

Proposed Revenue Budget Investments

Directorate Investment Options		
Directorate		2021/22 £'000
	Every child making the best start	
CYPS1	Additional support for Youth Work	50
CYPS2	Expansion of Family Group Conferencing (FGC)	130
	A strong community in a clean, safe environment	
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Total Investment Options		1,864

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Budget Investment Option 2021/22
Directorate : CYPS

Investment

Reference:	CYPS1
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2021/22 £'000

50

Proposal Description	Additional support for Youth Work
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Details of Proposal (what will be achieved)	<p>In last year's budget, the Council committed an additional £70,000 per year to deliver more universal Youth Work across the borough.</p> <p>This proposal will strengthen this activity by employing three (18.5 hour) Band F Outreach and Engagement Workers to coordinate, plan and quality assure the universal youth offer in each of the three localities (North, South and Central) through our existing Centres and the Voluntary Sector youth offer.</p> <p>The investment would be used to ensure consistent quality and safeguarding standards across youth work and will enable work with key agencies and youth work providers to develop and deliver a borough wide, positive activities programme in a variety of settings.</p> <p>As a result of the national lockdown from 23rd March 2020 young people and youth work has been significantly impacted by the pandemic and subsequent restrictions. When things can return to how they once were, the additional capacity will better enable the development of a coordinated youth offer for young people, incorporating places to go and things to do.</p>
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Director Responsible for Delivery	Suzanne Joyner
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Proposed Revenue Budget Investments

Cabinet Portfolio Holder	Cllr Gordon Watson
Finance Business Partner	Neil Hardwick
Implications on other Services (identify which services and possible impact)	<p>The need has been identified for a person to help coordinate, plan and evaluate the Youth Offer in each of the three locality areas of the borough to provide in partnership with other providers in the sector. These posts will provide the capacity whilst acting as a key 'link' person to the voluntary agencies, parish councils and uniformed and faith-based provision to ensure consistent quality and standards are in place.</p>

Proposed Revenue Budget Investments

Budget Investment Option 2021/22
Directorate : CYPS

Investment

Reference:	CYPS2
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2021/22 £'000

130

Proposal Description	Expansion of Family Group Conferencing (FGC)
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Details of Proposal (what will be achieved)	<p>A Family Group Conference (FGC) is a decision-making meeting in which a child's wider family network come together to make a plan about the future arrangements for the child, as an alternative to local authority care.</p> <p>FGCs are a process in which parents, children and members of the wider family produce a plan that addresses concerns and uses the families or friends own skills, strengths and personal knowledge to resolve difficulties.</p> <p>In RMBC we have a small team comprising of a coordinator and 3 FT practitioners. The request is for an additional x3 Band G Practitioners (North, South, Central) to double the capacity and enable the team to work with more families.</p> <p>Plus, a Band D Business Support (FT) to support the coordination.</p> <table style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 40%;">Band D x1</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£24,583</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Band G x3</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£105,318 (x3)</td> </tr> </table> <p>Total amount requested</p> <p>£130k*</p> <p>*Per annum (top of the scale) with on-costs</p> <p>Current Capacity</p> <p>Rotherham already has an existing FGC offer in place, with a small team of 4 x FTE Facilitators and 1 x FTE Coordinator.</p>	Band D x1	£24,583	Band G x3	£105,318 (x3)
Band D x1	£24,583				
Band G x3	£105,318 (x3)				

Proposed Revenue Budget Investments

Expected Outputs:

The additional capacity would allow us to target adolescents coming into care of the local authority.

The 2019 Children's Commissioner report showed how the profile and needs of children in care has changed over the last five years, driven by a growing share of older children and teenage care entrants who have more complex needs and potentially more expensive living arrangements. The report shows that adolescents are six times more likely than children under 13 to be living in residential or secure children's homes, and nearly half are living in privately-run accommodation. The number of teenagers in England (aged 13 or over) in care rose by 21% between 2012/13 and 2017/18, while the number of 0-5 year olds fell by 15%.

In Rotherham, adolescents currently account for 40% of the LAC cohort.

Illustrative cost savings benefits of FGC (taken from Daybreak Family Group Conferencing, children on the edge of care Research report July 2017) showed over a 6 month period, depending on children's pathway, the cost for a child who remained living with their parents was £1,598, compared to £17,557.66 when looked after by LA. This cost can be much higher for some children, with often poor outcomes particularly for older teenage children.

As well as anticipated financial benefits, we would expect the impact to include:

- Reduction in looked after children, particularly older teenagers
- timely decisions, and reduction in the duration of care proceedings (where initiated), thus reducing social care and court costs
- children remain with extended family as a priority when this is in their best interests
- effective advocacy for children and young people
- children have a voice in decision making about themselves
- no delay in court processes caused by late potential placements coming forward, or due to conflict with the local authority
- secure placements

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	<p>Our primary focus for FGC expansion in Rotherham would be: Reducing the need for becoming looked after, for children aged 15 and above</p> <p>Where family needs are escalating and indicate that they will be registered on a Child Protection Plan: *The FGC would be offered to the family prior to the first conference.</p> <p>A child who is at risk of entering the looked after system, via the Public Law Outline Panel</p> <p>Section 20 where there is a plan for a return home</p>
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Director Responsible for Delivery	Suzanne Joyner
Cabinet Portfolio Holder	Cllr Gordon Watson
Finance Business Partner	Neil Hardwick

Implications on other Services (identify which services and possible impact)	<p>FGC is an evidence-based approach to preventing families and children from entering the care system. We secured in 2020/21 £230k (over 2 yrs.) from the DfE Supporting Families: Investing in practice fund. A combination of the existing Team, the expansion through the investment opportunity and pooling the DfE resource will create the required capacity to address the needs of complex families before they enter the care system.</p> <p>An expansion would allow us to embed the FGC approach across the wider partnership and build capacity in communities through our public and voluntary sector partners such as the Rotherham United Community Foundation Trust, YWCA, Barnardo's, YMCA, JADE, REMA, Clifton Learning Project, to deliver and embed consistency of approach across the wider children's workforce and shift services to a lower cost early intervention and prevention, family and community based model.</p>
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Proposed Revenue Budget Investments

Budget Investment Option 2021/22
Directorate : Regeneration and Environment

Investment

Reference:	R&E1
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2021/22 £'000

489

Proposal Description	Additional street cleansing and grounds maintenance (Streetpride)
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Details of Proposal (what will be achieved)	<p>The service proposes four additional zonal cleansing teams, two teams dedicated to the central zone and one further team in the North and Southern zones working to support the delivery of street cleaning and grounds maintenance services.</p> <p>Increased resources within the zonal grounds maintenance and street cleansing structure will further enhance the cleansing regimes in high footfall areas and on main routes. This work will include litter picking, hand sweeping and weed removal.</p> <p>The additional resource will deliver a significant improvement in the cleanliness of these areas and also improve access for pedestrians and cyclists.</p> <p>The condition of existing on highway cycle routes in Rotherham is varied with remedial maintenance needed in a number of locations, potentially discouraging cycling along a number of routes. Current maintenance budgets do not allow for a comprehensive maintenance regime for the existing cycle network.</p> <p>It is proposed to renew the majority of the lining. cut back vegetation, remove weeds and cycle routes would be swept where required.</p> <p>This will contribute towards providing a well maintained and attractive cycle network to encourage cycling, which is a high priority within Rotherham and also Sheffield City Region.</p> <p>In line with the Council's zonal structures, the resources</p>
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Proposed Revenue Budget Investments

	will be flexible and be able to the delivery of local ward priorities where resources allow.
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Director Responsible for Delivery	Paul Woodcock
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Cabinet Portfolio Holder	Cllr Sarah Allen/ Cllr Emma Hoddinott/ Cllr Denise Lelliott
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Finance Business Partner	Richard Young
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Implications on other Services (identify which services and possible impact)	<p>Enhance ability to support Neighbourhoods and Enforcement services in key delivery objectives.</p> <p>Additional resource will be required within the Highways Service in order to undertake additional maintenance along cycle routes.</p>
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Proposed Revenue Budget Investments

Budget Investment Option 2021/22
Directorate : R&E

Investment

Reference:	R&E2
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2021/22 £'000

44

Proposal Description	Planning Enforcement
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Details of Proposal (what will be achieved)	<p>The costs to the Council to run the planning service have been reduced from £1.2m in 2010/2011 to £63,809 in 2019/2020 through restructures within Development Management and Planning Policy and the efficiency gains achieved by moving to a paperless document management system.</p> <p>As the reporting of planning breaches is made ever easier through electronic communications, there has been an increase in enforcement requests received and therefore a need to look at resources to address this.</p> <p>Demonstrable need</p> <p>Benchmarking has been undertaken with neighbouring Authorities to assess the level of resources currently available. This clearly demonstrates that Rotherham's planning enforcement resource is significantly lower than that of our near neighbours.</p> <p>Quantifiable Impact</p> <p>The provision and recruitment of a new planning enforcement officer will allow the service to be much more responsive to enforcement cases and achieve the standards as set out in the recently adopted 'Enforcement Plan'.</p> <p>Whilst most people will follow due process and obtain planning permission before starting work, there are a number of people, either through ignorance or an acceptance of risk, choose to ignore planning rules and carry out unauthorised work. The only recourse that the Council has against this is through the enforcement of planning regulations which requires specialist knowledge</p>
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and experience. Without providing adequate resources, the Council does not have the capacity to deal with the level of cases that are received which can ultimately lead to unauthorised works becoming lawful due to the passage of time. Any unreasonable delays are therefore likely to result in a negative impact on the reputation of the Council and its planning service.

Direct enforcement action also leads to the generation of income through the submission of planning applications which seek to regularise unauthorised developments and, as such, there is a direct correlation between the employment of additional staff and the income that can be generated, notwithstanding the improvement to reputation that would occur with a properly resourced enforcement team. In 2019 a total of 51 applications were submitted because of such intervention, with these applications generating a total additional income of £27,605.

Most planning permissions are granted subject to conditions which would otherwise make a development unacceptable and it is the role of the enforcement service to investigate any breach of condition and determine whether it is expedient or not to pursue formal enforcement action. This is in addition to complaints about development not being carried out in accordance with approved plans and any development that is being undertaken without first obtaining planning permission.

The number of cases received has risen during the last year and the planning enforcement team are struggling to keep on top of the workload. This will be compounded by the loss of the consultant enforcement officer who has been employed recently by virtue of a £50,000 Government grant which was secured last year.

Year	Cases
2013	295
2014	295
2015	274
2016	367
2017	308
2018	287
2019	369
2020	473

Potential Impact

The enforcement team are embedded within Development Management, a team which has gone through transformational change in recent years to utilise modern technology to release efficiency gains resulting in

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	<p>a streamlined and effective service. Over the past few years though, the enforcement resources have reduced to a level that is now well below the work that is being generated and it is projected that when the current temporary consultancy contract ends at the end of this year, a back log of work will grow exponentially. The reporting systems have been updated such that the workloads can now be identified and prioritised and an enforcement plan produced and adopted that gives a clear statement about how the service will react to notifications of a breach of control and the timescales which it endeavours to achieve with each case. A review of the workflow has streamlined procedures, but as reporting methods get easier (email, online forms, telephone etc), coupled with a general increase in reported breaches, it is clear that an additional experienced planning enforcement officer is required in order to keep on top of the volume of work.</p> <p>If the planning enforcement team is not adequately resourced, the workload backlog will increase as the number of cases being received outstrips the resources that are able to deal with the volume. This will have a knock-on effect to the credibility of the planning service and an implicit message that people can carry out unauthorised works with no penalty as no action will be taken by the Council to rectify matters. This will undoubtedly jeopardise the reputation of the Council.</p>
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Director Responsible for Delivery	Paul Woodcock
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Cabinet Portfolio Holder	Cllr Denise Lelliott
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Finance Business Partner	Jonathan Baggaley
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Implications on other Services (identify which services and possible impact)	It is expected that this proposal will require support from Legal Services.
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Proposed Revenue Budget Investments

Budget Investment Option 2021/22
Directorate : R&E

Investment

Reference:	R&E4
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2021/22 £'000
118

Proposal Description	Events that bring people together
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Details of Proposal (what will be achieved)	<p>Following a review of the Council's current events offer, this investment will enable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The creation of an additional post and new structure for the Events Team bringing additional resource and expertise to the team • A more sustainable delivery model for Rotherham Show as the headline signature event • The opportunity to refresh the core events programme to focus on fewer but larger scale and higher-quality Signature events; building civic pride and enabling placemaking, events unique to Rotherham and distinctive to its identity, providing scale and setting ambition, with a focus on a high-quality Christmas programme • the provision of a Connected Communities Events Grants Fund to support and develop community event organisers, with the intention of creating events that are community focused and aim to create moments for different communities to come together share their traditions and interests • Continuation of the team's existing roles with Council services required to lead on the delivery of the events that they currently lead and to fund these events from within their own service budgets <p>This investment aligns with the Rotherham Plan objectives, and is intended to support the Council's own Building Stronger Communities Strategy.</p> <p>In light of the current Coronavirus situation, the revenue ask has been reduced proportionately to allow a part year delivery in the second half of 2021/22.</p>
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Proposed Revenue Budget Investments

Director Responsible for Delivery	Paul Woodcock
Cabinet Portfolio Holder	Cllr Sarah Allen
Finance Business Partner	Richard Young
Implications on other Services (identify which services and possible impact)	<p>The review identified that a number of other services take on the delivery of events, often without a specific budget, leading to increased budget pressure and strain on the staff resources of those services. These services include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Democratic Services – currently delivering Civic Events • Policy & Performance – currently delivering equalities events • Community Safety – currently supporting the delivery of community led events

Proposed Revenue Budget Investments

Budget Investment Option 2021/22
Directorate : R&E

Investment

Reference:	R&E5
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2021/22 £'000
150

Proposal Description	Licensing Service
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Details of Proposal (what will be achieved)	<p>Following government intervention the Council revised all of its Licensing Policies and, in particular, introduced a significantly more robust regime to Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing. This Policy has, in the main, been very successfully implemented and enforced.</p> <p>It has become clear over the last few years however that the demands on the service remain very high, and there is a continued need for more proactive work with licensees to develop the licensed trades, and to ensure that all licensees are adhering to Policy.</p> <p>Having reviewed the licensing structure the proposal is to increase the level of resources as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 FTE Principal Licensing Officer – to support Licensing Board and Committee more directly, provide additional capacity for training and development and support the development of stronger partnership arrangements. • 1 FTE Licensing Enforcement Officer – to provide additional enforcement and investigatory capacity, and enhance our proactive inspection regimes. • 1 FTE Administrative Support Officer – to provide additional administrative support to the process for applications and reviews.
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Director Responsible for Delivery	Paul Woodcock
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Cabinet Portfolio Holder	Cllr Hoddinott
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Proposed Revenue Budget Investments

Finance Business Partner	Richard Young
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Implications on other Services (identify which services and possible impact)	It is expected that this proposal will require support from Legal Services.
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Proposed Revenue Budget Investments

Budget Investment Option 2021/22
Directorate : R&E

Investment

Reference:	R&E6
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2021/22 £'000
42

Proposal Description	Pollinator Friendly Grounds Maintenance Pilots
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Details of Proposal (what will be achieved)	<p>The Year Ahead Plan set out the ambition for the development of more pollinator friendly approaches to grounds maintenance in Rotherham.</p> <p>The service has set out four main strands to the development of our approaches, including proposed pilots of a number of different approaches over the next year. This includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identifying areas to be designated as zero or significantly reduced grounds maintenance areas. 2. Identify areas to be maintained annually, on a reduced schedule compared to the current. 3. Development and pilot approaches for additional areas of seeding with pollinator seed material, resulting in more wildflower swathes across borough on annual basis. 4. Engage with the Council's landscape design team to include pollinator friendly approaches as part of larger suitable projects. <p>To achieve the above objectives above would require the following budget investments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff to undertake seeding and maintenance of areas, including works identified to increase biodiversity of locations. This is estimated to require 2 Full Time Equivalent Operatives for 4 months to undertake seeding and maintenance - £17K • Commission an Ecological Survey to develop a pollinator friendly plan and to support the pilot approach. This is estimated at £10K • Additional materials, including vehicle hire, traffic management and labour are estimated at £15k. <p>The total financial proposal for this pilot, in revenue terms,</p>
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Proposed Revenue Budget Investments

	<p>is therefore £42k.</p> <p>It should be noted that the resource implications are high level estimates and could change based on the development of a plan delivered by an ecologist or appropriate individual.</p>
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Director Responsible for Delivery	Paul Woodcock
Cabinet Portfolio Holder	Cllr Allen
Finance Business Partner	Richard Young
Implications on other Services (identify which services and possible impact)	None

Proposed Revenue Budget Investments

Budget Investment Option 2021/22

Investment

Reference: R&E7

2021/22
£'000

50

Proposal Description

Boroughwide Tree Planting – Engagement Programme

Details of Proposal
(what will be
achieved)

The Council's proposed capital investment will ensure 500 trees are planted across the borough, but it is anticipated that this amount would double through the match funding that this investment would lever in from other sources.

A dedicated engagement officer with support budget will:

- Engage communities in the tree planting activities
- Develop education programmes working with schools and community groups
- Educate the general public about the importance of trees to our environment, working to increase understanding and reduce complaints from local residents

This funding would create one temporary post at Band E (£25k) with a small operating budget to support events, marketing and engagement activities.

Director Responsible for
Delivery

Paul Woodcock

Cabinet Portfolio Holders

Councillor Allen

Finance Business Partner

Richard Young

Implications on
other Services

Emergency Planning – Trees absorb and intercept water reducing the stress on storm water drains and they also

Proposed Revenue Budget Investments

<p>(identify which services and possible impact)</p>	<p>improve soil quality ensuring that more water is held in the ground as opposed to creating areas of surface flooding and run off.</p> <p>Regulatory Services – Planting of trees is proven to improve air quality and reduce pollution creating safer environments for residents across the borough.</p> <p>Public Health - Research has shown that residents living within sight lines of trees show significant improvement in public health and wellbeing, including reducing recovery times from mental health and stress related illnesses.</p> <p>Neighbourhoods – Studies have shown that tree planting scheme work towards building a sense of ownership and pride in communities, supporting efforts to reduce crime and improve community cohesion.</p>
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Proposed Revenue Budget Investments

Budget Investment Option 2021/22
Directorate : R&E

Investment

Reference:	R&E8
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2021/22 £'000

50

Proposal Description	Restoration of Libraries Book Stock Budget
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Details of Proposal (what will be achieved)	<p>It is proposed that the Stock Management budget which was reduced in this financial year is restored.</p> <p>In 2018/19 and 2019/20 the opening budget was £263k, however in 20/21 this was reduced to £213k.</p> <p>In light of the most recent action plan for Rotherham Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs 2020-2022, which will improve libraries and place them in the heart of the communities, it is important we have the appropriate budget to make this libraries vision a reality.</p> <p>Libraries' recent public consultation evidenced that 88% of respondents agreed with retaining library sites and investing within libraries; restoring the book stock budget will support this.</p> <p>Alongside the current £1.4m capital investment to refurbish sites along with £500k in ICT improvements, it is important we have a healthy stock budget to support both libraries' vision and this level of investment, ensuring stock is replenished and meets community needs.</p> <p>During the first lockdown the service saw an increase in the number of new library members wishing to access the e-service offer, the e-book monthly spend was therefore, increased in order to improve the offer. It was anticipated this would be a short-term solution, however if the budget was restored, the monthly spend increase would continue.</p> <p>This proposal will restore the budget back to £1 per head of population of Rotherham.</p>
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Proposed Revenue Budget Investments

Director Responsible for Delivery	Paul Woodcock
Cabinet Portfolio Holder	Clr Sarah Allen
Finance Business Partner	Richard Young
Implications on other Services (identify which services and possible impact)	None

Proposed Revenue Budget Investments

Budget Investment Option 2021/22
Directorate : Assistant Chief Executive

Investment

Reference:	ACX2
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2021/22 £'000

49

Proposal Description	Climate change data & research officer
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Details of Proposal (what will be achieved)	<p>The proposal is to employ a climate change data and research officer (Band J full time) to support work in line with the Climate Change Emergency motion adopted by councillors in October 2019.</p> <p>There is a need for a specific post to support the climate change agenda and to ensure that the future milestones associated with this theme are based on appropriate research and relevant information. There is currently no dedicated resource for this agenda in the Policy, Performance and Intelligence (PPI) Service.</p> <p>The proposal is to support year 1 of a multi- year programme of work to provide the expertise and capacity to drive forward the delivery of the carbon action plan. Therefore, it would be a flexible resource with analytical and project management skills.</p> <p>The focus for Year 1 would be to assist in baselining work which will enable the council to identify the most appropriate and relevant actions needed to impact the net zero target.</p> <p>This would involve: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying national, regional, and local climate change data sets and analysing the data to develop an internal baseline (2030 net zero target) and external baseline (2040 net zero target). • Identifying key public and private stakeholders across the borough and developing external networks. • Supporting internal and external stakeholders to identify climate change mitigation actions and plans.
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Proposed Revenue Budget Investments

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaising with key stakeholders and Council climate champions to develop emission projections and identify methods of mitigation. <p>This will support the ongoing delivery of the Council's carbon action plan and progress towards the council's net zero targets.</p>
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Director Responsible for Delivery	Jo Brown
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Cabinet Portfolio Holder	Councillor Allen
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Finance Business Partner	Nikki Kelly
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Implications on other Services (identify which services and possible impact)	A significant part of the climate change agenda is delivered by the Regeneration Directorate and this officer would work closely with the Directorate and with climate champions across the Council.
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Proposed Revenue Budget Investments

Budget Investment Option 2021/22
Directorate: Assistant Chief Executive

Investment

Reference:	ACX3
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2021/22 £'000

59

Proposal Description	Community Leadership Fund uplift
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Details of Proposal (what will be achieved)	<p>An investment in ward members individual Community Leadership Fund (CLF) budgets that will further enhance the ability to delivery ward priorities and build community resilience and capacity.</p> <p>The proposal is to increase each ward members CLF by £1,000. The May local elections will see a reduction in elected members from 63 to 59. Assuming these elections will take place, the total investment required will be £59,000. If the elections do not take place during the ongoing COVID19 pandemic, the number of current members will remain at 60.</p> <p>This investment will support delivery of the Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy and will devolve further decision making down to ward members. The allocation of the additional CLF will support the delivery of ward plans which set out the priorities for each ward and have been developed with residents and local partners and stakeholders. It will also contribute to the outcomes in the Year Ahead Plan by putting communities at the heart of everything we do and building local resilience and capacity.</p> <p>This investment will give ward members the opportunity to provide additional support to grassroots community-based organisations so that they can continue to respond to the impacts of the pandemic.</p>
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Director Responsible for Delivery	Jo Brown
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Proposed Revenue Budget Investments

Cabinet Portfolio Holder	Councillor Watson
Finance Business Partner	Nikki Kelly
Implications on other Services (identify which services and possible impact)	The Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy is a corporate priority and different council services may be called upon to support the delivery of specific ward projects as needed.

Proposed Revenue Budget Investments

Budget Investment Option 2021/22
Directorate : R&E

Investment

Reference:	R&E3
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2021/22 £'000

150

Proposal Description	ADVANCE careers support programme
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Details of Proposal (what will be achieved)	<p>Rotherham is experiencing substantial increases in the number of people claiming Universal Credit as a result of the impact of Covid-19. There remains a substantial number of workers who are furloughed and at risk of redundancy.</p> <p>ADVANCE is a programme which offers bespoke careers and education information, advice and guidance to individuals wanting to progress in their careers, and to employers wanting to develop and support their workforce.</p> <p>This scheme fills a key gap in the current offer to individuals, as it offers careers support to those already in work and seeking to upskill or change career. This is critical as we currently have a substantial number of people designated as in-work, but who are currently furloughed and at risk of redundancy at the end of the scheme. This scheme would therefore target those people who are generally active in the workforce but now find themselves at risk. Furthermore, the scheme will target groups of people who are being disproportionately affected.</p> <p>The scheme will also indirectly support unemployed people by signposting those who are out of work to other available programmes and support packages.</p> <p>The scheme will also work with local employers to ensure their staff are supported to explore alternative careers, access training and development to mitigate further increases in job losses.</p> <p>The investment in ADVANCE would provide local resources to enable Rotherham residents access to the</p>
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Proposed Revenue Budget Investments

	<p>scheme, which is currently available to residents in Barnsley, Doncaster and Sheffield. The proposed Council funding of £150k per year, will be matched by a further £225k from ESF to establish a team of 3 posts to deliver the project, in liaison with the wider network of Advance staff in place across the city region.</p> <p>The ADVANCE programme would also be targeted at specific sectors, including work taster sessions, employer insights and open days. In Doncaster, these have been aimed at the public sector, manufacturing, engineering, rail, logistics, digital, education, construction and finance sectors, but a locally operated scheme could select the sectors that are most relevant for Rotherham residents and businesses, enabling people to explore new careers in growing sectors, and moving on from those worst-hit by Covid-19.</p>
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Director Responsible for Delivery	Paul Woodcock
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Cabinet Portfolio Holder	Denise Lelliott
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Finance Business Partner	Richard Young
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Implications on other Services (identify which services and possible impact)	None
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Proposed Revenue Budget Investments

Budget Investment Option 2021/22

Directorate : Assistant Chief Executive

Investment

Reference: ACX1

2021/22
£'000

102

Proposal Description

Kickstart scheme placements paid at the Living Wage.

Details of Proposal
(what will be
achieved)

The government Kickstart scheme is designed to provide paid work placements for young people aged 16 – 24 who are in receipt of Universal Credit and at risk of long term unemployment. The Council has identified a potential 89 placements which could benefit local residents who are eligible for the scheme, and this investment will allow the places to be paid in line with the Council's Living Wage policy.

Under the scheme a Kickstart placement can only be offered if the proposed placement is for a minimum of 25 hours a week, has a duration for six months, and starts before the end of December 2021. In addition, the council is required to provide support to the individual which will help them secure ongoing employment once the placement has finished. The scheme suggests that support provided should be in relation to CV development and interview skills as a minimum.

Government funding is provided to cover costs of placements at the relevant minimum wage for the age of the young person on the placement.

The Council (delegated to Assistant Director of HR & OD) has agreed that all placements will be paid at the Band A equivalent salary of £9.43 per hour, in line with the Council's agreement with recognised trade unions to implement the Real Living Wage. This will mean an additional cost as set out below:

	Age 16-17	Age 18-20	Age 21-24	Band A
National	£4.55	£6.45	£8.20	£9.43

Proposed Revenue Budget Investments

Minimum Wage payable per placement (per hour)				
Weekly salary - 25 hours per week (refunded via scheme)	£113.75	£161.25	£205.00	£235.75
Total salary cost per placement @ 25 hours/week over 6 months (refunded via scheme)	£2957.50	£4192.50	£5330.00	£6129.50
Additional total cost if paid at Band A minimum hourly rate	£3172.00	£1937.00	£799.50	

An analysis of the likely age demographic breakdown of candidates has been undertaken to more accurately assess additional costs.

16 and 17 years olds can claim UC only in very specific circumstances e.g. limited capability for work, caring responsibilities, is a parent, is pregnant or does not have parental support.

For that reason, less than 1% of active jobseeker UC claimants are 16 – 17 year. Rotherham Job Centre have also said that 16 – 17 years olds are a negligible proportion of active jobseekers in the borough.

Nationally, there are 4 times as many claimants between 20-24 than under 20. Therefore, we have costed out filling all placements at 30% (18 – 20) and 70% (21 – 24).

Based on filling all 89 placements that would cost £52K for the proportion of 18 to 20 years old and £50K for 21 to 24 year old recruits – a maximum investment required of £102K

We do not yet know the demand for placements and the likely proportion that we may be able to fill.

Director Responsible for Delivery

Jo Brown

Proposed Revenue Budget Investments

Cabinet Portfolio Holder	Councillor Alam
Finance Business Partner	Rob Mahon
Implications on other Services (identify which services and possible impact)	None

Proposed Revenue Budget Investments

Budget Investment Option 2021/22
Directorate: Assistant Chief Executive

Investment

Reference:	ACX4
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2021/22 £'000

100

Proposal Description	Tackling Food Poverty
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Details of Proposal (what will be achieved)	<p>The proposal will take forward and develop further approaches to supporting people in crisis and tackling food poverty, building on learning from responses to the COVID 19 emergency.</p> <p>The proposal will support two sets of activity, building on experience gained during the COVID 19 emergency, and delivered through the Council's partnership working with crisis support partners.</p> <p>The first will be to extend the provision of non-food stock to be included with crisis food parcels. The provision of food continues as part of the current SLA. Non-food stock (personal hygiene; sanitary products etc.) has proved invaluable as part of the COVID 19 response.</p> <p>The second will be to support activity in community organisations to evolve the "social supermarket" and similar models, sometimes referred to as "food pantries". The social supermarket model has recently been supported by the Council working with the Crisis Support partners, through a small grant from the Local Authority Emergency Assistance Grant for Food and Essential Supplies, to Rotherham Timebuilders based at Rotherham Minster. This model is about working to prevent people facing food poverty and reduce the number of people having to turn to crisis support. Funding for this approach is likely to attract leverage of external funding targeted at innovative work.</p> <p>Th funding profile would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-food stock - £40,000 • Social Supermarket and similar models - £60,000
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Proposed Revenue Budget Investments

Director Responsible for Delivery	Jo Brown
Cabinet Portfolio Holder	Councillor Allen
Finance Business Partner	Nikki Kelly
Implications on other Services (identify which services and possible impact)	No direct implications. Other services do benefit from be able to refer people for crisis support.

Proposed Revenue Budget Investments

Budget Investment Option 2021/22
Directorate: Finance and Customer Services

Investment

Reference:	FCS1
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2021/22 £'000

50

Proposal Description	Digital Inclusion
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Details of Proposal (what will be achieved)	<p>Digital exclusion continues to be an issue in some age groups and sections of the community. This proposal will join up across existing Council strategies, providing additional capacity to reach those in greatest need of support in accessing digital services.</p> <p>Both the Council's Library Strategy 2021 – 2026, approved by Cabinet in October 2020, and the currently draft Digital Strategy, due to be presented to Cabinet in February 2021, identify the need for work around digital inclusion.</p> <p>The Library Strategy sets out "Increased digital inclusion: in addition to providing free access to the internet in order to help people get online and assisted digital support, the service will work with partners in order to offer digital training to service users."</p> <p>Along with the draft Digital Strategy stating "Working with education, our partners and voluntary sectors to facilitate, support and develop a programme of digital inclusion initiatives to encourage citizen to gain digital skills, confidence and motivation to unlock the benefits of being online and digitally connected."</p> <p>Digital exclusion is also a factor in community embedded poverty.</p> <p>Digital exclusion findings, whilst not specifically related to Rotherham, do illustrate that digital exclusion remains, as can highlighted from key findings, based on 2018 ONS data:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internet non-users amongst adults in Yorkshire and Humber equates to 12%
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Proposed Revenue Budget Investments

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those that do not possess the 5 basic digital skills is slightly below the national average at 19%. • Over half of all adult internet non-users are over 75 years old. • A little over 22% of the working age economically inactive population is an internet non-user. <p>The most common reasons for not having internet are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A perceived lack of need (64%), • Lack of skills (20%), • Access to (12%), • Cost barrier (8%) • Privacy or security concerns (7%) <p>This proposal will provide some additional capacity, and potentially equipment where needed, to enhance planned digital inclusion activity, especially through libraries and with a real focus on outreach work to VCS and faith organisations that can engage those most digitally excluded in the community.</p>
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Director Responsible for Delivery	Judith Badger
Cabinet Portfolio Holder	Leader, Councillor Read (Customer Services Portfolio), Cllr Alam (Finance & Customer Services Directorate)
Finance Business Partner	Nikki Kelly

Implications on other Services (identify which services and possible impact)	<p>This budget investment option supports policy activity led by ACX in relation to tackling poverty and exclusion and working with the communities and the VCS.</p> <p>The actions will cut across directorates, Regeneration and Environment in relation to the Library Strategy, and Finance and Customer Services in relation to the Digital Strategy.</p>
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Proposed Revenue Budget Investments

Budget Investment Option 2021/22
Directorate: Finance & Customer Services

Investment

Reference:	FCS2
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2021/22 £'000

122

Proposal Description	Reducing customer call waiting times
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Details of Proposal (what will be achieved)	<p>Five additional Customer Service Representatives (Band D) are required to increase call answering capacity and reduce customer waiting times; whilst work continues to increase channel shift and reduce call demand.</p> <p>Appetite for online services is increasing. Over the six month period (Apr to Oct), more than 104k digital forms were completed; 76% of them by customers self-serving online. There is clear evidence that more and more people are moving to digital - where it works easily and effectively for them - and it is anticipated that this method of contact and service delivery will continue to increase as more services are moved on line.</p> <p>For those unable to self-serve, providing 'assisted access' remains a key priority for the Customer Services team. Whilst the number of people needing this support is expected to reduce over time, demand through the Corporate Contact Centre currently remains high; averaging at around 11k enquiries per week. As a result, despite average wait times being lower than a year ago there is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A consistently high level of calls queuing throughout core business hours; • 'Record high' waiting times that can be in excess of 40 mins during peak hours; • High call abandonment rates resulting in customers making repeat calls; • A generally poor customer experience caused by lengthy waiting times; • A significant increase in customer complaints and multiple reports of customer dissatisfaction; • Customers in emergencies not always being able
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Proposed Revenue Budget Investments

	<p>to quickly make reports;</p> <p>During the first national lockdown period a number of services were suspended resulting in lower demand and an average call wait time of around 2 mins. As restrictions eased, call demand and average wait times have steadily increased. The current average call wait time is 6 mins which is an improvement on the pre Covid-19 average of 11 mins; although the current suspension of face to face customer service means that staff who usually work in Riverside House reception have been taking calls in the contact centre which has helped increase capacity. As Covid restrictions are eased in 2021/22 some of those staff taking calls will revert to face support – assisted digital, booking system, etc.</p> <p>Nevertheless, some customers are receiving a poor experience as a result of excessive wait times. Their frustrations are often directed at front line staff which has contributed to an increase in the number of staff reporting concerns about work pressure, stress and general discontent.</p> <p>The appointment of an additional 5FTE CSR's is expected to have a positive impact to the number and speed of calls answered allowing digital engagement to further increase and the need for assisted access to fall. The continued roll out of Customer & Digital improvements is also expected to identify opportunities to reduce avoidable contact and failure demand both of which should have a positive impact on contact centre performance.</p>
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Director Responsible for Delivery	Judith Badger
Cabinet Portfolio Holder	Leader (Customer Services Portfolio), Cllr Alam (Finance & Customer Services Directorate)
Finance Business Partner	Nikki Kelly
Implications on other Services (identify which services and possible impact)	Impacts will be positive. There are currently delays for services when receiving reports. Exasperated customers often contact services directly as a result of not being able to speak to Customer Services and this leads to complaints and puts strains on internal relationships. Increased resource on the front line will reduce the number of customer service related issues other services have to deal with which will allow them greater time to focus on their key activities.

Proposed Revenue Budget Investments

Budget Investment Option 2021/22

Directorate: Finance & Customer Services

Investment

Reference:	FCS3
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2021/22 £'000	
109	

Proposal Description	Support the delivery of the Customer & Digital Programme
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Details of Proposal (what will be achieved)	<p>The objective of the Customer & Digital programme is to deliver a Customer Service model that provides high quality services in a modern, efficient and joined up way so that all customers, regardless of circumstance, have access to the services they need and receive a consistently positive experience.</p> <p>The programme has already successfully delivered a number of key objectives; such as the implementation of a redesigned website, case management system and 8x8 telephony platform. In addition, a wide range of projects have already been completed in support of the delivery of Customer & Digital, Back Office Efficiencies (Budget Saving options FCS5 & RE1).</p> <p>To date £662k savings have been achieved. A further £1.8m is to be delivered split across 21/22 and 22/23.</p> <p>Whilst projects can vary in terms of size and complexity, each have a critical reliance on a number of key roles. It is becoming increasingly difficult to secure this expertise due to the expanding nature of the programme, increased demand for digital development, and changing customer expectations and behaviours; much of which has also become more pronounced during the Covid-19 crisis.</p> <p>Additional resources are therefore required in order to pick up the pace with which service redesign activities can be completed and digital solutions implemented, whilst at the same time ensuring the Customer Service team's ability to react to and support more business as usual digital developments/improvements, is not compromised at the expense of project work or vice versa.</p>
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Proposed Revenue Budget Investments

	<p>The funding is for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1FTE Business Analyst (Band I) • 1 FTE Digital Designer (Band G) • 1 FTE Customer Services Development Officer (Band F) <p>1 FTE Business Analyst (Band I): To undertake work shadowing, information gathering, process mapping and value streaming. These essential tasks draw out the opportunities for improvements and efficiencies, thereby evidencing project viability and post implementation benefits.</p> <p>1 FTE Digital Designer (Band G) To design and build complex end to end digital processes, and case management workflow; also creating effective dynamic web content, branding and styling that is accessible, user-friendly and allows customers to complete tasks with minimal effort.</p> <p>1FTE Customer Services Development Officer (Band F) To build the front-end web forms for customers to 'self-serve' and for Customer Services to complete when providing assisted access.</p>
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Director Responsible for Delivery	Judith Badger
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Cabinet Portfolio Holder	Leader (Customer Services Portfolio), Cllr Alam (Finance & Customer Services Directorate)
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Finance Business Partner	Nikki Kelly
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Implications on other Services (identify which services and possible impact)	<p>Impacts will be positive.</p> <p>Digital appetite is growing across the authority. Service departments are becoming more aware of the benefits of end to end process redesign and workflow management through the Council's new case management software. Whilst this is positive in terms of stimulating ideas, current resource challenges are making it more and more difficult to carry out any form of scoping work in a timely manner. The appointment of an additional business analyst would reduce the potential risk that these opportunities become lost and/or services grow disheartened/frustrated due to delay in work commencing.</p> <p>In terms of the Digital designer and Customer Services</p>
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Proposed Revenue Budget Investments

	<p>Development Officer, the additional two posts will increase the speed with which digital processes can be designed, created and delivered; keeping up the pace of the digital production line once service redesign activities have identified the 'to be' model. These posts also afford the team additional flexibility in terms of better balancing the challenges of 'business as usual' demand which is often both unpredictable and reactive.</p>
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