

**Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting**

Delegated Officer Decision – 21 April 2026

**Report Title**

Feasibility Fund Allocation: Approval of the Gainshare grant funding to progress Innovation Gateway priority projects.

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

Yes

**Service Director Approving Submission of the Report**

Simon Moss, Service Director, Planning, Transport & Regeneration

**Report Author(s)**

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**Ward(s) Affected**

Boston Castle, Rotherham West, Greasbrough, Rawmarsh West, Rawmarsh East, Rotherham East

**Report Summary**

The Council is working with partners to promote the development of Rotherham Gateway Station. To ensure the Station opportunity brings the greatest benefit to Rotherham communities, the Council undertook master-planning; exploring how development in the vicinity of the Station could contribute to wider regeneration and growth objectives across the Borough. The resulting scheme, 'Innovation Gateway', delivers a longer-term vision for Rotherham with a phase-by-phase approach (phases 1 to 4) and a twenty-year timescale.

The Council has drawn down Gainshare funding in order to progress the priority projects for Phase 1 of Innovation Gateway. In February 2026, Cabinet delegated authority to the Service Director of Planning, Regeneration and Transport in consultation with the Service Director of Financial Services and the Cabinet Member for Transport, Jobs and the Local Economy to approve the specific allocations of the grant and any variations required through the development of the Innovation Gateway Phase 1 priority projects. This report seeks to exercise this delegation.

## **Recommendations**

1. That the Service Director of Planning, Regeneration and Transport in consultation with the Service Director of Financial Services and the Cabinet Member for Transport, Jobs and the Local Economy approve the specific allocations of the Gainshare grant funding and any variations required through its delivery.

## **List of Appendices Included**

Appendix 1 Masterplan Summary Document  
Appendix 2 Masterplan Phasing  
Appendix 3 Equalities Impact Screening  
Appendix 4 Part B Equalities Impact Assessment  
Appendix 5 Climate Impact Assessment

## **Background Papers**

Mainline Station and Strategic Acquisition: [Cabinet Report July 2025](#)

December 2025/26 Financial Monitoring Report: [Cabinet Report February 2026](#)

## **Exempt from the Press and Public**

No

**Feasibility Fund Allocation: Approval of the Gainshare grant funding to progress Innovation Gateway priority projects.** Feasibility Fund Allocation: Approval of the Gainshare grant funding to progress Innovation Gateway priority projects.

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 The Council is working with partners to promote the development of Rotherham Gateway Station. This mainline and tram-train station will be a catalyst for growth, improving local, regional, and national rail connectivity for all communities and businesses across the Borough. It will drive investment, attracting new businesses, creating employment, and supporting the development of high-quality new homes.
- 1.2 The Council submitted an Outline Business Case to the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) and the Department for Transport (DfT) for approval to release funding for a Full Business Case in relation to the transport elements. This was approved in January 2026, releasing £11.38 million for the Full Business Case that will include the design of the mainline and tram-train station ready for delivery. Rotherham Gateway aligns with SYMCA priorities, improving connectivity and acting as the northern anchor for the Don Valley Corridor and the South Yorkshire Investment Zone.
- 1.3 To ensure the Station opportunity brings the greatest benefit to Rotherham communities, the Council undertook master-planning; exploring how development in the vicinity of the station could contribute to wider regeneration and growth objectives across the Borough and act as a catalyst for investment. The resulting scheme, 'Innovation Gateway', maximises the benefit of the Station investment and delivers a long-term vision for Rotherham with a phase-by-phase approach (phases 1 to 4) and a twenty-year timescale (see appendix 1).
- 1.4 Phase 1 of Innovation Gateway includes the mainline station, tram-train station, Station public realm, car parking and northern access and the Station Anchor building - essentially covering the development of the Station core area. Outside the Station core area an active travel route along Effingham Street will connect the Town Centre to the Station (Phase 1a). All aspects of Phase 1 and Phase 1a need to be developed in tandem. Phases 2 to 4 include a proposed advanced technologies Innovation Campus to the west of the Station and, in the longer term, a residential quarter to the east (outlined in appendix 2).
- 1.5 The Council and SYMCA are working closely to explore a 'Place-Based' approach to funding the delivery of the Innovation Gateway (Masterplan) projects. To maintain momentum and ensure the alignment of phase 1 schemes, the Council proposed utilising Gainshare funding. This will fund the three priority workstreams, plus resource capacity (internal recruitment to the Regeneration team or external expertise):
  - Station Area (Floormat) Public Realm, car parking & northern access (Phase 1)
  - Innovation Gateway Anchor Building (Phase 1)

- Effingham Street Active Travel Route (Phase 1a)

## 2. Key Issues

- 2.1 SYMCA acts as the accountable body for a number of different Government funding streams and as the accountable body for Gainshare. Reported to Cabinet in February 2026 as part of the December 2025 financial monitoring update, a funding request of £2.050m was to be made for revenue Gainshare funding that SYMCA hold but is earmarked for the Council. The bid was considered and approved by SYMCA's Board on 27th January 2026.
- 2.2 As part of the December 2025 Financial Monitoring Update, presented to Cabinet in February 2026, Cabinet approved delegation to the Service Director of Planning, Regeneration and Transport in consultation with the Service Director of Financial Services and the Cabinet Member for Transport, Jobs and the Local Economy to approve the specific allocations of the grant and any variations required through the development of the Innovation Gateway Phase 1 priority projects.
- 2.3 As noted above, this will enable the development of the three priority workstreams from Phase 1 of Innovation Gateway plus provide capacity to deliver the work. The projects are outlined below.
- 2.4 **Phase 1 - Station Area (Floormat) Public Realm:** Further work is required to develop the outline designs for the space surrounding the station. These plans will ensure the Station area is a welcoming transit interchange with good design and high-quality public realm that will create a 'sense of place' and act as a gateway into Rotherham. The Gainshare funding will be used to progress the designs to RIBA Stage 4 Detailed Design. The design work will take place in conjunction with partners working on the Station Full Business Case to ensure coordination with the mainline and tram-train designs and ensuring a holistic design is ready for the construction phase of the Station. Total cost of design stage: estimated £400,000
- 2.5 **Phase 1 - Innovation Gateway Anchor Building:** To activate the Station area (floormat) and create a well-used, safe space, the Masterplan proposes the development of an anchor building on site. This should be a high-quality, flagship building of architectural merit with an anchor tenant to act as a gateway into Rotherham. It would also be an anchor building for the Innovation Campus and incorporate the required station facilities into the ground floor. Further work is required to explore need across the region and to scope out a strong anchor tenant. Once this is determined, feasibility and design work will be undertaken to ensure the building works for the end user and the Station facilities are incorporated. Total cost of next stage development: estimated £624,000
- 2.6 **Phase 1a - Effingham Street Masterplan & Active Travel Route:** The proposed Station site is located 15-20 minutes-walk outside of the town centre. It is essential that the town centre benefits from the development of the Station, and key to this will be ensuring commuters can easily travel between the two locations. There is scope to deliver improvements to a key

route to the town centre along Effingham Street and the A633 (St Ann's Roundabout). A comprehensive scheme has been proposed that would incorporate a new cycle/foot bridge, landscape improvements, Active Travel provision, and improved pedestrian crossings. This will complement the tram-train stop at the Rotherham Gateway site that will enable commuters to connect quickly and easily into the town centre. The next stage of works will be full design of all aspects of the Active Travel route (including the new bridge) ready for delivery.

Contribution to next stage of development: estimated £1,026,000

- 2.7 The Phase 1 interventions, particularly the Station Area Public Realm and the Station Anchor Building will input to the design of the mainline/tram-train Stations as part of the Station Full Business Case. Therefore, the Council wishes to progress the workstreams concurrently with the Station Full Business Case. The Council is considering the resourcing required to ensure that the schemes can run concurrently and required outputs are produced in a timely manner.

### **3. Options considered and recommended proposal**

- 3.1 The Council could consider not progressing the other elements at this stage (Station building and public realm). This, however, could impact the Mainline Station/Tram-Train delivery programme, significantly delaying the progression of the FBC. It is critical that the public realm and building designs are prepared so they are ready for delivery at the same time. This option is not recommended in line with the Council's ambitions for Borough-wide regeneration.

**This option is not recommended.**

- 3.2 Funding could be sought from alternative sources including Council revenue rather than allocating the Gainshare funding. However, this type of development work is what Gainshare revenue is designated for, and it is a priority project for the Council as well as SYMCA, as part of the Don Valley Corridor and South Yorkshire Plan for Good Growth. Using alternative sources would impact on the wider Council revenue budget.

**This option is not recommended.**

- 3.3 The Gainshare funding is specifically designed for the purposes proposed here and has been approved by the SYMCA. It is therefore considered the best source for the development of the Phase 1 projects. The development of the priority projects now will ensure both the Masterplan and the Station Full Business Case can develop concurrently, meeting the Council's regeneration aims.

**This option is recommended.**

### **4. Consultation on proposal**

- 4.1 Stakeholder consultation was undertaken throughout the master-planning process. This was facilitated by the Project Governance structure. Partners presented opportunities through the Station Board and Station Steering Group that fed into the master-planning and design process. This included

rail stakeholders such as Network Rail and Transport for the North as well as Train Operating Companies. The master-planning team has worked closely with Network Rail on the design development of both stations (mainline and tram-train), and the completed designs reflect the requirements of the project stakeholders.

- 4.2 Consultation took place with stakeholders such as emergency services, utilities (including Northern Powergrid), Secure by Design and colleagues managing car parking/EV charging. The draft Masterplan was circulated for feedback from internal teams, including colleagues in Planning to explore the implications for the longer-term vision for the Masterplan area. Engagement sessions also took place with developers to inform the Delivery Strategy for the Masterplan and explore market conditions.
- 4.3 Engagement on the wider scheme has taken place with local and regional stakeholders including representatives of local businesses, education and community partners via internal and external boards. This includes the Employment and Skills Board and the Rotherham Together Partnership. The Town Board has been updated regularly and is supportive of the scheme.
- 4.4 In September 2025, public engagement took place at the Rotherham Show. This was an opportunity to share information on the Station and the wider Masterplan which was positively received. A press campaign has been launched featuring an opinion piece by the Leader of the Council in the Yorkshire Post. The Rotherham Advertiser is backing the scheme and is running a series of press releases sharing key milestones.
- 4.5 Information has also been shared on the Council's social media platforms, and a website has been developed where people can pledge their support for the scheme. This has currently received approximately 1000 pledges of support. The scheme has received constant support from local MPs. MPs John Healey and Sarah Champion have both provided letters of support for the scheme. In December 2025, the Chief Executive spoke at the Great Northern Conference where the scheme was well-received. There was considerable press interest following the NPR announcement in January including online articles, regional news programmes and specialist rail press.
- 4.6 In the coming months, work with stakeholders will continue to obtain feedback before work starts on the Full Business Case for the Station and the Strategic Programme Business Case for the wider masterplan. This will include follow-up sessions with the stakeholders and partners who were consulted as part of the Masterplan development. This review work will be crucial to guide the next stages of the Masterplan design work.

## 5. **Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision**

5.1	Funding draw-down approved at SYMCA Board	January 2026
	Council internal allocation and spend approval	February 2026

Scoping and initiate procurement of external expertise	Qtr 1 2026/27
Appoint consultants	Qtr 2/3 2026/27
Development of three priority project designs/RIBA stage/business cases	September 2026 to December 2027

## **6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications**

- 6.1 Gainshare is an annual revenue and capital allocation of funding from SYMCA. The Council has had its bid approved by SYMCA to use prior years' revenue allocations to complete the work outlined above. Further work is underway to understand how the whole fund will be used over its lifetime.
- 6.2 As reported to Cabinet in February 2026 as part of the December 2025 Financial Monitoring Update, a funding request of £2.050m was to be made for revenue Gainshare funding that SYMCA hold but is earmarked for the Council. The bid was considered and approved by SYMCA's Board on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2026. This funding is now being applied to the three specific workstreams outlined in this report.
- 6.3 The engagement of third-party contractors / consultants to support the delivery of the activity detailed in this report must be procured in compliance with relevant procurement legislation (Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or the Procurement Act 2023 dependent upon the route to market identified) as well as the Council's own Financial and Procurement Procedure Rules.

## **7. Legal Advice and Implications**

- 7.1 The recommendations in this report are in accordance with previous authorities of the Council and the prevailing statutory framework.
- 7.2 If required by SYMCA, the Council may need to enter into grant documentation to access the Gainshare funding and legal advice in this regard should be taken at that time.

## **8. Human Resources Advice and Implications**

- 8.1 There are no immediate HR implications arising from this paper. The concurrent delivery of multiple Phase 1 workstreams as they progress may require additional resource which should be managed following internal recruitment and procurement policies.

## **9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults**

- 9.1 None

## **10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications**

10.1 See attached Equalities Impact Screening and Assessment.

## **11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change**

11.1 See attached Climate Impact Assessment

## **12. Implications for Partners**

12.1 Rotherham Gateway is the northern anchor of the Don Valley Growth Corridor, recently launched and a key aspiration and priority for SYMCA. Rotherham Gateway, alongside Bassingthorpe Farm and Templeborough will contribute to the wider economic corridor, with Gateway being a catalyst to 'kickstart' development and investment in the wider region. A strategic approach to working will be required with SYMCA and Sheffield City Council to maximise the opportunity the corridor presents.

12.2 The Council will work closely with colleagues at SYMCA to develop the 'place-based' case for investment that will require flexibility to the funding approach and assurance for the scheme.

12.3 The Council will work closely with the wider scheme stakeholders as the project governance develops. A scheme of this scale will require a commitment from the Council and project stakeholders to provide the skills and resource required for delivery. This will mean implications for staffing and structure as well as recognition of the need for wider resource support such as consultants.

## **13. Risks and Mitigation**

13.1 **Risk:** The Station design (as part of the Station Full Business Case) will require input from the Station Masterplan development. Therefore, any delays in the Phase 1 priority projects could impact on the mainline/tram-train design work taking place for the Full Business Case.

**Mitigation:** The Council is considering the resourcing required to ensure that all elements of Phase 1 can run concurrently and required outputs are produced in a timely manner. Officers working on the Station will provide early sight of requirements to internal services such as Procurement and Legal to ensure the time needed to appoint external expertise, for example, can be built into the programme.

13.2 **Risk:** Funding not secured for delivery stage of the priority projects.

**Mitigation:** The Gainshare funding will enable the development of the schemes and confirm the scheme delivery costs. This forms part of the Programme Business Case submitted to SYMCA with a view to sourcing wider delivery funding.

## **14. Accountable Officers**

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This report is published on the Council's [website](#).