

Summary Sheet

Name of Committee and Date of Committee Meeting

Cabinet – 19 November 2018

Report Title

Thriving Neighbourhoods - The Rotherham Neighbourhood Strategy 2018-2025

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

Yes

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Shokat Lal, Assistant Chief Executive

Report author(s):

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Ward(s) Affected

All

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to present for approval, the new Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy 2018-2025 (Appendix A). The strategy sets out a fresh approach to working with residents and partners across the borough. The Council's vision is for every neighbourhood to be a thriving neighbourhood where people have a good quality of life. Central to this is the role of elected members providing a leadership and engagement role in each ward.

The strategy is framed around three key outcomes which describe what the Council would like to see in each ward across Rotherham:

- Neighbourhoods are safe and welcoming with good community spirit;
- Residents are happy and healthy and love where they live, and
- Residents use their skills and assets to contribute to the outcomes that matter to them.

The strategy signals a new way of working for the Council both for members and for staff. The strategy covers every ward in the borough and will be delivered through ward plans developed with residents to address local issues and opportunities. Ward members will be supported by the neighbourhood team and will work with officers and residents from a range of organisations. Councillors will be asked to report to Council on an annual basis with an update on progress in each ward.

Recommendations

1. That the Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy 2018-2025 be approved.
2. That councillors in each ward provide a report to Council on an annual basis covering developments in their ward.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix A Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy 2018-2025

Appendix B Thriving Neighbourhoods Equality Analysis.

Background Papers

Review of Neighbourhood Working report to Cabinet and Commissioners' Decision Making meeting on 10th October 2016

Review of Neighbourhood Working to Cabinet and Commissioners' Decision Making meeting on 10th April 2017

Review of Neighbourhood Working to Council 19th May 2017

Neighbourhood Working Annual Report 2017/2018 and Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy 2018-2025 presented to the Improving Places Select Commission (IPSC) on 20th September 2018.

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

Improving Places Select Commission – 20 September 2018

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Thriving Neighbourhoods - The Rotherham Neighbourhood Strategy 2018-2025

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 That the Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy 2018-2025 be approved.
- 1.2 That councillors in each ward provide a report to Council on an annual basis covering developments in their ward.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Council's corporate improvement plan, "A Fresh Start", included a key theme of 'strong, high impact partnerships'. The theme's objective was to deliver enhanced neighbourhood working and to introduce 'a new model of citizen engagement and neighbourhood working linked to a review of area assemblies.'
- 2.2 In order to deliver this a member working group was established, chaired by the Cabinet Member responsible for neighbourhood working and comprising area assembly chairs/vice chairs and a member of the opposition, supported by the Chief Executive and senior officers.
- 2.3 The working group submitted a report to Cabinet and Commissioners on 10th October 2016 and the following vision and principles were agreed:
That the Council adopt an approach to neighbourhood working which would involve "Putting communities at the heart of everything we do and making people healthier, happier, safer and proud by:
 - *Councillors working with their communities on what matters to them*
 - *Listening and working together to make a difference*
 - *Supporting people from different backgrounds to get on well together.*
- 2.4 Cabinet and Commissioners agreed a number of recommendations for a new neighbourhood working model following pre decision Scrutiny in March 2017 and these were endorsed by Council in May 2017. The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board received a further update in respect of the neighbourhood model in November 2017.
- 2.5 The member working group was also tasked with producing a new neighbourhood strategy, which would see the wards as the building blocks that would enable partners and communities to work together to improve local outcomes.
- 2.6 In addition, the Rotherham Together Partnership made a commitment to develop better multi- agency working across the three localities (north, central and south) as part of the Rotherham Plan 2025.

3. Key Issues

- 3.1 The Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy has been developed with input from the member working group and the Strategic Leadership Team. The strategy is framed around three key outcomes:

- Outcome 1: **Neighbourhoods are safe and welcoming with good community spirit.** This is about building on the good work that is already happening across the Borough to ensure that residents are safe and to build greater community cohesion.
- Outcome 2: **Residents are happy and healthy and love where they live.** This is about taking action to improve the health and wellbeing of residents by working together to address issues like loneliness, as well a key health inequalities and to make our green spaces accessible to everyone.
- Outcome 3: **Residents use their skills and assets to contribute to the outcomes that matter to them.** This is about harnessing the skills and capabilities of residents. The Council is not able to solve every issue on its own but by building the capacity of local communities can work together with residents and other organisations to make a difference.

3.2 Ongoing austerity and the reduction in public finances will continue to provide challenges for the Council. This means that the Council will have to work differently by collaborating with others and making the best use of the resources at its disposal whether this is money, physical assets or local skills and knowledge.

3.3 The strategy is about the Council and residents working together to achieve better quality of life and describes the key role for elected members both as champions of place and as community leaders bringing together those who care about the local neighbourhood. The strategy also describes how the Council will take a strength based approach drawing on existing strengths in the community and valuing the role of voluntary and community groups and assets.

3.4 The new neighbourhood working model was introduced in May 2017 and the last 16 months have seen the implementation of the programme across all 21 wards in Rotherham. This transitional period has enabled ward members to develop ward based plans and engage with residents to identify important local issues and opportunities. In particular members have welcomed:

- The tailored approach to engagement and communication in each ward which has increased the level of contact with residents
- The development of ward plans and profiles providing a clear picture of local statistics, assets and priorities
- Devolved budgets and dedicated officer support which have enabled plans to translate into action, building confidence in the new approach
- More joined up working with communities and partner organisations and some examples of cross-ward working.

3.5 During the transitional period there has also been a review of the neighbourhood service to align it with the new model. A new Head of Neighbourhoods joined the Council in September 2018 and the service now sits within the Assistant Chief Executive's Directorate.

- 3.6 In the forthcoming year there is further work required to adopt learning from year one and to embed the model consistently across wards. An annual report was submitted to Improving Places Select Commission in September 2018 to provide a summary of the first year of delivery of the new neighbourhood working model and lessons learnt. The report included a number of recommendations designed to a) further improve communication and engagement, b) strengthen governance and decision making processes and c) encourage further joint ward working.
- 3.7 To ensure the successful delivery of the strategy and a joined up approach between the Council and partners, an implementation plan is being developed which will set out how the strategy will be delivered, the role of the neighbourhood team and the role of other council service areas. It will also include proposals for member and staff development.
- 3.8 It will be important to ensure that best practice is shared across the Council and that key developments are reported formally to the Council. As such councillors will be expected to work together to provide council with an annual progress report for their ward. This will help ward members to share good practice and learning.
- 3.9 The strategy is a public facing document which is reflected in its eye-catching design. It will be available to the public online and linked to the 'Your Neighbourhood' web pages. Partners, community organisations and residents will be encouraged to sign up to the strategy and talk to the Council about how they can contribute to its delivery.

Other developments

- 3.10 The Council has continued to work with the Rotherham Together Partnership to develop multi-agency working bringing together colleagues from health, police, the fire service and the voluntary sector.
- 3.11 Other developments include the new co-located services with South Yorkshire Police (SYP). The central neighbourhood team was established in Riverside House in May 2018, bringing together the local policing team with the Council's community protection service, housing management and anti-social behaviour. The operational benefits of this co-location are already being felt in terms of improved relationships, collaboration and action on the ground. Also based with the new team is a "partnership hub", comprising the strategic functions from the Council's community safety and SYP's central neighbourhood service.
- 3.12 New multi-agency meeting structures agreed by the Safer Rotherham Partnership are now in place and operating well. This includes ward-level meetings with elected members, multi-agency tasking meetings and the new community Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC).

4. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 4.1 The review of neighbourhood working was undertaken following a recommendation from the improvement board to review area assemblies and develop a new model. Following this review the recommended option is to adopt the Thriving Neighbourhood strategy as the best approach to improving neighbourhood and citizen engagement.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 Detailed consultation has previously taken place regarding the new neighbourhood working model. Ward plans also feature a specific section relating to community engagement.
- 5.2 The neighbourhood working annual report highlights that further work is required to develop partnership forums at ward and area level to engage statutory services and voluntary and community groups in place planning.
- 5.3 Thriving Neighbourhoods is about the Council and residents working together to achieve better outcomes for residents. It will do this by bringing together those who care about the local neighbourhood to cooperate and make a positive difference. The aim is to engage a wide and diverse range of local people, to build the capacity of community groups and voluntary sector organisations, and to draw in support from council departments and other agencies.
- 5.4 The next steps will be to promote the Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy in order to get people involved and to explore opportunities for joint delivery. A neighbourhood working communications plan is being developed which will set out how the Council will engage residents, community organisations, council staff and partners.

6. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 6.1 An implementation plan is being developed to deliver the strategy across the Council. In addition, the neighbourhood team will produce a work programme.

7. Financial and Procurement Implications

- 7.1 Budgets were re-aligned for 2018/19 to reflect the transfer of the service to Assistant Chief Executive's Directorate, and all officers are aware of and operating within budget limitations for capital and revenue expenditure.
- 7.2 By working in partnership and encouraging communities to work independently, there is the potential to deliver outcomes in a more efficient way. This will be reviewed on a regular basis, with recommendations put forward as appropriate.

8. Legal Implications

- 8.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

9. Human Resources Implications

- 9.1 A member and officer development plan is being designed to support delivery of the strategy.

10. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 10.1 The outcomes within the Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy support the Council's priorities: "Every child making the best start in life" and "Every adult secure, responsible and empowered."

11. Equalities and Human Rights Implications

- 11.1 The new neighbourhood model should improve the Council's ability to respond to the specific needs of Rotherham's increasingly diverse communities. Engagement with residents needs to take into account the assets and needs of different communities of interest. The needs and requirements of the citizens, businesses and communities in each ward are different and the new approach allows the flexibility to respond to these needs by making the ward the building block for community engagement.

- 11.2 An initial Equalities Analysis has been completed (Appendix B).

12. Implications for Partners and Other Directorates

- 12.1 The Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy provides the framework for a strategic review of how the whole council engages with its citizens and customers in localities.
- 12.2 Delivery of the Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy will require a collective effort from all council directorates and partners.

13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 There is a risk that the neighbourhood working approach is applied inconsistently across wards, causing tension and uncertainty and undermining the overall Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy. This would be mitigated by adoption of the Neighbourhood Working Annual Report recommendations, including proposals for minimum requirements and governance arrangements.

14. Accountable Officer(s)

Shokat Lal, Assistant Chief Executive

Martin Hughes, Head of neighbourhoods

Approvals obtained on behalf of:

	Named Officer	Date
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services	Nikki Kelly	29.10.2018
Assistant Director of Legal Services	Stuart Fletcher	29.10.2018
Assistant Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development	Lee Mann	29.10.2018
Head of Procurement (if applicable)	N/A	

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