

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Cabinet – 12 October 2026

Report Title

Moving Rotherham Partnership - Delivery of Place Expansion Grant

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

Yes

Executive Director Approving Submission of the Report

Ian Spicer, Executive Director of Adult Care, Housing and Public Health

Report Author(s)

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Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

This report provides an overview of proposed further Sport England investment for Rotherham as part of the Place Expansion Programme. It outlines key activities to be undertaken to expand opportunities for physical activity and deliver on the Moving Rotherham Partnership priorities.

Recommendations

1. That Cabinet approve the acceptance and spending of the Rotherham Sport England Grants (comprising the Main Award and Capital Grant) in line with Sport England grant conditions and as set out in section 2 of this report.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 Equality Impact Assessment Part A
Appendix 2 Equality Impact Assessment Part B
Appendix 3 Carbon Impact Assessment

Background Papers

[Previous Cabinet paper approving Development Award 17th March 2025](#)
[Health and Wellbeing Board 10th June 2026 item 10 including Strategy and Evaluation Report 2025/26](#)

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel
Health Select Commission 24th September 2026

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Moving Rotherham Partnership Delivery of Place Expansion Grant

1. Background

- 1.1 Physical activity has benefits that are wide ranging and not only reduce health risks and improve physical and mental health outcomes but can also positively influence economic prosperity, such as through improved productivity, as well as social and community connectedness benefits.
- 1.2 In 2023 Sport England committed to investing £250m over the following five years to expand its Place Partnerships to an additional 80-100 places. Sport England's focus for funding is:
 - Increasing activity (increasing amount of time people spend being active)
 - Decreasing inactivity (decreasing the proportion of the population that are classed as sedentary/inactive)
 - Tackling inequality
 - Providing positive experiences for children and young people
- 1.3 In 2023, Sport England invited places across the country to apply to become Place Expansion Partners as part of its Uniting the Movement strategy. Rotherham was successful in securing a Place Expansion Grant Development Award of £455,870. Cabinet approved acceptance and expenditure of this funding in March 2025, with delivery managed by the Council's Public Health service on behalf of the Moving Rotherham Partnership.
- 1.4 The purpose of the Development Award was to better understand the needs and priorities for physical activity in Rotherham through engagement and evaluation across a range of priorities. The Moving Rotherham Partnership used this work to develop a new Moving Rotherham Physical Activity and Sport Strategy and publish a Moving Rotherham 2025/26 Evaluation report. These were presented to Health and Wellbeing Board in June 2026.
- 1.5 Following the success of the development phase, Rotherham has secured further Sport England Place Expansion Grant Main Award. This report seeks approval to accept and spend this new Main Award funding.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 Place Expansion Main Award funding brings an additional £1.1 million investment into improving physical activity and the opportunity to continue to increase the scale and pace of the Moving Rotherham Partnership's delivery. The proposals set out in this report have been developed with stakeholders based on the 2025/26 evaluation to inform what should be prioritised to maximise outcomes and to enhance existing work and capacity.
- 2.2 During the development award phase, significant engagement took place with children, young people, schools, and adults of all ages, in communities with

lower levels of physical activity. An evaluation report identified key themes, including barriers and opportunities to increase physical activity locally.

- 2.3 Following the development phase evaluation, the Moving Rotherham Partnership developed a new Physical Activity and Sport Strategy for Rotherham, which was shared with the Health and Wellbeing Board in June 2026. This was developed by the Partnership to provide a clear narrative of the aims of Moving Rotherham, to set priority themes for delivery and provide a framework for a delivery plan.
- 2.4 The Moving Rotherham Strategy describes three priority audiences that align with Sport England's Uniting the Movement strategy:
- Children and young people,
 - People with long-term health conditions and/or disabilities, and
 - Communities where activity levels are lowest.
- 2.5 To ensure the Partnership can work effectively with these audiences, there are also three priority enabling themes of:
- Communication,
 - Inclusion, and
 - Place-making.
- 2.6 A delivery plan sets out the funding requirements from the bid aligned to these priorities. The new proposed additional funding allocated as a Place Expansion Main Award grant is £1,145,438 until March 2028. There is also an additional £15,000 Capital grant as described in paragraph 2.17.
- 2.7 **Children and young people: £323,069**
The grant will facilitate work with schools in areas with lower levels of activity to ensure that families receive better information and get the chance to try out different sports and physical activities in their local area. Schools will be supported by the Rotherham School Games programme who have established relationships with schools. This will include family taster events where families will be encouraged through schools to come along and have a go at a wide range of activities. Parents told us they did not know what was available. By raising the profile of local clubs, activities and organisations, and expanding the opportunities available in Rotherham, the Partnership aims to inspire and enable more children and young people to spend more time enjoying being active.
- 2.8 One of the top activities children and young people said they wanted to do more, was ride a bike. The grant will enable the Partnership to deliver cycling skills in local communities from an early age, with bikes available for children to have a go and take part.
- 2.9 **People with long-term health conditions and/or disabilities: £202,500**
The development award piloted Every Move Counts health coaching service to support inactive people with long-term conditions to gain confidence and identify opportunities to move more and become more active in their daily lives. Clinicians have high demands on their time, so this programme considered that by giving patients time focussed on them, their concerns and

their needs, to build their confidence, and find the right things that would motivate them to move more. Through these one-to-one motivational coaching sessions, patients made significant increases to their weekly activity levels, gaining real benefits to their health. The grant will support the further development of this service.

- 2.10 A range of specialist physical activity programmes continues to be provided through Places Leisure and other local providers, as well as schemes introduced by the Council to help reduce barriers to physical activity such as the new discount Swim Scheme, which gives a 50% discount on swimming for residents aged over 65 across the borough's four leisure centres, reducing the cost from £4.30 to £2.15 per session. The coaching programme continues to help residents to navigate the options available and make use of these opportunities.

2.11 **Communities where activity levels are lowest: £295,386**

To strengthen community-led delivery, capacity hosted by Voluntary Action Rotherham will support community engagement, partnership development and wider skills and capacity building. Working collaboratively with Rotherham Libraries, local voluntary and community organisations, and other key partners, new roles will engage with local people to co-design ways of establishing and developing more active community settings, maximising the use of local green spaces, and connecting residents to opportunities to be more physically active within their neighbourhoods. This will be determined at a hyper-local level, but examples include training, or establishing local volunteer-led health walks, or providing equipment for established groups to use for physical activity sessions, or improvements to the local area by creating local interest trail routes or providing access to equipment. This will also support the development of sustainable local networks and ensure community voices help shape activity provision and investment decisions.

- 2.12 In identified communities where activity levels are lowest, the grant will enable an Activation Fund to be established which will provide targeted investment into the voluntary and community sector. This funding will be coordinated by Voluntary Action Rotherham and support local organisations and community groups to develop and deliver physical activity opportunities that respond to local need, build community capacity and help reduce barriers to participation.

2.13 **Communication: £144,484**

A key theme of the engagement findings was that people didn't know about the opportunities to be active in their local area. Through working in collaboration with the Council Communications team, additional capacity in the voluntary sector will support a full communication and marketing programme of Moving Rotherham-promoted physical activity opportunities and ensure people identify with those opportunities through tailored messaging and images.

2.14 Inclusion: £13,700

People with disabilities face some of the biggest barriers to participating in physical activity. To help reduce and remove these barriers, community organisations and leisure sector providers in the borough, working together as the Inclusive Activity Network, will continue to receive specialist training, improve their provision, and put on extra taster sessions to show the range of activities on offer.

2.15 Place-Making: £166,299

The grant funding will support the convening of stakeholders and partners from across the borough to influence and change physical environments, service interactions, facilities, and opportunities that support a more physically active way of life across the borough. Regeneration work and the Local Plan will provide new opportunities to influence the wider environment to facilitate enjoyable active lives.

2.16 The Moving Rotherham Partnership and associated governance structures and networks of stakeholders will continue to facilitate collaboration and alignment of activity. There is provision in the grant for additional training and a new celebratory awards event to encourage sharing of the good work of partners and raising awareness to continue to strengthen and broaden membership of the Partnership.

2.17 Built Sports Facilities Strategy: £15,000

To complement the recent Playing Pitch Strategy by expanding the understanding of requirements and provision of other sports and leisure facilities in Rotherham, funding has been sought from Sport England to commission a Built Sports Facilities Strategy. £15,000 funding for this will come from a separate Sport England capital grant process. This funding will be combined with match funding that has been identified within current budgets. The Strategy will enable a thorough assessment of assets across the borough to identify need and priorities and maximise future investment in physical activity settings and green spaces. It will also include identifying opportunities for future Sport England capital investment to support other sport facilities development, regeneration or upgrade opportunities.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

3.1 Option 1: Cabinet approve the acceptance and spending of the Rotherham Sport England Grants (comprising the Main Award and Capital Grant) in line with Sport England grant conditions and as outlined in this report.

3.2 Whilst Sport England Place Expansion encourages individual places (in this case Rotherham) to determine what interventions will work best in their local setting, it must be in line with Sport England expectations and working principles highlighted in the bid process. Sport England have approved main award funding based on our commitments to these ways of working and our award submission as described.

3.3 Option 2: Cabinet does not approve spending of the grants and rejects the Sport England investment.

3.4 Recommended Proposal

Option 1 is recommended. Not accepting the grant funding would significantly impact the progression of the Moving Rotherham priorities and potential future Sport England investment, including in other remits, such as capital investment. The proposals set out in the report are based on fulfilling the ambitions of the strategy, the engagement findings and research evidence, which determine that they will maximise the likelihood of increasing local levels of physical activity. Without the additional spend from the grant investment, Rotherham would not be able to progress the activities described in the report and would be unlikely to see the uplift in physical activity levels this activity would support.

4. **Consultation on proposal**

- 4.1 During the development award phase, the opinions of over 1,700 children and young people in Key Stages 2 and 3, 70 participants in 8 youth groups, 244 parents of Key Stage 1 children, 810 people across a wide age range in outdoor creative sessions, 375 people with long-term health conditions referred into Every Move Counts, and a wide range of key stakeholders across the public, voluntary and community, education and other sectors have been sought and analysed. This has provided information about what activity they currently do or want to do, barriers to activity and opportunities.
- 4.2 At an evaluation session, learning from this engagement was shared, including reflections from stakeholders about strengths and challenges. An evaluation report presented to Health and Wellbeing Board in June summarises these findings, and a workshop with stakeholders led to the development of the Moving Rotherham Strategy themes and proposals for the Main Award funding based on strengths, gaps and opportunities. The proposed funding delivery plan was approved by the Moving Rotherham Board.

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

- 5.1 The Place Expansion (Main Award) bid was submitted to Sport England in June. If approved, the funding agreement with Sport England can be completed, and delivery of the programme can commence immediately, including recruitment and procurement activity where required.
- 5.2 The Moving Rotherham Partnership will continue to work with Sport England to identify future funding opportunities. Funding for Place Expansion partners beyond March 2028 has not yet been announced, but some level of funding is expected.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 6.1 The expenditure detailed in this report totals £1,160,438. This will be funded by £1,145,438 Sport England Place Expansion Main Award and £15,000 Sport England capital grant.
- 6.2 Regular monitoring of activity and spending should ensure the expenditure remains within the set budget.
- 6.3 Procurement Activity arising from the funding set out in this report must be awarded in compliance with the Council's Financial and Procurement Procedure Rules and relevant applicable procurement legislation.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

- 7.1 The activities proposed in this report, which are aimed at increasing participation in physical activity, improving health outcomes and reducing inequalities, fall within the Council's statutory public health functions and are capable of being supported by those powers. The Council also has broad powers to promote and improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of its area under section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 (the General Power of Competence).
- 7.2 The report seeks Cabinet approval to accept and spend Sport England Place Expansion grant funding in accordance with the approved funding application and associated grant conditions. The Council must ensure that all expenditure is applied strictly in accordance with the terms of the grant agreement and any conditions imposed by Sport England.
- 7.3 Delivery of the programme involves a combination of direct Council staffing, grant funding arrangements, contract variations and the procurement of goods and services. All such arrangements must be undertaken in compliance with the Council's Financial and Procurement Procedure Rules and any applicable procurement and related legislation. Appropriate legal agreements should be completed where funding is provided to third-party organisations and suitable monitoring arrangements should be put in place to ensure accountability for the use of public funds.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

- 8.1 There are no direct HR implications for the Council in relation to Human Resources arising from the proposals as presented in this report.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 9.1 As set out in the Moving Rotherham Strategy, children and young people are a priority audience for the Moving Rotherham Partnership work. Children and young people have been engaged in the development phase to help understand their motivations and barriers to being more active. The principles of co-production and engagement will continue to ensure that they remain at the heart of developing the approaches taken to improve access and uptake.

- 9.2 The priority focussed on people with long-term conditions and/or disabilities as well as the inclusion enabling theme, demonstrate commitment to improving access to physical activity opportunities for those who face the most barriers. The Moving Rotherham Partnership will seek to ensure that there is appropriate training and expectations around safeguarding and inclusion so activity provision is safe and inclusive.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

- 10.1 Equity and inclusion are strong themes in the Moving Rotherham Strategy and main award funding. There are explicit aims of reducing inequality and targeted engagement of those who face the greatest barriers to access.
- 10.2 Both an Initial Equality Screening Assessment (Part A) and an Equality Analysis (Part B) have been completed and are attached as Appendices 1 and 2.

11. Implications for CO₂ Emissions and Climate Change

- 11.1 There are no direct implications for CO₂ emissions and climate change arising from this report.
- 11.2 Being more physically active benefits the environment by reducing carbon emissions through walking or cycling instead of driving, lowering fuel consumption, and improving air quality. It decreases resource use by reducing the demand for cars, infrastructure, and disposable vehicle-related products. Active lifestyles also promote the creation and use of green spaces, which support biodiversity and absorb CO₂, contributing to a healthier and more sustainable environment.

12. Implications for Partners

- 12.1 To see meaningful change, partners are developing a more integrated and collaborative approach. Supporting communities and promoting sustainable approaches requires partners to think beyond isolated short-term funded initiatives and work together across sectors.
- 12.2 A wide range of stakeholders are committed to the Moving Rotherham Partnership and delivery of the strategy and delivery plan. The communication enabling theme of work will set out to increase further the breadth and reach of engaged stakeholders.
- 12.3 Success of the Moving Rotherham Partnership in increasing physical activity levels across the borough has the potential to bring about significant positive benefits to a wide range of partners. Improved physical and mental wellbeing, has the potential to reduce demand in health services and social care provision. Healthier, fitter people are more able to work and bring economic benefits to the local economy and reduce the impacts of poverty. Happier, connected communities bring improvements in community cohesion and in reducing crime and antisocial behaviour.

13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 There is a reputational risk and a risk of not being able to secure future investment from Sport England if the grant is not accepted.
- 13.2 The complexity of system wide changes needs a measured and deliberate approach. To fully realise the potential of Moving Rotherham priorities, continuing to strengthen partnership working will be essential. Not being able to do this, whilst unlikely, would have a negative impact on the pace of delivery. Partners are integral to the success of delivery and there are inherent risks therefore associated with their successful continued engagement.
- 13.3 Measuring the impact of complex systems and programmes of activity is difficult and an ongoing national challenge. The Moving Rotherham Partnership will continue to develop and use metrics that better reflect the true impact and effectiveness of the programme of work, to ensure a more accurate and informed assessment of success. This will include continued involvement in the National Learning and Evaluation Partnership.

14. Accountable Officers

Gilly Brenner, Consultant in Public Health

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	John Edwards	22/09/26
Executive Director of Corporate Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	18/09/26
Service Director of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phil Horsfield	18/08/26

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