

-External inspections, reviews and audits recommendations/areas for improvement detailed internal update – May 2025

Title and purpose	Date	Outstanding recommendations	Original target date for completion	Revised target date for completion	Status	Progress update
Children and Young People's Services						
Ofsted Focused Visit <i>To review the arrangements for children in need or subject to a child protection plan.</i> <i>Usually undertaken every three years as part of the ILACS Inspection Programme.</i>	Focused visit: 14 and 15 May 2024 Published: 12 July 2024	Overall outcome: The response to children who are subject to child-in-need and child protection planning is very effective. A stable senior leadership team is unstinting in its determination to make children in Rotherham safer and improve their outcomes. Strong corporate support ensures a whole-council approach to understanding children's vulnerability and responding to risk and need. Four areas for improvement were identified. Overall progress: An action plan is in place to address the recommendations from the peer review. Progress is overseen by the CYPS Evidence Challenge Panel and CYPS DLT. One area for improvement is complete.				
		Area for improvement 1: Identify children's unique needs and characteristics to better inform their plans and how they will be helped and supported. And Area for improvement 4: Reduce length of children's plans as these are overly long. Note: The progress updates for Area for Improvements 1 and 4 have been combined as they relate to both areas for improvement.	Oct-24	Sep-25		In progress and partly delayed The remaining action to implement a revised Plan template has been delayed due to the impact changes will have on other forms when integrated into the CYPS Social Care system (Liquidlogic). Work is ongoing to resolve this and is expected to be completed by September 2025.
		Area for improvement 2: Reduce Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) waiting lists.	Dec-25			In progress and on track
		Area for improvement 3: Reduce waits for domestic abuse services.	Dec-24			Complete
Ofsted Area SEND inspection of Rotherham Local Area Partnership <i>To review the special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) arrangements.</i>	Inspection date: 30 September 2024 - 4 October 2024 Report published: 14 November 2024	Overall outcome: The local area partnership's special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) arrangements typically lead to positive experiences and outcomes for children and young people with SEND. The local area partnership is taking action where improvements are needed. The next full area SEND inspection will be within approximately five years. Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission ask that the local area partnership updates and publishes its strategic plan based on the recommendations set out in this report. Two areas for improvement were identified. Overall progress: The final report and recommendations from the inspection were published on the 14 November 2024. As recognised in the report, work was already ongoing prior to the inspection in relation to the two areas for improvement and will continue. Progress will be monitored by the local area SEND and AP Partnership board and overseen by the CYPS Evidence Challenge Panel and SEND Executive Board.				
		Area for improvement 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New and revised EHCPs are consistently compliant with statutory guidance. The target is 	September 2026			In Progress and On Track

		for 50% to be compliant by December 2025; and 60% compliant by September 2026.				
		Area for improvement 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve oversight of waiting lists through regular reporting to SEND Partnership Board. Evidence sustained compliance to a trajectory to reduce neurodevelopmental assessment waiting times. Evidence sustained compliance to a trajectory to reduce occupational therapy waiting times. Evidence sustained compliance to a trajectory to reduce waiting times for speech and language therapy. 	March 2026			Awaiting start
Adult Care, Housing and Public Health						
Safeguarding Peer Review (LGA) <i>The Rotherham Safeguarding Adults Board (the RSAB) requested that a peer challenge be undertaken by the Local Government Association (LGA). The work was commissioned by the Independent Chair on behalf of the RSAB.</i>	11-13 July 2023	Overall outcome: Key Messages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pride and commitment in Rotherham Voices are listened to in Rotherham, but not yet heard at the RSAB You can go much further on collaboration and constructive challenge To be an outstanding SAB you need sufficient resources to support it and robust processes to plan and deliver on your strategy Mainstream the pockets of excellent practice Celebrate your good work! Overall progress: All of the recommendations that were made by the Peer Review team were grouped into 3 discussion points/themes at a development day-and all areas are now complete. The RSAB are responsible for monitoring progress.				
		THEME 1: Strengthening the User Voice. Work with partners to establish what user groups are in place.	June 2024	December 2024		Complete
Adult Social Care Peer Review (led by the Local Government Association) <i>The peer review was commissioned by ASC to measure preparedness for CQC assurance.</i>	December 2023	Overall outcome: Key Messages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong and clear strategic direction Positive workforce Senior Leadership Team Social work and reablement vacancy level – succession planning Streamline pathways and new models with the focus on the voice and experience of the resident Communication and feedback loop. Overall Progress: Recommendations cover the 4 thematic CQC assessment areas; Working with People, Providing Support, Ensuring Safety and Leadership. 23 considerations for the service to progress with 20 completed. The programme of improvement is being driven by the service's CQC Assurance Board.				
		THEME 1: Working with People	December 2024	May 2025		In progress and partly delayed

						<p>This theme included 9 recommendations. 6 recommendations are complete and 3 are in progress.</p> <p>The 3 that are in progress relate to the Carers offer and the enablement pathway and capacity within enablement.</p>
		THEME 2: Providing Support	December 2024	n/a		Complete
Public Health Peer Review <i>Voluntary Sector Led Improvement across Public Health teams in the Yorkshire and Humber.</i>	Conducted: 8-10 October 2024	Overall outcome: positive feedback received. Key messages included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Honesty, openness, and willingness has enabled us to hear from a breadth of people The public health team is incredibly well respected, knows itself and adds value Determination of partners to rebuild over the last ten years and the positive impact this has had on the strength of partnership working and governance The Children's Capital of Culture is a fantastic example of how sharing power with children and young people is re-building trust and impacting health and wellbeing Public health is effectively embedded in the wider health system and the wider health system is fully engaged in the health and wellbeing board on delivering the strategy. <p>Presentation provided on 10 October 2024 which included four recommendations.</p> <p>Overall progress: Discussed at PHSMT Planning Day on 14 November 2024 and Health Select Committee on 21 November 2024. All recommendations are now complete.</p>				
		Recommendation 1: In the health and wellbeing strategy refresh, consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on outcomes Priorities informed by intelligence and engagement Consider population groups as well as geographical areas. 	March 2025			Complete
		Recommendation 2: Go further as positive disrupters and help to maximise the impact that the cultural, physical and economic regeneration has on the health and wellbeing of the population.	January 2025			Complete
		Recommendation 3: Public Health Team to reflect on how it interfaces and influences with both seldom heard communities (including those with protected characteristics), and communities of place, in how it addresses health inequalities. This may include looking for best practice outside the Borough, as well as holding reflective joint workshops with internal and external	January 2025			Complete.

		partners to empower these communities.				
		Recommendation 4: Look at further opportunities to build capability within the rest of the council to maximise the impact on health and wellbeing outcomes.	January 2025			Complete
Regeneration and Environment						
2024 Prevent Duty Annual Assurance Assessment (Home Office) To support local authorities in meeting the Prevent duty and to assure the local delivery of Prevent, the Home Office (Homeland Security Group) carries out an annual assurance process.	March 2024	Overall outcome: "Exceeding" across all 8 benchmark criteria. Four recommendations made. Overall progress: All recommendations are now complete.				
		Recommendation 2: The local authority should consider updating any terms of reference or standing agendas at Silver to recognise the need to identify and disrupt the influence of groups and individuals that could create a permissive environment. More communication should be afforded to private sector companies such as sharing venue hire best practice to reduce permissive environments across the region.	December 2024	n/a		Complete
DVSA MOT Vehicle Testing Station Site Review (DVSA) <i>Check conformity with standards expected by the DVSA – unannounced and periodic.</i>	March 2024	Overall outcome: Satisfactory rating and two recommendations made. Overall progress: All recommendations are now complete.				
		Annual assessments try to complete before the end of December.	December 2024			Complete
Sports Ground Safety Authority – Local Authority Audit (Sports Ground Safety Authority (SGSA)) <i>An audit by the National regulator to assess the Council's delivery of statutory functions under the Safety at Sports Grounds Act 1975. The audits are carried out at a frequency determined by risk assessment.</i>	29 August 2024	Overall outcome: Excellent progress has been made with the recommended actions from the previous audit with all items being completed satisfactorily. The Council was rated as low risk and three recommendations were made. Overall progress: Recommendations one and three have been accepted the one remaining outstanding recommendation will be implemented within the next 6 months.				
		Recommendation 2: A tabletop exercise that included stadium staff and emergency services has not taken place for some time and the LA will ensure this is carried out by the club this season. (review date August 2026)	Review date August 2026			In progress and on track

Finance and Customer Services					
2022/23 VFM arrangements (Grant Thornton) <i>Annual audit of the 2022-2023 Value for Money Arrangements conducted by Grant Thornton.</i>	March 2024	<p>Overall outcome: Positive outcome and no areas of significant weakness identified. Grant Thornton satisfied that adequate arrangements are in place for SEND and the recommendation was removed. Findings noted the Council's improvement journey and commented that the Council's financial position is strengthening, though referenced that the Local Authority financial environment remains challenging with a number of Local Authorities issuing S114 notices. The report identified a small number of improvement recommendations to further enhance finance, governance, and performance arrangements.</p> <p>It is important to note that these are improvement recommendations in the view of Grant Thornton, therefore, the Council does not have to deliver these recommendations as they are considered low level potential improvements to reporting, governance or performance and are therefore non-essential.</p> <p>There were four new recommendations and two follow up recommendations.</p> <p>Overall progress: The two follow up recommendations are now complete. One new recommendation is also complete and three remain in progress.</p> <p>Progress is overseen by the Finance and Customer Services Directorate.</p>			
		Financial sustainability Rec 1: When Capital Budget Programme is updated, recommend Council continues to report the initially approved Capital Budget Programme amount alongside the revised number in the quarterly Financial Monitoring Reports (FMR) – in order that stakeholders can track the changes from the original Programme approved by Members.	March 2025	July 2025	Complete
		Financial sustainability Rec 2: When transfer and virements of budgets between directorates occurring during financial year, the Financial Monitoring Reports (FMR) should include the initially approved budget for relevant directorates, and the reason for the transfer, alongside the revised position.	March 2025	July 2025	Complete
		Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness: Rec 2: Set out the key actions and challenges in achieving net zero in 2030 and update the Corporate Strategic Risk Register accordingly on a timely basis.	March 2025	September 2025	In progress and on track
NEW 2023/24 Statement of	November 2024	<p>Overall outcome: The Council received a clean audit opinion again (unmodified), this is the best outcome that can be received on local authority accounts. The auditors were again positive in assessing the Council's Financial Controls, Governance and standing and praised</p>			

Accounts (Grant Thornton) <i>Annual audit of the 2023-2024 Value for Money Arrangements conducted by Grant Thornton.</i>	<p>the effective work of the team, senior management in finance in ensuring that continues to be the case in challenging conditions. The Council continues to be one of a handful of Council's that has all its accounts signed off, with many a number of years behind.</p> <p>There were five recommendations made to support the Council's work towards new accounting changes that have not yet come into force, along with suggested control improvement in the Council's IT environment.</p> <p>Overall progress: All recommendations are on track for delivery, with two completed already, the main work will be completed as part of the production of the 2024/25 accounts.</p>			
	Rec 1: We recommend the Council to accelerate the implementation and identification process of assets within the scope of IFRS16 to ensure such assets are completely and accurately captured before 2024-25 accounts closedown.	March 2026		Complete
	Rec 2: We recommend: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management to further improve the valuation instructions to the in-house valuer by referencing for example, applicable LG Code guidance ; and • Council's RICS qualified valuation expert to prepare a formal Terms of Engagement document and agree with management, further to the receipt of management valuation instructions 	March 2026	n/a	In progress and on track
	Rec 3: We recommend management to perform further investigations on land and buildings carried out at historical cost at note 19 (e) linking to Council's Fixed Asset Register and ensure they are identified, and such disclosures reflect the accurate numbers in this note.	March 2026	n/a	Complete
	Rec 4: Where possible, generic accounts should be removed, and individuals should have their own uniquely identifiable user accounts created to ensure accountability for actions performed. Alternately, management should implement suitable controls to limit access and monitor the usage of these accounts (i.e. through	March 2026	n/a	In progress and on track

		increased use of password vault tools / logging and periodic monitoring of the activities performed). Where monitoring is undertaken this should be formally documented and recorded				
		Rec 5: It is recommended that security event logs are reviewed on a regular basis for example daily or weekly, ideally by an IT security personnel / team who are independent of those administering [the application] and its underlying database. Any issues identified within these logs should be investigated and mitigating controls implemented to reduce the risk of reoccurrence	March 2026	n/a		In progress and on track
NEW 2023/24 VFM arrangements (Grant Thornton) <i>Required annually by legislation.</i>	November 2024	<p>Overall outcome: The Council received a positive outcome in its Value For Money report from Grant Thornton. Findings noted the Council's improvement journey and commented that the Council's financial position is strengthening, though referenced that the Local Authority financial environment remains challenging with a number of Local Authorities issuing S114 notices due to the rising demand and inflation challenges facing the sector. The report noted the Councils robust Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy and its clear narrative about how the Council is addressing the challenges it faces and planned ahead coherently for the future.</p> <p>The report also noted that the Council had identified some significant challenges around its buildings and housing stock linked to compliance and condition surveys that it had set out clear plans to address. To support the Council in dealing with these challenges Grant Thornton have put forward 4 key improvement recommendations working with Council officers.</p> <p>10 new recommendations made. 2 are key improvement recommendations and 8 are improvement recommendations where the Council can choose to implement or not.</p> <p>Overall progress: Work is underway to implement the 2 key improvement recommendations and give due consideration to 8 improvement recommendations as to whether the Council should implement these or not. As work progresses on the improvement recommendations options will be considered that will lead to either the implementation of the recommendation or the recommendation from Council officers that a recommendation is not implemented.</p>				
		REC KR1: The Council needs to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continue improving its HRA compliance data robustness and validity. • ensure contract management arrangements are put in place with its HRA contractors. • improve compliance with decent homes standards. • work to improve its understanding of category 1 hazards in its housing stock. 	TBC			In progress and on track Note – although situated under FCS for the purposes of reporting, Housing services are responsible for implementation of this recommendation.

		papers by giving more detail on completed audits including an executive summary of each report completed in the period in part 1 papers to the Audit Committee.				
		REC IR4: The Council should consider strengthening its counter-fraud controls by developing a corporate counter-fraud risk register and ensuring counter-fraud risks in departmental risk registers are updated. It also needs to enhance its counter-fraud plan.	March 2026	n/a		In progress and on track
		Rec IR5: The Council could improve its financial monitoring reporting in line with good practice by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> when the approved Capital Programme is updated during the year, continuing to report the initially approved Capital budget alongside the revised numbers in the quarterly monitoring reports to track changes from the original Programme approved by Members. 	July 2026	n/a		Complete
		Rec IR6: The Council should develop and publish a Procurement Strategy. This should set procurement strategic priorities that align with the Council's priorities such as net zero and capture changes to procurement following the Procurement Act (2023) and the national Procurement Policy Statement (2024). It should include measurable actions and indicators with clear accountabilities and an annual review process. The Strategy should be widely communicated to staff and members to raise awareness of their responsibilities.	March 2026	n/a		In progress and on track

		REC IR7: The Council should develop a corporate data quality policy and ensure this is used to inform a data quality review. It could look to the national data quality framework to guide this work.	March 2026	n/a		In progress and on track Note – although situated under FCS for the purposes of reporting, the Assistant Chief Executive’s directorate are responsible for implementation of this recommendation.
		Rec IR8: The Council should put in place a corporate process to improve contract management and ensure contractor performance is effectively managed, and data is verified across the Council’s contracts and that contracts are in place in highways.	March 2026	n/a		In progress and on track
Assistant Chief Executive’s directorate						
LGA Corporate Peer Challenge <i>Expectation that councils receive a peer review every five years to provide robust, strategic, and credible challenge, whilst also enhancing capacity and helping to avoid insularity.</i>	Overall outcome: Positive feedback received which stated: “Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council serves the town well and is today an impressive organisation. Being named the ‘Most Improved Council’ in the country at the Local Government Chronicle (LGC) Award in 2022 provides ample evidence that it is now in a very good place. It is ambitious and has well-established and robust foundations, along with several notable and commendable practices that other councils can learn from” and seven recommendations made.					
	Overall progress: Action plan agreed by Cabinet in September 2023 included 20 actions which are being progressed. Progress is overseen by the Strategic Leadership Team and where relevant, actions for 2024-25 have been included in the new Year Ahead Delivery Plan.					
	5-8 June 2023	Recommendation 2: Develop an externally facing compelling and positive narrative of place which will help to promote and market the borough and capitalise on Rotherham’s assets.	March 2025	n/a		Complete Note – although situated under ACEX for the purposes of reporting, the Regeneration and Environment Directorate are responsible for implementation of these actions.
	Findings received August 2023	Recommendation 3: Use the significant investments underway to expand and attract private sector investment at scale, maximising its potential and supporting a more inclusive economic future.	March 2026	n/a		In progress and on track Note – although situated under ACEX for the purposes of reporting, the Regeneration and Environment Directorate are responsible for implementation of this action.
		Recommendation 4: Develop effective pathways and mechanisms for local people, especially young people, to benefit from inclusive growth that can help to deliver improved health outcomes and address inequalities.	March 2025	n/a		Complete Note – although situated under ACEX for the purposes of reporting, Housing services are responsible for implementation of this action.
	Recommendation 5: Review performance management with a focus on demonstrating impact	March 2025	May 2025		Complete	

Status key

		and an improvement in outcomes in delivering the council's ambition; and use the strong leadership, capacity and capability of the top-team to drive and deliver further organisational transformations and change across the borough at pace.				
		Recommendation 6: Building on the Neighbourhood working model, develop a clearer and shared understanding of integrated locality working across the public sector and increase the pace of digital transformation across the organisation to deliver improved outcomes for residents and consistently improve the customer experience.	March 2024	March 2025		Complete

Complete	Recommendations/areas for improvement are fully complete
In progress and on track	Recommendation/area for improvement on track to be delivered by the original agreed deadline
In progress and partly delayed	Recommendation/area for improvement progressing, however target date behind the original agreed deadline
Significant delay	Recommendations/area for improvement delayed by more than twelve months past the original agreed deadline
No action required or outcome unknown	No recommendation/area for improvement, or the outcome is not yet known

Residential Children’s Homes – Inspection Outcomes

Residential children’s homes are inspected by HMI Ofsted under the Social Care Common Inspection Framework (SCCIF) and focus on evaluating the impact of care and support on the experiences and progress of children.

Following inspection, the children’s home will receive an overall judgement based on the experiences and progress of children and young people, of Outstanding, Good, Requires Improvement to be Good, or Inadequate.

Where requirements or recommendations are made, an action plan is developed which is submitted to Ofsted detailing the progress.

The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations stipulates the requirement for monthly oversight visits to Children's Homes. These visits, known as Regulation 44 Visits, are carried out under [Regulation 44 of the Children's Homes Regulations 2015](#). All residential children's homes in Rotherham receive an Independent Reg 44 visit monthly, undertaken by an Independent Person from NYAS (an independent children’s rights charity). The registered Person from National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS) seeks independent scrutiny of the home and makes best use of information to ensure continuous improvement, this includes independent oversight of any requirements or recommendations following a previous visit and/ or inspection. Ofsted reviews the content of Regulation 44 reports to inform the next inspection and uses the information to decide if we need to take any other action.

All Ofsted reports are published in the public domain, however the identity (location) of the homes remain confidential and are not disclosed in the reports. Recommendations and progress against recommendations are considered monthly with oversight from the Reg 44 visits and Ofsted. This is more frequent than the Audit Committee schedule and therefore any recommendations and progress against these are not included within this reports as they would be out of date before they were published.

The following table provides the current ratings for our four registered children’s homes.

Residential Children’s Home	037521	2662265	2597567	2629335	2775749	2759142	2812398 (Awaiting first inspection – only registered 10/01/25)
Date of Full Inspection	11 June 2024	2 July 2024	08 April 2024	06 August 2024	29 July 2024	15 January 2025	
Overall experiences and progress of children and young people	Good	Good	Requires Improvement to be good	Requires Improvement to be good	Good	Good	
Sub judgements							
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good	Good	Requires Improvement to be good	Requires Improvement to be good	Good	Good	
The effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good	Good	Requires Improvement to be good	Requires improvement to be good	Good	Good	