Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Public Report

Audit Committee

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting:
Audit Committee – 28 July 2026

Report title:
External inspections, reviews, and audits update

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included in the Forward Plan?
No

Executive Director Approving Submission of the Report:
Jane Maxwell, Director of Policy, Strategy and Engagement

Report Author(s):
Katie Stead (Policy, Improvement and Risk Manager)
Policy, Strategy and Engagement Directorate
katie.stead@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected:
All

Report Summary:

In line with the Audit Committee terms of reference, the purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the recent external inspections, reviews, and audits. The report also provides assurance that ongoing and outstanding recommendations from earlier inspections, audits and reviews, are being progressed.

The report includes a summary of progress against the recommendations from all external inspections, reviews and audits and sets out the details of arrangements for ensuring the accountability and governance around their implementation.

Recommendations:

That Audit Committee:

- Note the recent external inspections, reviews and audits which have taken place and the progress made in implementing the recommendations since the last report in January 2026.
- Note the governance arrangements that are currently in place for monitoring and managing the recommendations.

- Continue to receive regular reports in relation to external inspections, reviews and audits and the progress made.

List of Appendices Included:

Appendix 1 – External Inspections, Reviews and Audits – 29 May 2026

Background Papers

External audit and inspection recommendations reports to Audit Committee every six months, most recently 13 January 2026 and 29 July 2025.

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel
None

Council Approval Required
No

Exempt from the Press and Public
No

External audits, inspections, and reviews update

1. Background

1.1 In line with the Audit Committee terms of reference, the purpose of this report is to provide details of the recent external inspections, reviews and audits across the Council and assurance that recommendations and areas for improvement are being progressed.

1.2 The last report was presented to Audit Committee on 13 January 2026. The report referred to external inspections, reviews and audits that had taken place since July 2025.

2. Key issues

2.1 This report focusses on progress since the last Audit Committee meeting in January 2026 and is intended to provide an overview of the outcomes of external inspections, reviews, and audits. The report also aims to provide Audit Committee with assurance that arrangements are in place for managing the Council's response, including effective governance arrangements.

2.2 Governance arrangements are in place for monitoring and managing external inspection, review, and audit recommendations within each directorate. Regular progress against the recommendations is reported and considered quarterly by the Strategic Leadership Team.

2.3 Six new inspections, reviews, and audits have been completed since January 2026. These are:

Adult Social Care, Housing and Public Health

Title	Date	Purpose	Outcome
Homes England Compliance Audit	January 2026	The Compliance Audit report confirms that grant recipients have met Homes England's funding conditions and contractual requirements and have properly exercised their responsibilities as set out in the Capital Funding Guide.	Final Grade Green - Meets requirements (highest grade achievable) with no breaches identified.

Inspection of Adult Social Care conducted by Care Quality Commission*	February – July 2025	To assess how well the Council is meeting its responsibilities to ensure people have access to adult social care and support under the Care Act (2014)	Rating of 'good'

Regeneration and Environment

Title	Date	Purpose	Outcome
Prevent Duty Benchmarking Assessment (Home Office)	March 2026	Undertaken annually.	All seven assessed areas were marked as exceeding. There were 3 recommendations.

Corporate Services

Title	Date	Purpose	Outcome
Teachers Pensions Audit 2024/25 (KPMG)	August 2025	Required Annually by legislation.	Audit passed with no recommendations.
Pooling of Local Authority Housing Receipts 2024/25 (KPMG)	November 2025	Required Annually by legislation.	Audit passed with no recommendations.
External assessment of Internal Audit (CIPFA)	November 2025	Required every five years by the Global Internal Audit Standards.	Rating is it 'Generally Conforms to the Global Internal Audit Standards (UK Public Sector). There are 5 action points included.

2.4 There are also a number of inspections, reviews and audits which either remain as ongoing status (no change since the last report in January) or have commenced since January and where the outcomes are still awaited. These are:

Reported as ongoing in January (and remain ongoing):

- Housing Benefit Audit 2023/24 conducted by Grant Thornton commenced in May 2025
- Housing Benefit Audit 2024/25 conducted by Grant Thornton

- Exemplar accreditation conducted by the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (Tpas) commenced in March 2025

New since January, and ongoing:

- Inspection of Youth Justice Work with Children and Victims conducted by HMIP between February and March 2026

2.5 As part of the Council's commitment to continuous improvement it is proactive in determining where reviews can identify opportunities for improvement in service delivery. For example, Officers are seeking external support to review the processes and approach to large capital regeneration projects.

2.6 Appendix 1 provides a high-level of overview of the recommendations and areas for improvement as well as the progress the Council has made in responding to these. Once recommendations and areas for improvement are complete or closed and have been reported to Audit Committee, they will be removed from the list. Where possible to do so, recommendations and actions have been grouped together under themes.

2.6 A total of 37 recommendations or areas of improvement are listed in the tracker. 21 have been completed since the last report (June status is blue), including seven which were delayed in the previous report (January status was amber or red). 16 remain ongoing, of which 7 are delayed (June status is amber), including two that are delayed by more than 12 months (June status is red). The reasons for the delays are summarised within Appendix 1.

2.7 With regards to residential children's homes inspections, recommendations and progress are considered monthly with oversight from the "Regulation 44" visits and Ofsted. This is more frequent than the Audit Committee schedule and therefore any recommendations and progress against these are not included within the reports to Audit Committee. Since January there have been two inspections identifying significant improvements achieved.

2.8 The status ratings applied to demonstrate the current position for each inspection, review, and audit include:

Complete	All recommendations/areas for improvement are fully complete
In progress and on track	All recommendations/areas for improvement are on track to be delivered by the original agreed deadline
In progress and partly delayed	Recommendations/areas for improvement progressing, however target date for one or more area is behind the original agreed deadline
Significant delay	All recommendations/areas for improvement delayed or one area delayed more than twelve months past the original agreed deadline
No action required	There are no recommendations/areas for improvement, or the outcome is not yet known

3. Lessons learnt

3.1 The Council continues to share learning from external inspections, reviews and audits across services and other directorates, where appropriate, to prevent future concerns/problems arising and enhance service delivery.

3.2 Furthermore, the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge report noted that the Council had *‘opened itself to a range of peer reviews to support a learning culture’.* The report also stated, *‘The council has undergone an impressive transformation and has many exemplary and commendable practices that other councils can learn from’.*

4. Options considered and recommended proposal

4.1 Audit Committee to note the recent external inspections, reviews and audits which have taken place, and the progress made in implementing the recommendations since the last report in January 2026.

4.2 Audit Committee to note the governance arrangements that are currently in place for monitoring and managing the recommendations.

4.3 Audit Committee to continue to receive regular reports in relation to external inspections, reviews and audits and the progress made.

5. Consultation on proposal

5.1 Not applicable to this report.

6. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

6.1 The timescale for each recommendation varies depending on the individual inspection or audit. Target dates for each are included on Appendix 1.

6.2 The next report will be presented to Audit Committee in January 2027.

7. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

7.1 There are no direct financial and procurement implications as a result of this report.

7.2 Audits relating to finance and procurement and any related recommendations are outlined in the main body of the report.

8. Legal Advice and Implications

8.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations within this report.

8.2 Audits relating to legal services and any recommendations are outlined above.

9. Human Resources Advice and Implications

9.1 There are no Human Resources implications.

10. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

10.1 The recommendations in relation to inspections in both Children and Young People's Services and Adult Social Care have direct implications on the quality of services provided to children, young people and vulnerable adults. Completing the recommendations will improve outcomes for these groups.

11. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

11.1 When implementing changes and improvements services are to consider the impacts on services users and communities, including an individual or group with a protected characteristic. This may require the completion of an equality analysis to advance and maximise equality as well as eliminate discrimination and negative consequences.

12. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

12.1 There are no direct CO2 emissions and climate change implications.

13. Implications for Partners

13.1 Partnership approaches are key to improving services and the improvements need to be of a multi-agency nature and owned across the partnership.

14. Risks and Mitigation

14.1 There is a risk that actions are reported as completed without substance, it is important that arrangements are in place as part of the respective quality assurance regimes and monitored through performance management, evidencing not just completion of actions, but the associated outcomes. As governance arrangements are strengthened, these risks become mitigated.

15. Accountable Officer(s)

Fiona Boden, Head of Policy, Performance and Intelligence

Approvals Obtained from:-

Jane Maxwell, Director of Policy, Strategy and Engagement

This report is published on the Council's website or can be found at:

Browse meetings - Audit Committee - Rotherham Council