

Councillor Chris Read – Leader of the Council

Riverside House

Main Street

Rotherham

S60 1AE

E-mail: chris.read@rotherham.gov.uk

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Ref	Direct Line:	Please Ask For
CR/EJH	01709 822700	Councillor Read

23 July 2021

Councillor E Barley

By email emily.barley@rotherham.gov.uk

Dear Councillor Barley

Council 21st July 2021

I am sorry that you I was not able to answer your question at the Council meeting. However, I have detailed the question below along with my subsequent response for your information.

“In May, the Legatum Institute published its Prosperity Index, which looks a huge range of data points across education, enterprise, health, personal freedom, safety, and more, and produces an overall ‘prosperity score’ for each local authority. This year, Rotherham ranks 364th out of 379 – what are you going to do to ensure RMBC does better in the future?”

It is indeed a sad reflection on eleven years of Conservative government that despite Boris Johnson’s bluster about “levelling up” such a ranking leaves a community with Rotherham’s relative deprivation in such a position.

The prosperity index rankings cover a number of pillars. Rotherham is doing better for some pillars and less well on others such as social capital. For example on enterprise conditions Rotherham ranks as 71 and on infrastructure Rotherham ranks 156. This would indicate that the right enterprise conditions and infrastructure are in place to build a prosperous future although this will also be influenced by the amount and variety of investment opportunities available to the Borough and the region.

Social capital is an important priority included in the year Ahead Plan covering activities to support thriving neighborhoods and partnership working with the VCS to develop community capacity. This will continue to be an important priority in the new council plan.

Prior to the pandemic Rotherham had one of the fastest growing local economies in the north, driven in part by inward investment we secured creating employment at the Advanced Manufacturing Park, and the University Centre Rotherham. I hope after the pandemic we can again return to that progress and that is what this administration will seek to do. But Rotherham people will only ever really get the chances they deserve with a government that really backs them for the long term, not one that undermines them year after year.

Yours sincerely



Councillor Chris Read
Leader of the Council