

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Cabinet – 13 April 2026

Report Title

Council Plan Update - Year Ahead Delivery Plan 2026/27

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

Yes

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Chris Paddock, Interim Director of Policy, Strategy and Engagement

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Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

In May 2025, the Council adopted a new Council Plan for 2025-30, 'Forging Ahead'. The Council Plan is a key document which sets out the Council's vision for the borough and priorities for serving residents and communities. The plan provides the medium-term basis for targeting resources, informing the budget-setting process and planning cycles, ensuring that residents can hold the Council to account for delivery.

A Year Ahead Delivery Plan is created annually to enable the Council to work towards the Council Plan outcomes and achieve the priorities and commitments. It builds upon the previous year's progress and takes account of recent budget investments and external changes.

The Year Ahead Delivery Plan 2026/27 sets out the activities to be delivered over the period from 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027, and associated measures of performance for this time period.

Recommendations

That Cabinet:

1. Agree the new Year Ahead Delivery Plan for 2026-27.
2. Note that future progress reports will be presented to Cabinet in January and July 2027.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 – Year Ahead Delivery Plan 2026-27

Appendix 2 – Equality Analysis

Appendix 3 – Carbon Impact Assessment.

Background Papers

Council Plan 2025-30 approved by Council on 21 May 2025.

Council Plan 2025-30 and Year Ahead Delivery Plan 2025-26 considered by Cabinet on 19 May 2025.

Mid-Year Report on Council Plan 2025-30 and Year Ahead Delivery Plan Progress for 2025-26 considered by Cabinet on 19 January 2026.

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

None

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Council Plan Update - Year Ahead Delivery Plan 2026-27

1. Background

- 1.1 The Council Plan 2025-30 is a key document, which sets out the Council's vision for the borough and priorities for serving residents and communities. The Plan provides the medium-term basis for targeting resources, informing the budget-setting process and planning cycles, ensuring that residents can hold the Council to account for delivery.
- 1.2 To enable the Council to work towards the Council Plan outcomes and achieve the priorities and commitments, a Year Ahead Delivery Plan is created annually to set out the activities and performance measures required.
- 1.3 The 2026/27 Year Ahead Delivery Plan is the second delivery plan that has been produced to deliver this Council Plan. It sets out the key activities to be delivered over the upcoming financial year ending 31 March 2027.
- 1.4 The 2026/27 Year Ahead Delivery Plan has been informed by the most recent review of performance and progress against the delivery of the 2025/26 Year Ahead Delivery Plan, the budget investments agreed for 2026/27, the Council's risk register and changes in the external environment.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 Informed by a programme of public and stakeholder engagement, the Council Plan 2025-30 sets out medium-term priorities and actions to make improvements for local people and places. The Plan is framed around the following five outcomes:
 - Places are thriving, safe, and clean.
 - An economy that works for everyone.
 - Children and young people achieve.
 - Residents live well.
 - One Council that listens and learns.
- 2.2 Alongside the 5 strategic outcomes, the Council Plan identifies 17 priorities to be delivered, including defined differences that will be seen between 2025 and 2030. Meanwhile, the 30 long-term measures of success set out the changes to be realised across the Borough through the delivery of the Council Plan.
- 2.3 The 2026/27 Year Ahead Delivery Plan includes 81 priority actions and 35 performance measures, alongside a further 12 social care measures. Priority actions are broken down as follows.

2.4 ***Places are thriving, safe and clean***

32 priority actions and 6 performance measures.

Measures to help people feel safe in their communities include producing draft ward road safety plans, commencing work on tranche 2 of the local neighbourhood road safety programme and delivering the work of the Street Safe team. Council investment in public spaces and community facilities across the Borough is accompanied by a varied cultural programme of events to support and reflect vibrant communities. Essential bridge repairs and flood alleviation schemes are included, alongside the phased replacement of Council fleet vehicles as part of a suite of measures to create better public spaces. The continuing commitment to town centre revitalisation sees Rotherham Central Library opening and Riverside Gardens completed.

2.5 ***An economy that works for everyone***

8 priority actions and 8 performance measures.

Partnership work continues to progress the Don Valley Corridor development, including Rotherham Gateway and Waverley station opportunities. More than 600 businesses will be supported by investment into business centres and targeted advisory services and grants to aid growth and local employment opportunities. The Council continues to support the wider skills agenda by delivering apprenticeship opportunities within its workforce, as well as supporting 1,000 residents into training and/or employment.

2.6 ***Children and young people achieve***

10 priority actions and 7 performance measures.

Reflecting the Council's commitment to ensuring children and young people have fun things to do an extra 10,000 places are being made available on the Healthy Holidays activity programme and over 1,200 youth work sessions are being provided by the voluntary and community sector. The Council is also investing in improvements to 8 playgrounds and Crowden Outdoor Activity Centre facilities. Financial support is being made available for eligible families through the Crisis and Resilience Funding in the summer holidays and baby packs will continue to be delivered. Two registrations will be submitted for 2-bed homes for children in care.

2.7 ***Residents live well***

19 priority actions and 10 performance measures.

As part of its commitment to better physical and mental wellbeing, the cost of swimming for the over 65s is being discounted, and the track at Herringthorpe Athletics Stadium is being renewed. The Council is continuing to provide a Council Tax support top up scheme and crisis support scheme for residents struggling with the costs of living. The Council is also delivering a further 150 new council houses as part of its commitment to create 1,000 Council homes and bringing 25 empty homes back into use.

2.8 **One Council that listens and learns**

12 priority actions and 4 performance measures.

To create a better customer experience, residents will receive improved online services, including new systems for complaints, trees and housing repairs. The Council will continue to work with its partners to launch the new Rotherham Plan and gain tenant engagement accreditation. An action plan will be developed around the areas of improvement from the employee opinion survey as part of the priority to create a workforce that is ambitious and proud. Actions to respond to climate change include investing in solar panels on the town centre market and library buildings, energy conservation measures in council premises and tree planting.

2.9 **Social care measures**

12 performance measures

The Council regularly reviews performance against these key strategic measures in adult and children's social care. For 2026/27 a new measure, SC5 'the proportion of adults involved in a safeguarding enquiry who felt their personal outcomes were at least partially met' is proposed for inclusion. This will replace the SC2 measure 'number of new admissions to residential care homes for older people as a rate per 100K population' that had been included in the 2025/26 plan, given the duplication of that measure with SC3, where this is expressed as a number. The measures regarding children's social care remain unchanged on the 2025/26 plan.

2.10 **Monitoring Performance**

Six-monthly progress reports will be produced for Cabinet and made publicly available. The reports will include progress and performance updates on the actions in the Year Ahead Delivery Plan. The year-end progress report will include an update on the long-term measures of success. It is proposed that the mid-year progress report, covering the period April 2026 to September 2026, is reported to Cabinet in January 2027 and year-end report for the period October 2026 to March 2027 is reported to Cabinet in July 2027.

Service plans have been produced for every Council service, and these are reviewed annually alongside the development of the Year Ahead Delivery Plan to ensure a 'golden thread' runs from the Council Plan through to each service. This complements the 'My Year Ahead Delivery Plan' Performance Development Review (PDR) process at individual officer level.

3. **Options considered and recommended proposal**

3.1 The Council Plan 2025-30 was developed in consultation with Elected Members and officers across all directorates and informed by public consultation.

3.2 It is recommended that Cabinet:

- Agree the Year Ahead Delivery Plan for 2026/27.

- Note that future progress reports will be presented to Cabinet in January and July 2027.

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 The programme of public consultation and engagement to support the development of the Council Plan took place between September and November 2024. This included online and postal surveys, focus groups (internal and external), and a series of short interactions and engagement activity at a number of locations across the borough. There were 214 online and postal surveys returned and over 1,960 interactions in total across all methods of engagement.
- 4.2 The consultation and engagement activity included speaking with voluntary and community groups which represent protected characteristic groups, as well as attendance at the Parish Council Network, direct engagement with the public and a session open to all elected members.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 A six-monthly progress report will be presented to Cabinet in January 2027. A year-end progress report will be presented to Cabinet in July 2027, this will incorporate the annual update on the long term measures of success.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 6.1 The Council Plan and the Year Ahead Delivery Plan are designed to help steer the use of Council finances, balanced against the wider funding backdrop for the Council and the broader context of national local government finance and policy. There are no direct financial implications arising from the report, but the plan's delivery will require close financial management to ensure that financial implications are within budget, and longer-term implications that may be generated by the Plan are factored into the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- 6.2 The Council operates in a constantly changing environment. It will be important to ensure that ambitions and performance targets remain realistic in the context of central government policy, legislative changes and the financial position of the Authority. The financial impact of delivery of the Year Ahead Delivery Plan will therefore need to be monitored as part of the Council's financial management arrangements and considered alongside the Council's overall financial position.
- 6.3 There are no direct procurement implications associated with the recommendations detailed in this report. Where the engagement of third party suppliers is required to deliver the year ahead delivery plan, these must be procured in compliance with relevant procurement legislation (Public Contracts Regulations 2015, the Procurement Act 2023 or The Health Care Services (Provider Selection Regime) Regulations 2023)

dependent on the route to market selected as well as the Council's own Financial and Procurement Procedure Rules.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

- 7.1 Whilst there is no specific statutory requirement for the Council to have a Performance Management Framework and Council Plan, being clear about the Council's ambitions gives staff, partners, residents, and central Government a clear understanding of what it seeks to achieve and how it will prioritise its spending decisions.
- 7.2 An effective and embedded Council Plan is also a key part of the Council's performance management and continual improvement.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

- 8.1 There are no direct HR implications arising from this report, however, should any workforce matters emerge during the delivery of the Year Ahead Delivery Plan, these will be managed in line with the Council's established HR policies and procedures, including consultation with staff and Trade Union representatives where appropriate. No issues are anticipated at this stage, and any requirements relating to staffing, training or changes to working practices will be addressed through normal management processes.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 9.1 The Council Plan has a core focus on the needs of children and young people and vulnerable adults, and this is embedded throughout all outcomes of the plan, particularly 'children and young people achieve' and 'residents live well'.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

- 10.1 Three cross cutting policy drivers run throughout the plan. One of these includes 'opportunities are expanded to all' to ensure that the Council creates new opportunities, with help targeted to those who need it the most, so no one is left behind. All outcomes aim to meet residents' and communities' differentiated needs.
- 10.2 A detailed Equality Analysis is attached (see Appendix 2).

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

- 11.1 The 'one council that listens and learns' outcome has a focus around reducing harmful levels of carbon emissions to limit the impacts on the climate and the environment. Actions within this outcome encompass plans for the reduction of emissions. The 'places are thriving, safe and clean' outcome also includes actions focussed on flood alleviation projects and flood resilience measures for communities in the worst-affected areas.

11.2 A Carbon Impact Assessment has been produced (see Appendix 3).

12. Implications for Partners

12.1 Working with partners across the public, private and voluntary and community sectors is integral to the delivery of the Council Plan, and partners have been consulted as part of its development. All the outcomes require multi-agency approaches to some degree and the Council will continue to show effective leadership, operating through a range of strategic partnership bodies.

12.2 The Rotherham Plan 2025, the overarching partnership plan for the Borough, will be replaced with an updated plan in 2026. The Rotherham Plan will align with and complement the Council Plan, setting out partners' joint ambitions to improve outcomes for local people.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 The Corporate Strategic Risk Register is aligned to the new Council Plan outcomes and the process of updating and identifying strategic risks is already designed to manage risks connected to the plan.

13.2 Progress reports will continue to note the risks associated with actions at risk of not being delivered, or those that have missed the deadline, as well as performance measures which have not progressed in accordance with the target set.

14. Accountable Officers

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Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	John Edwards	27/03/26
Service Director, Financial Services (Deputy S.151 Officer)	Rob Mahon	23/03/26
Service Director of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phil Horsfield	23/03/26

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