

Improving Lives Select Commission Chair's Briefing for the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board meeting on 8th April 2026

Items covered since the last update meeting: -

- At the Improving Lives meeting on 17th March 2026 the following items were considered: -

1. **Community Recovery Fund - Children's Services** - Members received the report and presentation which provided a detailed update on the delivery of the Community Recovery Fund projects in Children and Young People's Services over the past 12 months. The programme had been delivered by a range of organisations including direct delivery by Rotherham Council services, direct delivery by the voluntary sector and a grants budget which would allow for further solutions to be co-created and co-designed with community groups and prioritised as part of an overall co-ordinated approach.

Members welcomed the update and the positive information that was shared.

2. **Children Not in School Update** – Members received the report and associated appendices which provided in depth information and assurance regarding activity in relation to Children Not in School in Rotherham to enable the Commission to receive an update regarding this area of work. The Elective Home Education, and Exclusions dashboard also provided a breakdown of the characteristics of the respective cohorts to enable further scrutiny.

A positive discussion took place which allowed Members to fully explore the detail and ask questions.

3. **SACRE Annual Report 2024/25** – Members received the Annual Report of the Rotherham Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) for the academic year 2024–2025, which summarised advice to statutory bodies, the standards and quality of Religious Education (RE) and collective worship in Rotherham schools, the work of the Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC), and SACRE's contribution to wider Council priorities.

The report highlighted strengthened membership (notably secondary RE specialists), successful CPD and interfaith engagement, progress towards

reviewing the local Agreed Syllabus, and one determination (Thornhill Primary School).

Members noted the Annual Report and endorsed the forward actions for 2025–2026, including enhanced subject leader support, the South Yorkshire RE Conference and development of school visits/visitors' guidance.

Work Programme 2025-26 Updates: -

- **Children's Capital of Culture Workshop - Impact and Legacy for Children and Young People**

A workshop has been arranged for Tuesday, 21st April 2026 looking at Impact and Legacy for Children and Young People. An invitation had also been extended to Improving Places Select Commission for any interested Members to attend.

- **Children and Young People's Partnership Board**

A pre-decision scrutiny session has now been agreed with the Children and Young People's Partnership Board made up of young people who have reviewed their programme of work and are developing a strategy to underpin their agreed priorities going forward. This will take place with several Members and will be incorporated into the next meeting of the Children and Young People's Partnership Board on 28th April 2026 at 4.00 p.m. at the Town Hall.

Items to be discussed at the next meeting: -

28 April 2026

- Corporate Parenting Partnership Board Update
- Corporate Parenting Partnership Board Annual Report 2024-2025
- Child Exploitation Strategy Update