

Summary Sheet

Improving Places Select Commission (IPSC) – 20th September 2018

Report Title

Thriving neighbourhoods

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

No

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Shokat Lal, Assistant Chief Executive

Report Author(s)

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Ward(s) Affected

All wards

Summary

The purpose of this report is to:

- a) Provide a summary of the first year of delivery of the new neighbourhood working model and the lessons learnt
- b) Make recommendations for future delivery of the neighbourhood working model
- c) Share the draft new Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy.

Recommendations

Members of Improving Places Select Committee are asked to:

1. Review the Annual Report 2017/18 Neighbourhood Working including recommendations for future delivery.
2. Note the Thriving Neighbourhoods: The Rotherham Neighbourhood Strategy 2018-2025.

List of Papers Included

- Annual Report 2017/2018 Neighbourhood Working
- Thriving Neighbourhoods: The Rotherham Neighbourhood Strategy 2018-2025

Background Papers

Review of Neighbourhood Working report to Cabinet/Commissioners' Decision
Making meeting – 10th April 2017

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel
Council

Council Approval Required

Yes

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Thriving neighbourhoods

1. Recommendations

1.1 Members of Improving places Select committee are asked to:

- Review the Annual Report 2017-18 Neighbourhood Working including recommendations for future delivery.
- Note the Thriving Neighbourhoods: The Rotherham Neighbourhood Strategy 2018-2025.

2. Background

2.1 The Council's corporate improvement plan, "A Fresh Start", included a key theme of 'strong, high impact partnerships'. The theme's objective was to deliver enhanced neighbourhood working and to introduce 'a new model of citizen engagement and neighbourhood working linked to a review of area assemblies'.

2.2 In order to deliver this a Member working group was established, chaired by the Cabinet Member responsible for neighbourhood working and comprising area assembly chairs/vice chairs and a Member of the opposition, supported by the chief executive and senior officers.

2.3 The working group submitted a report to Cabinet and Commissioners on 10th October 2016 and the following vision and principles were agreed:

That the Council adopt an approach to neighbourhood working which would involve

"Putting communities at the heart of everything we do and making people healthier, happier, safer and proud by:

- Councillors working with their communities on what matters to them
- Listening and working together to make a difference
- Supporting people from different backgrounds to get on well together"

2.4 Cabinet and Commissioners agreed a number of recommendations for a new neighbourhood working model following pre decision scrutiny in March 2017 and these were endorsed by council in May 2017. Overview and Scrutiny Management Board also received a further update in respect of the neighbourhood model in November 2017.

2.5 The Cabinet recommendations included plans for:

- The removal of the area assembly governance framework and dissolution of area assembly coordinating groups.
- Members to agree at a local level how to conduct citizen engagement in a flexible and innovative manner.
- Wards to work together, where needed, in flexible clusters based on geography and common interest.

- Quarterly updates from each ward to be submitted to the portfolio Cabinet Member.
- Ward plans to be produced and published outlining ward priorities and activities aligned to the corporate plan.
- Place profiles to be developed for each of the 21 wards detailing the demographics and community assets of the area; to be piloted in four wards.
- The Community Leadership Fund of £1,000 per elected Member to continue, but Members to be encouraged to spend this in line with ward plan priorities.
- The £30,000 allocated for area assembly chairs from the community engagement budget in 2017/18 to be distributed evenly to all 21 wards and reviewed as part of the budget setting process for 2018/19.
- £210k to be allocated equally across wards from the capital programme in 2017/18 and to be utilised as determined by the neighbourhood.
- Decision-making to be delegated to wards with spend approved by the Assistant Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services.
- Officers to explore how support could be provided to Members to secure additional funding both internally and externally.
- A 12 month transitional plan to phase-in the new neighbourhood working approach and annual report on neighbourhood working to Improving Places Select Commission (IPSC) and Council.
- A review of staffing structure supporting neighbourhood working and decisions arising from the review be taken under existing delegated powers.
- The relevant amendments to be made to the constitution.

2.6 In addition the Rotherham Together Partnership made a commitment to develop better multi agency working across the three localities (north, central and south) as part of the Rotherham Plan 2025.

3. Key Issues

Neighbourhood working – progress and learning

- 3.1 The new neighbourhood working model was introduced in May 2017 and the last 16 months have seen the implementation of the programme across 21 wards in Rotherham. This transitional period has enabled ward Members to develop ward based plans and engage with residents to identify important local issues and opportunities.
- 3.2 The attached annual report captures the learning from the transitional period and makes recommendations for future delivery.
- 3.3 The report suggests that Members are enthusiastic about the neighbourhood working model. In particular Members welcome:
- The tailored approach to engagement and communication in each ward has increased the level of contact with residents.
 - The development of ward plans, which provide a clear picture of local statistics, assets and priorities.
 - Devolved budgets and dedicated officer support which have enabled plans to translate into action, building confidence in the new approach.

- More joined up working with communities and partner organisations and some examples of cross-ward working.

3.4 In year two further work is required to adopt learning from year one and to embed the model consistently across wards. The annual report makes a number of recommendations designed to:

- a) further improve communication and engagement;
- b) strengthen governance and decision making processes and;
- c) encourage further joint ward working.

The recommendations are outlined below at paragraph 4.

Neighbourhood service review

3.5 During the transitional period there has also been a review of the neighbourhood service to align it with the new model. A new head of neighbourhoods joined the Council earlier this month and the service now sits in the Assistant Chief Executive's Directorate.

Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy

3.6 The Member working group was also tasked with producing a new neighbourhood strategy, which will see the ward as the building block that enables partners and communities to work together to improve local outcomes.

3.7 Thriving Neighbourhoods, The Rotherham Neighbourhood Strategy 2018-2025, is attached and has been developed with input from the Member working group, the strategic leadership team and informal Cabinet. The strategy is framed around three key outcomes:

- Neighbourhoods are safe and welcoming with good community spirit
- Residents are happy and healthy and love where they live
- Residents use their skills and assets to contribute to the outcomes that matter to them.

3.8 The strategy is about the Council and residents working together to achieve better quality of life and describes the key role for elected Members both as champions of place and as community leaders bringing together those who care about the local neighbourhood. The strategy also describes how the council will take a strength based approach drawing on existing strengths in the community and valuing the role of voluntary and community groups and assets.

3.9 The strategy is a public facing document which is reflected in its eye-catching design. It will be available to the public online and linked to the Your Neighbourhood web pages.

3.10 The Council has continued to work with the Rotherham Together Partnership to develop multi-agency working in north, central and south areas each led by a partner 'champion' from health, police and the Council.

- 3.11 Other developments include the new co-located services with South Yorkshire Police (SYP). The central neighbourhood team was established in Riverside House in May 2018, bringing together the local policing team with the council's community protection service, housing management and anti-social behaviour. The operational benefits of this co-location are already being felt in terms of improved relationships, collaboration and action on the ground. Also based with the new team is a "partnership hub", comprising the strategic functions from the Council's community safety and SYP's central neighbourhood service.
- 3.12 New multi-agency meeting structures agreed by the Safer Rotherham Partnership are now in place and operating well. This includes ward-level meetings with elected Members, multi-agency tasking meetings and the new community Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC).

4. Options considered and recommended proposal

4.1 Members of Improving Places Select Committee are asked to:

- Review the Annual Report 2017-18 Neighbourhood Working which includes the following recommendations:
 - **1. Communication and engagement**
 - a) Promote the Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy amongst residents, community organisations, Council staff and partners in order to get people involved and to explore opportunities for joint delivery.
 - b) Ensure that Members, Council officers, partners and local people know where to find information on local assets and that the information is regularly refreshed to ensure it remains accurate.
 - c) Provide support to community groups, particularly in relation to developing a constitution and applying for funding, or ensure they are consistently signposted to support that is already available (i.e. from VAR or RotherFed).
 - **2. Governance**
 - a) Continue to use the Neighbourhood Member Working Forum to drive business and to monitor progress of the neighbourhood working model.
 - b) Ensure that each ward plan is refreshed and includes clear actions up to 2020.
 - c) Establish a set of minimum requirements for the governance of neighbourhood working including:
 - Formalising ward meetings and ensuring that a minimum of 4 meetings take place per year in each ward. The ward meetings should bring together ward Members and officers to review delivery of the ward plan and to make decisions regarding devolved budgets and key priorities such as CCTV deployment

- Developing a resident engagement strategy in each ward as part of the development of the ward plan.
- d) Consider the option of pooling devolved budgets (for example, the CLF budget and the ward budget) and harmonise the processes for allocating funding.
- e) Design and implement a robust evaluation framework to measure impact and outcomes.
- **3. Joint working and coordination of activity**
- a) Review the Area Housing Panels to align them with the new neighbourhood working model.
- b) Forge closer relationships with parish Councils by working together on shared priorities and reducing duplication of effort.
- c) Embed an asset based approach by ensuring ongoing training and development for Members and officers.
- d) Implement the Thriving Neighbourhoods strategy across the Council and clarify how each part of the Council will support neighbourhood working.
- Note the Thriving Neighbourhoods: The Rotherham Neighbourhood Strategy 2018-2025.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 Detailed consultation has previously taken place regarding the new neighbourhood working model. Ward plans also feature a specific section relating to community engagement.
- 5.2 The neighbourhood working annual report highlights that further work is required to develop partnership forums at ward and area level to engage statutory services and voluntary and community groups in place planning.

6. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 6.1 An implementation plan is being developed to deliver the strategy across the council. The strategy which will also provide the basis for the neighbourhood team work programme.

7. Financial and Procurement Implications

- 7.1 The Annual Report 2017-18 includes details of Neighbourhood Budgets for both capital and revenue budgets. Overall, wards committed and spent 82% of the capital budget and 74% of the revenue budget in 2017/18.
- 7.2 It also highlights the requirement to review the ratio of capital-revenue budgets and coordinate funding at ward level and across areas to achieve best value,

both in terms of aligning resources and exploring joint procurement opportunities.

8. Legal Implications

8.1 There are no direct legal implications.

9. Human Resources Implications

9.1 There are no direct staffing implications.

10. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

10.1 The outcomes within the Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy support the Council's priorities: "Every child making the best start in life" and "Every adult secure, responsible and empowered".

11. Equalities and Human Rights Implications

11.1 The new neighbourhood model should improve the Council's ability to respond to the specific needs of Rotherham's increasingly diverse communities. Engagement with residents needs to take into account the assets and needs of different communities of interest. The needs and requirements of the citizens, businesses and communities in each ward are different and the new approach allows the flexibility to respond to these needs by making the ward the building block for community engagement.

11.2 An initial Equalities Analysis has been completed.

12. Implications for Partners and Other Directorates

12.1 The Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy provides the framework for a strategic review of how the whole Council engages with its citizens and customers in localities.

12.2 Delivery of the Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy will require a collective effort from all Council directorates and partners.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 There is a risk that the neighbourhood working approach is applied inconsistently across wards, causing tension and uncertainty and undermining the overall Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy. This would be mitigated by adoption of recommendations above including proposals for minimum requirements and governance arrangements.

14. Accountable Officer(s)

Shokat Lal, Assistant Chief Executive
Jackie Mould, Head of Performance, Intelligence and Improvement

Approvals obtained from:

	Named Officer	Date
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services	Judith Badger, Strategic Director of Finance and Customer Services	14 th September 2018
	Paul Stone, Head of Corporate Finance	12 th September 2018
Assistant Director of Legal Services	Dermot Pearson, Assistant Director of Legal Services	14 th September
Head of Procurement (if appropriate)	N/A	N/A
Head of Human Resources (if appropriate)	Lee Mann, Assistant Director - HR and OD	11 th September 2018

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