

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Cabinet – 11 May 2026

Report Title

Supporting High Streets

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

Yes

Executive Director Approving Submission of the Report

Andrew Bramidge, Executive Director of Regeneration and Environment

Report Author(s)

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Ward(s) Affected

Boston Castle
Dinnington
Maltby East
Swinton Rockingham
Wath

Report Summary

A new team is being established following the approved Budget Investment for "Supporting Our High Streets" in principal towns across the Borough, including Rotherham, Wath, Dinnington, Maltby and Swinton. The team will provide business support and a visible presence across the Borough and also take the lead on delivery of the Shopfront Grants Programme.

Recommendations

That Cabinet:

1. Note the establishment of the new Supporting Our High Streets Team.
2. Approve the activities guiding the Supporting Our High Streets Team's programme of work in principal towns across the Borough.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 Part A Initial Equality Screening Assessment
Appendix 2 Supporting our High Streets - Climate Impact Assessment

Background Papers

[Cabinet Budget Report Feb 2026 - R&E 002 – Supporting our High Streets](#)
[Cabinet Report 16 March 2026 - Local Growth Fund 2026/27 allocation](#)

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

None

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Supporting High Streets

1. Background

- 1.1 Rotherham Council continues to invest in high streets across the Borough. Following on from additional capital investments such as the Shopfront Grants programme, as well as revenue investments in areas such as the Street Safe Team, the Council is aiming to maximise engagement and impact in high street areas across the Borough.
- 1.2 As part of the budget approved by Council on 4th March 2026, a revenue investment entitled “Supporting our High Streets” was agreed. Building on the success of the existing Town Centre Co-ordinator role, this project seeks to expand this approach, with a focus on business support, in Rotherham Town Centre and across the other principal towns in the Borough; Wath, Swinton, Dinnington and Maltby.
- 1.3 The purpose of the investment is to introduce three new High Street Business Advisers to work across Council services to support high street businesses to flourish, including access to a budget of £25,000 in each of the five locations to support local activities, for example promotional campaigns.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 The new team, with advisers operating on a geographical basis, will allow for greater engagement with ward members, businesses and residents in the identified areas to ensure that resources are focussed on tackling the issues that matter most and so that successes can be effectively communicated. The main purpose of the roles is to engage with high street businesses in the Borough’s principal towns, and to provide a point of co-ordination for businesses in relation to the various activities in each locality: events, Streetscene, Street Safe and crime, business investment, local promotional opportunities and signposting to other business support services.
- 2.2 The posts will have a specific function of liaison with the local business community, providing a local presence, identifying issues of concern, and signposting to other Council services for assistance, where appropriate. They will provide visible and routine engagement in the identified areas and be a known face to businesses and local ward members, providing regular updates on activity and working to solve problems as they arise.
- 2.3 The Advisers will also provide initial business advice, help to co-ordinate local promotions, signpost to other services (e.g. grant opportunities) and co-ordinate with other Council departments.
- 2.4 The team will also lead on the delivery of the successful Shopfront Grants project, which has received a further 12 months of funding through the Local Growth Fund for 2026/27.

Deployment and monitoring

- 2.5
- As an additional resource, the team will have a significant impact on the areas covered, which are areas of high demand and therefore offer a significant opportunity in relation to enhancing the engagement and support available to the local business community. Team resources will be deployed based on identified needs and agreed priorities, such as implementation of the Shopfront Grants, and in proportion to the demand and requests from the local business community.
- 2.6
- Various indicators will be used to measure the impact and success of the activities, and will include the number of businesses supported, the amount of vacant building floorspace brought back into use, and the take up of business support and grants by Rotherham businesses.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1
- Option 1 – Approve the activities of the Supporting Our High Street team. This will provide a recognisable local resource for business support, support businesses with applying for Shopfront Grants, as well as identifying and accessing other sources of funds – this is the recommended option.
- 3.2
- Option 2 - Not to approve the activities, which is not recommended as that would not be in line with the investment approved by Council in March. The target areas would not receive the additional localised support supplied by the Advisers and the ability to maximise the various grants and business support available to them.

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1
- Members and other local stakeholders will be consulted on how the new team will operate in the various target areas.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1
- The Outline Investment Proposal was presented to Cabinet and Council in February and March 2026. Following the budget approval, work was progressed in March and April on the necessary recruitment approvals and interviews and appointments are anticipated in May 2026, with staff onboard, trained and operational by July 2026.
- 5.2
- During the two years of funding currently approved, an evaluation of the project and its impacts will be undertaken. This will be used to assess the potential for continuing or expanding the project.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 6.1
- There are no direct procurement implications arising from the recommendations detailed in this report.

6.2 On 4th March 2026 Council approved a £304k permanent revenue budget investment as part of the Council's Budget and Council Tax Report 2026/27 entitled Supporting Our High Streets. This created a team of three business advisors and a budget in each of the five locations to support local activities.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

7.1 The Council has power to implement the Supporting Our High Streets programme under its general powers of competence and in accordance with budget approvals agreed by Council for 2026/27. Other than this there are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations within the report.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

8.1 The proposal requires the establishment of three posts to support delivery of the Supporting Our High Streets programme. All recruitment activity will be undertaken in line with the Council's Recruitment and Selection Policy.

8.2 Any future workforce implications will be managed in accordance with the Council's policies and procedures.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

9.1 There are no implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults arising directly from this report.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 An Initial Equality Screening Assessment (Part A) has been completed and is attached as Appendix 1.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

11.1 A Climate Impact Assessment has been completed and is attached as Appendix 2.

12. Implications for Partners

12.1 It is expected that the Supporting our High Streets team will involve a range of internal and external partners in their work, dependent on the issues arising.

12.2 The team will have regular communication with the Neighbourhood teams and local Councillors, to ensure they are fully up to speed with what is happening in areas and how they can assist.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 Failure to recruit suitable staff for the posts.

Mitigation: Salary is competitive and similar posts have received a number of good applicants.

13.2 Advisers fail to connect with many local businesses.

Mitigation: Will use existing contacts through the RiDO and Neighbourhoods teams to promote the new team and the support they can offer.

14. Accountable Officers

14.1 Simeon Leach, Service Manager Economic Strategy

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	John Edwards	22/04/26
Executive Director of Corporate Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	13/04/26
Service Director of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phil Horsfield	13/04/26

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