside bodies and acknowledge that there may be logistical implications associated with this. Cabinet will need to consider the implications for partners in its response to the recommendations from scrutiny.

12. Risks and Mitigation

- 12.1 Members have regard to the risks and mitigation factors associated with the services under scrutiny and have made recommendations accordingly.

13. Accountable Officer(s)

Emma Hill, Head of Democratic Services and Statutory Scrutiny Officer
Kristianne Thorogood, Governance Advisor

- 13.1 Approvals obtained on behalf of:

	Name	Date
Service Director of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phillip Horsfield	07/08/26
The Executive Director with responsibility for this report	Jane Maxwell, Director of Policy, Strategy and Engagement	21/08/26

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

Improving Places Select Commission – Work Programme 2026-27		
Chair: Cllr Cameron McKiernan	Vice-Chair: Cllr Adam Tinsley BEM	
Governance Manager: Kristianne Thorogood	Link Officer: Andrew Bramidge	
The following principles were endorsed by OSMB at its meeting of 5 July 2023 as criteria to long/short list each of the commission's respective priorities:		
Establish as a starting point:		
· What are the key issues?		
· What is the desired outcome?		
Agree principles for longlisting:		
· Can scrutiny add value or influence?		
· Is this being looked at elsewhere?		
· Is this a priority for the council or community?		
Developing a consistent shortlisting criteria, e.g.		
T: Time: is it the tight time, enough resources?		
O: Others: is this duplicating the work of another body?		
P: Performance: can scrutiny make a difference		
I: Interest: what is the interest to the public?		
C: Contribution to the corporate plan		
Meeting Date	Responsible Officer	Agenda Item
Tuesday 20 June 2026	Sarah Clyde / Garry Newton	Housing Strategy 2025-30 Progress Report Year 1 (2025-26)
	Chris Paddock / Martin Hughes	Draft Neighbourhood Leadership Strategy
	Governance Advisor	Nominate representative to the Health, Welfare and Safety Panel
	Work Programme 2026-2027	IPSC Terms of Reference
	Governance Advisor	Work Programme 2026-2027
Tuesday 1 September 2026	Louise Robson / James Smith	Introducing Housing Involvement and Governance
	Simon Moss / Martin Beasley	Review of Rotherham Investment and Development Office (RiDO) Business Centres
	Councillor Tinsley/Governance Advisor	Improving Places Select Commission Scrutiny Review – School Road Safety
	Governance Advisor	Work Programme 2026-2027
Tuesday 20 October 2026	Jane Maxwell / Martin Hughes	Draft Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy
	Chris Siddall / Rachel Stothard	Update on Playing Pitch Strategy Phase 2
	Lucy Hudson	Update on lessons learned from the LNRS (Local Neighbourhood Road Safety) programme
	Governance Advisor	Work Programme 2026-2027
Tuesday 1 December 2026	Sarah Clyde / Lynsey Stephenson	Housing Stock Condition Survey Update
	Governance Advisor	Work Programme 2026-2027
Tuesday 26 January 2027	Richard Jackson	Flooding Alleviation Update
	James Smith / Caroline Hubbard	Tenant Scrutiny Update
	Governance Advisor	Work Programme 2026-2027
Tuesday 2 March 2027		

[illegible]

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

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