

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT

2025 - 2026

A NOTE FROM THE CHAIR OF OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD, CLLR BRIAN STEELE



It is my pleasure to introduce Rotherham Council's Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report for 2025–2026, which demonstrates the growing maturity, effectiveness and impact of scrutiny across the Council and its partners.

Over the past year, scrutiny has become more focused on delivering tangible outcomes, strengthening governance, improving decision making and ensuring accountability to Rotherham residents. This is evidenced not just by increased activity, but by the clear influence scrutiny has had on policies, strategies and service delivery.

Pre-decision scrutiny has increased significantly, with 42 reports considered, a 44% rise on the previous year, alongside more workshops, reviews and site visits. This reflects a shift from building solid foundations in 2024–2025 to delivering deeper, more confident and more influential scrutiny in 2025–2026.

Scrutiny's Impact has been demonstrated through shaping major strategies such as the Best Start Plan, Homelessness Prevention Strategy and Housing Strategy, by strengthening governance in complex areas including Selective Licensing and Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects, supporting improved decisions on regeneration schemes such as Markets and Libraries and delivering impactful reviews, including Access to Contraception and Menopause, with recommendations accepted and progressed by Cabinet. Scrutiny has also shown its long-term value, with sustained challenge, such as on NHS Quality Accounts, driving measurable improvements in transparency and reporting over time.

Importantly, the scrutiny model itself has been strengthened through the introduction of the Scrutiny Steering Group, the development of the Scrutiny Tool and the Effective Scrutiny Action Plan, embedding a more consistent, evidence-led and outcomes-focused approach to this important work. Taken together, this demonstrates that scrutiny in Rotherham is not only more active, but more effective, strategic and impactful in its scrutiny activity, delivering real benefits for Rotherham People and supporting Council Plan priorities.

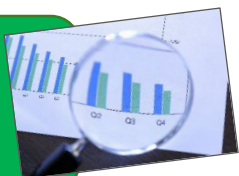
I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to scrutiny during 2025-2026, Members, Co-optees, Officers, Partners and members of the public who have engaged with and supported its work, for their continued commitment and positive response to robust and constructive challenge. Looking ahead, we will build on this year's achievements, ensuring scrutiny remains innovative, evidence-led and firmly rooted in the needs of Rotherham residents.

Councillor Brian Steele
Chair, Overview and Scrutiny Management Board



2025-26 SCRUTINY AT A GLANCE

4 scrutiny commissions



97

15% increase
from 2024-25

substantive items considered

44% increase
from 2024-25

42

pre-decision scrutiny reports



1 decision subject to call in

50% reduction
from 2024-25

71% increase
from 2024-25

12

workshops



3 reviews completed

300% increase from
2024-25

2 reviews progressed



500% increase
from
2024-25

6 site visits



15 off-agenda briefings

42% reduction
from 2024-25



FAQ:

WHAT IS SCRUTINY?

Scrutiny aims to ensure that public services and policies best meet the needs of Rotherham Residents. It acts as the check and balance to the Council's Executive decision makers (the Cabinet) by contributing to policy review and development; holding the Cabinet and partners to account for decisions and performance; investigating issues that matter to residents; working with Council officers and partners to improve services.

WHO IS INVOLVED?

Any Councillor who is not a member of the Cabinet can participate. Committees also have co-opted members and dedicated officer support. Cabinet Members, Strategic Directors, and representatives of partner organisations are invited to attend meetings and discuss issues.

WHAT KIND OF THINGS CAN SCRUTINY LOOK AT?

Councillors and co-opted members prioritise issues. The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board manages the overall Work Programme, considering whether scrutiny can make a real difference by looking at an issue.

IS THERE ANYTHING SCRUTINY CAN'T EXAMINE?

Individual complaints or regulatory decisions are not appropriate topics for scrutiny.

CAN I SUGGEST A TOPIC?

Yes, contact your ward Councillor to suggest a topic, or use the [online form](#) to submit your suggestion.

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Contact the [Governance Team](#) for more details on anything in this report.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB) acts as the principal overview and scrutiny committee of the Council. It considers matters relating to the conduct, structure and procedures of overview and scrutiny, ensures overview and scrutiny of the Council's values, plans and strategies and makes recommendations for improvements either directly or via the Health, Improving Lives or Improving Places Select Commissions through oversight of their respective work programmes.

2025-26 KEY CONTACTS



Cllr Brian Steele
Chair



Cllr Joshua Bacon
Vice Chair




Phillip Horsfield
Link Officer



Barbel Gale
Governance Manager

Selective Licensing



OSMB considered Selective Licensing in October and November of 2025, in conjunction with IPSC, and in May 2026. During these sessions, the Board scrutinised the outcomes of the 2020–2025 scheme and the justification for continuation and redesign, with members challenging the strength of the evidence base, particularly around demonstrable improvements to property conditions, compliance, and tenant outcomes.

This robust scrutiny had a clear impact on shaping the Council's approach, with OSMB's challenge reinforcing the need for a more outcomes-focused and targeted refreshed scheme, better aligned with wider housing and neighbourhood priorities, supported by clearer performance metrics and reporting. Through focus on transparency, clearer rationale for area selection, and more robust evaluation of value for money, the Board influenced how proposals were refined before Cabinet consideration, strengthening governance and ensuring that subsequent decisions on Selective Licensing were grounded in more rigorous evidence and accountability.

Best Start Plan

At its 11 March 2026 meeting, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board undertook pre-decision scrutiny of the Best Start Plan 2026–2029, examining its evidence base, delivery framework and alignment with wider strategies, particularly in the context of rapid development following a December 2025 multi-agency summit, and recognising the need for stronger local insight to support implementation. The Board's impact was to support approval while strengthening the plan's delivery approach, most notably by recommending the inclusion of more granular, neighbourhood-level data to better target interventions and address inequalities, thereby ensuring that Cabinet decision-making was informed by a clearer emphasis on place-based delivery, measurable outcomes and improved accountability for achieving early years improvements across Rotherham.



South Yorkshire Mayor's Q&A Session

At its 10 December 2025 meeting, OSMB held the South Yorkshire Mayor's Q&A session, using it to directly challenge regional priorities, funding decisions and delivery across the Mayoral Combined Authority, with a particular focus on transport, economic growth, skills and the distribution of devolved funding as they affect Rotherham.

Through targeted questioning and follow-up actions, the Board strengthened accountability by pressing for clearer links between regional strategies and tangible local outcomes, improving transparency around funding allocations and their impact, and sharpening the Council's future engagement with SYMCA by identifying priority issues to pursue—thereby ensuring a more robust, Rotherham-focused influence within ongoing regional collaboration.



Markets and Libraries Pre-Decision Scrutiny and Site Visit

OSMB undertook pre-decision scrutiny of the Markets and Libraries redevelopment ahead of Cabinet consideration at its 6 May 2026 meeting, in conjunction with IPSC, building on earlier member engagement through a site visit in February 2026 which enabled Members to directly observe the scheme and inform their questioning of officers and Cabinet Members. Through this combined approach of site-based insight and formal scrutiny, the Board focused on ensuring the robustness of the business case, delivery assumptions, and governance arrangements for a major town centre regeneration project.

The impact of this scrutiny was to provide assurance and strengthen the final proposals taken to Cabinet, with the Board formally supporting the recommendations while adding constructive challenge to improve clarity on delivery, risks and outcomes. This scrutiny ensured that decision-making was informed by a clearer understanding of the scheme's practical implications and local context, increasing confidence in the project's viability and reinforcing accountability for its delivery, whilst the earlier site visit enhanced the quality and focus of member challenge.



Homelessness Prevention

At its 13 January 2026 meeting, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board considered the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2026–2031, scrutinising priorities around early intervention, partnership working and the use of temporary accommodation in response to rising demand. The Board's impact was to support the strategy while strengthening its focus on prevention and delivery, particularly by emphasising the need for clearer outcome measures, improved data to understand demand drivers, and stronger integration with wider housing and health services; this ensured that Cabinet decision-making was underpinned by a more robust, evidence-led and preventative approach, reinforcing accountability for reducing homelessness and improving support for vulnerable residents.



Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects – Whitestone Solar Farm

At its 15 October 2025 meeting as part of pre-decision scrutiny of Cabinet proposals, OSMB considered the Whitestone Solar Farm, a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP). Members heard that, as an NSIP, the scheme would not be determined by the Council but by the Secretary of State, with the Council acting only as a statutory consultee responsible for submitting technical evidence and a Local Impact Report within strict national timescales. The Board's discussion therefore focused on clarifying governance arrangements, including the proposed delegation to Senior Officers to ensure timely and compliant submissions, and reinforcing understanding of the Council's limited but important role in representing local impacts through the Planning Inspectorate process.

The impact of OSMB's scrutiny was to strengthen the robustness and clarity of the Council's approach to engaging with NSIPs rather than influencing the merits of the Whitestone proposal itself. By scrutinising and supporting the delegation and reporting arrangements, the Board helped ensure that the Council could respond effectively within statutory deadlines, maintain oversight through regular reporting, and present co-ordinated, evidence-based representations on behalf of Rotherham communities and residents affected by the project. This clarified governance framework improved preparedness for Whitestone and future NSIPs, ensuring that local concerns could be systematically captured and conveyed despite the Council's non-decision-making role.



Scrutiny Steering Group

During 2025-2026, the Chair of OSMB has brought together Chairs, Vice-Chairs, Elected Members, Link Officers and Governance Advisors involved in delivering apolitical scrutiny at Rotherham Council to discuss work programme planning, share ideas around operating models, consider challenges and barriers to success and to consider opportunities to innovate and deliver added value impact through scrutiny activity.

This has culminated in the formation of the Scrutiny Steering Group which now meets at least twice yearly to consider these themes, and ensure that scrutiny delivers effective challenge and drives tangible front-line service improvements for Rotherham residents. This has also led to the formal adoption of a 'Scrutiny Tool' and the development of a 'Effective Scrutiny Action Plan' which taken together assists all Scrutiny Commissions to plan, deliver and evaluate activities and impact in a consistent considered manner, following successful trial via the Health Select Commission.



Council Plan themes supported by the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board in 2025-26:

CHILDREN AND
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2026-27 KEY CONTACTS



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Chair



Cllr Joshua Bacon
Vice Chair



Phil Horsfield
Link Officer



Barbel Gale
Governance Manager

HEALTH SELECT COMMISSION

The remit of the Health Select Commission (HSC) is to undertake scrutiny in respect of all matters relating to Rotherham in the context of health and the public health agenda, as described in the relevant legislation. In broad terms, this relates to health service commissioning, partnerships and integrated health and social care services, emergency planning, public health arrangements, measures delivering health improvements and promoting wellbeing, measures intended to address health inequalities, food standards and environmental health. The Chair also represents Rotherham at the South Yorkshire, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC), which considers matters affecting regional or specialist health services and ‘matters of substantial variation’.

2025-26 KEY CONTACTS



Cllr Eve Keenan
Chair



Cllr Taiba Yasseen
Vice Chair



Emily Parry-Harries
Link Officer



Kerry Grinsill-Clinton
Governance Advisor

Same Day Emergency Care and Joint Lung Clinic Site Visits

The Health Select Commission’s scrutiny of the Same Day Emergency Care (SDEC) Centre and Joint Lung Clinic was shaped by direct member engagement, including a site visit to the SDEC facility in February 2026 and a site visit to the Joint Lung Clinic serving Rotherham and Barnsley patients in March 2026, which then informed formal consideration of both items at the 26 March 2026 meeting. The Joint Lung Clinic broke new ground as Rotherham’s HSC arranged for the site visit to be undertaken in conjunction with Elected Members from Barnsley Council whose residents were also served by the facility. This approach delivered harnessed the collective efforts of both Local Authorities, and minimised the amount of time NHS facilitators were detracted from their core functions. Members reflected that both the SDEC and Lung Clinic discussions were explicitly augmented by the site visit, with Members using first-hand observation of patient pathways, facilities and partnership working to test evidence presented by NHS partners and to focus questioning on access, operational delivery and system resilience.

In both cases, the impact of this combining site visits with formal consideration during a public HSC meeting was to strengthen the depth, credibility and outcomes of scrutiny. Insights gained through site visits directly informed the issues raised in the public meeting, particularly around patient experience, infrastructure and integration, ensuring these were reflected in the Commission’s conclusions and follow-up expectations. As a result, scrutiny added value by translating real-world observation into evidence-based challenge and actionable oversight, reinforcing accountability for service performance and shaping how both the SDEC and Joint Lung Clinic will be reviewed and improved going forward, with the recommendations made securing commitment to defining and extending the scope of planned post-implementation evaluation and to The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust considering the transferability and application of operating practices, innovations and initiatives delivering to other clinical disciplines, alongside working together with the Cancer Alliance and Council to revisit long standing issues relating to parking at the hospital site.



NHS
The Rotherham
NHS Foundation Trust



South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw
CANCER ALLIANCE

Menopause Spotlight Review

During the 2025–26 municipal year, the Health Select Commission progressed its Menopause Spotlight Review from workshop activity into a formal scrutiny review. This culminates in its consideration and endorsement of the final report and recommendations at the 14 May 2026 meeting.

Drawing on evidence from partners, clinicians and residents, the Commission identified significant gaps in awareness, access to support and consistency of provision, and agreed a suite of recommendations focused on improving public information, strengthening primary care responses, including ‘Menopause Champions’ in GP surgeries, enhancing mental health support, and developing co-ordinated, multi-agency approaches. The Commission’s work translated lived experience and system insight into a clear, actionable set of borough-wide improvement recommendations, ensuring that partners across health, education and employment settings were collectively tasked with delivering measurable change for the benefit of all Rotherham residents.

The Commission’s scrutiny added tangible value by elevating a previously less recognised issue, engendering cross-system commitment to improvement, and embedding a practical, evidence-led framework for ongoing delivery and monitoring. Even before the presentation of its final report, following the initial workshop, additional pro-active activities such as online clinical information sessions, International Women’s Day menopause sessions and the publication of Healthwatch’s Menopause report were noted amongst the Council and delivery partners.

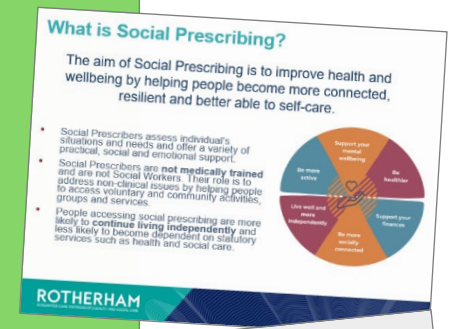
The review was subsequently presented to OMSB on 3 June 2026, where its referral to Cabinet for consideration was supported, reinforcing its strategic importance and ensuring corporate visibility and accountability. The work also generated local press coverage, highlighting key findings, which amplified the reach and influence of the Commission’s recommendations beyond the Council’s governance structures.



Social Prescribing Member Session

During the previous municipal year, the Health Select Commission identified social prescribing as a priority area and commissioned a dedicated Member Session to ensure all Elected Members were enabled to support Rotherham residents who might benefit from Social Prescribing. Drawing on its role to examine cross-cutting health issues and engage system partners, the Commission intended the session to build Member understanding of how Social Prescribing operates locally, particularly its integration with Primary Care and the Voluntary and Community Sector, and to test promote its effectiveness in improving wellbeing and reducing demand on acute services.

In addition to increasing Members’ awareness about the role and benefits of Social Prescribing, this session also embedded understanding around the wider determinants of health and the referral pathways available to Rotherham residents who could benefit from the enabling services Social Prescribing offers. Utilising their increased knowledge base, Members are now better placed to ensure social prescribing is effectively scrutinised with stronger focus on prevention, accountability and service impact across the Commission’s work programme.



Health Hub Pre-Decision Scrutiny

HSC undertook pre-decision scrutiny of the proposed Town Centre Health Hub at its 26 June 2025 meeting, examining plans to repurpose the former Boots building in Rotherham Town Centre into an NHS integrated facility combining pharmacy, GP and walk-in services. The Commission's scrutiny tested the scheme's strategic alignment with improving primary care access, reducing system pressures and supporting town centre regeneration, thereby strengthening the clarity and robustness of the proposal taken forward to Cabinet, including delivery assumptions, funding arrangements and partnership governance.

Whilst the Commission supported the recommendations to Cabinet, they also requested that the relevant services return to HSC to discuss Phase 2 proposals, to ensure that residents views and the reservations expressed by members during Phase 1 pre-decision scrutiny had been considered when developing plans. This reinforced scheme's role as both a health and regeneration intervention, ensuring a stronger focus on accessibility, system demand reduction and local accountability in the final decision-making. Members added value by improving the evidence base and strategic narrative underpinning Cabinet's decision and ensuring clearer expectations around delivery and impact.

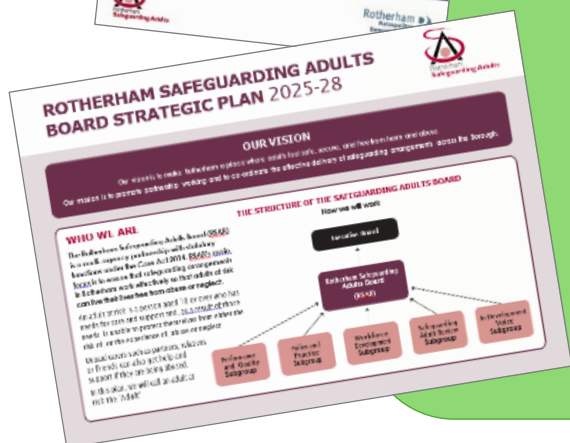
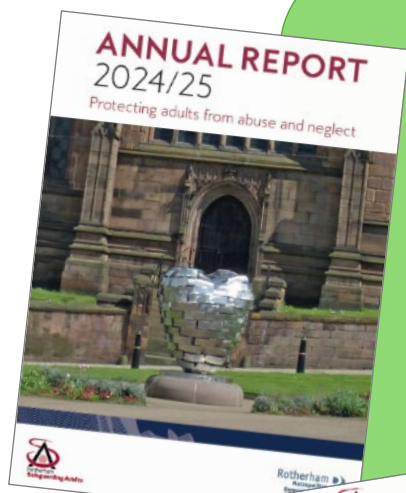
Local press coverage which followed consideration of this item, highlighted both the scale of the proposed facility and the Commission's scrutiny role, extending awareness of the scheme and its potential benefits.



Rotherham Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report and Strategic Plan 2025-2028

At its 22 January 2026 meeting, the Commission considered the Rotherham Safeguarding Adults Board (RSAB) Annual Report 2024-2025 and Strategic Plan 2025-2028, scrutinising safeguarding performance, partnership effectiveness and future priorities such as prevention, engagement and strengthening the voice of vulnerable adults.

HSC's scrutiny helped to strengthen accountability and focus future scrutiny, by challenging the robustness of data, emphasising the importance of clear public communication and the use of lived experience, and reinforcing expectations for timely, ongoing reporting to support continuous oversight. This also ensured that safeguarding remained a high-visibility priority within its 2025-26 work programme, with strong focus on measurable outcomes, transparency and partnership delivery and in shaping how the strategic plan will be monitored going forward, cementing a more rigorous, evidence-led approach to scrutiny and enhancing accountability across agencies charged with improving adult safeguarding practice in the Borough.



Adult Social Care Mental Health Strategy Pre-Decision Scrutiny

At its 26 June 2025 meeting, HSC undertook pre-decision scrutiny of the Adult Social Care Mental Health Strategy, examining its focus on prevention, integration with health services and support for people with complex needs, while testing the robustness of delivery plans, partnership arrangements and performance measures.

The Commission's supported progression of the strategy to Cabinet whilst adding value by strengthening its delivery and accountability framework, reinforcing expectations around clear, measurable outcomes, improved performance monitoring and stronger system integration across health, social care and community services. This ensured Cabinet decision-making was underpinned by a more robust, outcomes-focused approach with clearer accountability for delivery.



JHOSC Involvement: IVF and Gluten Free Prescribing Consultation

During 2025–26, HSC contributed to the work of the South Yorkshire, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire JHOSC via the Chair through scrutiny of South Yorkshire ICB's IVF and Gluten-Free Prescribing policies, with consideration at JHOSC's July 2025 and October meetings 2025. JHOSC ensured robust challenge on consultation quality and length, equality impacts and the risk of widening health inequalities, including advocating for extended consultation and stronger evidence of patient impact prior to decisions being made. Through this activity, HSC's Chair ensured Rotherham's voice was reflected in the process by securing extended and broadened consultation, demonstrating how local scrutiny can shape accountability and influence policy across and decision making the wider integrated care system.



NHS Plan and Neighbourhood Health Services – The Rotherham Approach

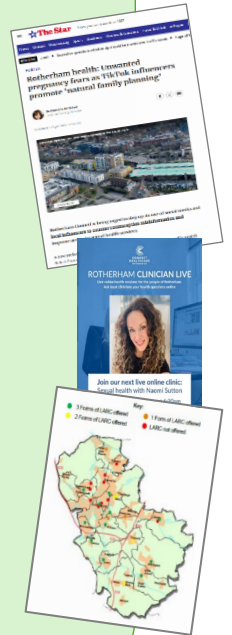
At its 14 May 2026 meeting, the Commission considered local implications relating to the NHS 10 Year Plan and Neighbourhood Health Services, examining how national priorities, particularly the shift from hospital based care to prevention and community based provision, would be implemented in Rotherham through place partnerships and integrated neighbourhood models. Members scrutinised system readiness, workforce capacity, and alignment with existing structures and mechanisms such as primary care networks, social prescribing and the proposed Health Hub, using this to challenge partners on the clarity of delivery plans and measurable outcomes. HSC's scrutiny aimed to strengthen local accountability and implementation clarity, reinforcing expectations for robust performance frameworks, clear articulation of neighbourhood delivery models and stronger integration across health, social care and voluntary sector partners, thereby ensuring national policy was translated into a more locally grounded, evidence-led approach subject to ongoing scrutiny.



Access To Contraception Review

During 2025–26, the Commission conducted its Access to Contraception Scrutiny Review, which culminated with the recommendations and broad ambitions arrived at being presented to OSMB and Cabinet. Those recommendations and broad ambitions were intended to address inconsistent access, particularly to LARC, alongside barriers such as stigma, misinformation and uneven GP provision. This initial consideration attracted local press coverage which highlighted ‘patchy access’ and concerns about misinformation, amplifying the issue and reinforcing the relevance of the Commission’s work. The Commission’s converted evidence gathered and public concern into a clear, action-oriented improvement framework, which encouraged the expansion of outreach clinics, the use of developments such as the Town Centre Health Hub to provide augmented accessible services, advice and guidance and the delivery of strengthened, targeted public health communications with the potential to deliver significant local impact.

Cabinet formally responded on 8 June 2026, where the Commission’s recommendations were fully or partially accepted, and work will progress in relation to delivering the improvements associated them in conjunction with delivery partners. This outcome demonstrates the Commission’s direct influence on policy and service planning, securing commitments to expand outreach, explore delivery options and enhance education and promotion, ensuring that identified inequalities are addressed through a coordinated, evidence-based programme of improvement.



Quality Accounts 2025-26

Every year, HSC reviews the Quality Accounts for The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust, Rotherham Doncaster and South Humber NHS Trust and Yorkshire Ambulance Service. When considering their 2025-26 accounts in May the Commission reflected on their clear cumulative impact, with all three organisations evidencing responsiveness to prior-year scrutiny through improved clarity, greater use of plain English and stronger articulation of how feedback informs service improvement and broader transparency improvements. The Commission’s intention was to ensure Quality Accounts reflected outcome-focused, place informed, accountable reporting, consistently challenging providers on health inequalities, data transparency and demonstrable impact on Rotherham residents and is reflected in expectations regarding use of population health data, clear presentation of performance and trends and more explicit links between feedback, learning and service change. The Commission have determined targeted follow-up work, such as neurodiversity waits at RDaSH, urgent care performance and inequalities at YAS, and embedding learning into frontline practice at TRFT, demonstrating a mature scrutiny approach that influences reporting quality year-on-year while encouraging ongoing commitment to improved transparency, accountability and patient outcomes for Rotherham residents.



Council Plan themes supported by the Health Select Commission’s work in 2025-26:



2026-27 KEY CONTACTS



Cllr Eve Keenan
Chair



Cllr Taiba Yasseen
Vice Chair



Emily Parry-Harries
Link Officer



Kerry Grinsill-Clinton
Governance Advisor

IMPROVING LIVES SELECT COMMISSION

The Improving Lives Scrutiny Commission (ILSC) is tasked with carrying out in-depth overview and scrutiny of issues affecting Rotherham's residents including the Borough's education functions, including educational outcomes and expanding opportunities for skills and learning for young people, SEND (special educational needs and disabilities) and reviewing the performance of Children's and Young Peoples Services. Safeguarding children, which comprises of neglect, abuse, CSE (Child Sexual Exploitation) and CCE (Child Criminal Exploitation) and prevention and early intervention strategies including family intervention, fostering, adoption and looked after children. It also considers transition from childhood to adulthood for young people with complex needs and Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), in conjunction with the Health Select Commission as required and Domestic Abuse, including the Domestic Abuse Strategy and response.

2025-26 KEY CONTACTS



Cllr Gina Monk
Chair



Cllr Rajmund Brent
Vice Chair



Kelly White
Link Officer



Debbie Pons
Governance Advisor

Children's Strategy Pre-Decision Scrutiny Workshop



The Improving Lives Select Commission added clear value to the development of the Children's Strategy by scrutinising the draft alongside young people from the Young People's Partnership Board, ensuring their priorities, intended outcomes and measures were robustly tested. This collaborative approach strengthened the strategy's focus on delivering tangible improvements for young people in Rotherham, with Members' recommendations enhancing the clarity of performance data, improving access to information on support and resources, and sharpening the narrative to better demonstrate real-world impact, ultimately supporting a more outcome-driven and effective submission to Cabinet.

Domestic Abuse and Sexual Offences Strategy 2026-2029

The Improving Lives Select Commission strengthened the Domestic Abuse and Sexual Offences Strategy 2026-2029 through early, in-depth scrutiny, ensuring a more focused, coordinated and effective response to key areas of need. By challenging and refining the proposed approach, Members helped embed a consistent, survivor- and family-centred model that better addresses violence against women and girls while promoting inclusivity for all individuals at risk. Their recommendations enhanced the use of data to inform targeted interventions and sharpened the identification of vulnerable groups, ultimately ensuring the refreshed Strategy is more responsive, equitable and capable of delivering meaningful protection and improved outcomes for victims and communities.



Corporate Parenting Partnership Board Annual Report

The Commission scrutinised the Corporate Parenting Partnership Board Annual Report 2024/25 in April 2026, which strengthened oversight and accountability by driving a clearer, evidence-led understanding of outcomes for children in care and care leavers. Through robust challenge and detailed discussion with officers, Members secured targeted recommendations to improve the use of placement data to inform decision-making and to proactively reshape the narrative around care experience, aiming to reduce stigma and promote a more accurate, strengths-based view of young people's potential, ultimately supporting more informed policy development and improved outcomes for this vulnerable group.



Children's Capital of Culture – Impact and Legacy

The Select Commission strengthened the evaluation of the Children's Capital of Culture programme by actively shaping its evidence base through detailed scrutiny and cross-commission engagement, ensuring both quantitative outcomes and lived experiences were fully captured. Members' contributions enriched the evaluation process, improving how impact and legacy were evidenced and articulated, and helping to ensure the final report clearly demonstrated the programme's tangible benefits for children, young people and communities across Rotherham.



Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Sufficiency Strategy 2026-2029

In November 2025 the Commission considered the draft Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Sufficiency Strategy 2026-2029, in advance of its submission to Cabinet and welcomed the opportunity to scrutinise this important work at an early stage and influence the draft strategies vision, aspirations and plan for how success of the strategy would be measured.

The Select Commission put forward a series of targeted recommendations designed to strengthen the report's clarity, effectiveness and overall impact. These recommendations were intended to enhance the quality of the final document and ensure it more clearly demonstrated how its findings and proposals would drive improved outcomes before it was considered by Cabinet.



Council Plan themes supported by the Improving Lives Select Commission's work in 2025-26:

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2026-27 KEY CONTACTS



Cllr Gina Monk
Chair



Cllr Donna Sutton
Vice Chair



Kelly White
Link Officer



Natasha Aucott
Governance Advisor

IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION

The remit of the Improving Places Select Commission (IPSC) is to undertake scrutiny activity in respect of all matters pertaining to the Borough of Rotherham as a place. In broad terms, this remit relates to business and economic development, employment, emergency planning, environment, housing, climate change, leisure, culture and tourism, transport and highways, trading standards and environmental health. The breadth of functions and services that fall within the Commission's remit is significant and varied, with some cross-over with the work of the other scrutiny commissions.

2025-26 KEY CONTACTS



Cllr Cameron McKiernan
Chair



Cllr Adam Tinsley
Vice Chair



Andrew Bramidge
Link Officer



Kristianne Thorogood
Governance Advisor

Housing Strategy 2025-2030 Pre-Decision Scrutiny

Members were given the opportunity to scrutinise the draft Housing Strategy 2025-2030 in September 2025. Members were supportive of the Strategy but made some additional recommendations to Cabinet around the wording of the key priorities under the Strategy and the inclusion of more detail and case studies on how anti-social behaviour would be dealt with by Housing Officers, as they wanted to focus on the Council Plan Strategic Priority of 'Places are Thriving, Safe and Clean'. This in turn led to the development and delivery of the Anti-Social Behaviour Workshop.



Anti-Social Behaviour Workshop

In December 2025, IPSC Members participated in a workshop focusing on ASB, as experienced and dealt with by the Housing Team and colleagues in the Community Protection Unit. As part of this workshop, Members took part in a breakout Case Study group session where Members and Officers worked through a number of real-life scenarios together and were able to discuss the particular complexities of each case and valuable lessons learnt. Feedback from the session was that both Members and Officers found it extremely useful to consider issues relating to ASB from different viewpoints. Going forward, their enhanced understanding will enable them to more effectively signpost and support Rotherham residents experience ASB issues in their communities.



The Waterfront at Rother Valley Country Park Site Visit

In March 2026, IPSC Members had the opportunity to visit to the new Waterfront complex and café at Rother Valley Country Park, just prior to its opening to the public. Members that attended were impressed by the quality of the leisure facilities that this investment had produced and as a result of discussions with officers on site, were able to bring to the attention of OSMB, issues regarding recruitment and procurement that warranted further scrutiny.



School Road Safety Review

Throughout the 25-26 municipal year, IPSC Members have been engaged in a detailed Scrutiny Review of School Road Safety across the borough. This has involved a range of meetings with officers working across directorates at RMBC in Highways & Transportation, Crossing Patrol, Parking Enforcement, Active Travel and School Engagement. Members have recently rounded off the Review with an informative meeting with officers involved in the Safer Roads Partnership and Active Lives initiatives at SYMCA. Work is underway to prepare a report setting out the Commission's recommendations, ahead of presentation to OSMB and Cabinet. Recommendations are expected to support the creation of safer environments around schools for parents, pupils and crossing patrols through effective traffic management, enforcement and safety focused street furniture.



Rotherham Events

In March 2026, Members received an overview from the Council's Events Team, and partner agency Flux, on the programme of borough-wide events that had taken place over the year, including the events that ran throughout the Children's Capital of Culture year. Members celebrated the diversity, variety and reach of the successful events programme. They also considered ambitions for the future, providing feedback and suggestions for improvement intended to increase community engagement and participation, to support the economic prosperity of the borough, promote community cohesion and raise the aspirations of Rotherham residents.

Playing Pitch Strategy Pre-Decision Scrutiny

In April 2026, Members scrutinised the draft Playing Pitch Strategy. They welcomed the thorough review of playing pitch facilities the Strategy provided and were impressed by the innovative portfolio work being conducted with the Football Foundation in relation to 3G football pitches. Members intend to ensure that access to pitches is inclusive across the borough and that appropriate community use agreements are in place, and will receive an update on the work undertaken with sporting governing bodies, partners and Voluntary and Community Sector organisations once the strategy is underway, in the 2026-27 municipal year.

Council Plan themes supported by the Improving Places Commission's work in 2025-26:

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