

Appendix 1.

Cabinet's Response to Scrutiny Review – Rotherham Community Hub

	Recommendation	Cabinet Decision <i>(Accepted/ Rejected/ Deferred)</i>	Cabinet Response <i>(detailing proposed action if accepted, rationale for rejection, and why and when issue will be reconsidered if deferred)</i>	Accountability	Target date for completion (if applicable)
1.	<p>That the following recommendations from the review be received:</p> <p>a) That the excellent work of Rotherham Community Hub be commended, especially in respect of the befriending service which helped relieve loneliness and isolation throughout the pandemic.</p>	Accepted	<p>During the period of operation from the 25th of March 2020 until the 31st of March 2022 Rotherham Community Hub received 630 requests for loneliness support. The Hub and partners identified that loneliness for many people was a pre-existing vulnerability, which had been exacerbated through the pandemic. The periods of lockdown helped forge genuine networks between volunteers and supported residents through weekly conversations, creating a good foundation to tackle loneliness. Support was directly provided through the Rotherham Befriending Network, linked to the Rotherham Heroes volunteer programme. The Rotherham Befriending Network comprised of local voluntary and community sector organisations, offering befriending support to people of all ages.</p> <p>The Rotherham Befriending Network is chaired by the CEO of Rotherham Federation for Communities (RotherFed) and continues to meet. The Network shares good practice, discusses challenges and opportunities. The organisations in attendance share a wealth of information on what is happening within communities and who best to support them.</p> <p>The emergence of the Rotherham Befriending Network has been one of the positive legacies of the pandemic response. Members recognition of the valuable contribution made by the organisations and volunteers comprising the Network to tackle loneliness and isolation has provided further impetus for the organisations to carry on their activity, recognising that the needs are still prevalent in the community across all ages.</p>	Nathan Atkinson	Not Applicable
	<p>b) That Members be encouraged to add the Community Hub to their Ward priorities and e-bulletins to better support vulnerable residents and families.</p>	Accepted	<p>Members supported the activity of the Rotherham Community Hub throughout its period of operation. Support entailed more than just promotion of the Hub offer, with Members actively involved in developing community responses, linking in volunteers through the Rotherham Heroes programme and working with voluntary sector groups within their Wards and across the borough to enable vulnerable residents to access support from the Community Hub.</p> <p>The Rotherham Community Hub was promoted by Members through their e-bulletins and Ward priorities were tailored, where applicable, to support Community Hub activity as part of the Councils overall response to the Covid-19 pandemic from the period of the spotlight review in September 2021 until the end of the Community Hub offer on the 31st of March 2022.</p> <p>The recommendation of the Health Select Commission Review Group has therefore been discharged but is now no longer relevant following the ending of the Rotherham Community Hub service. The ending of the Rotherham Community Hub service offer was in line with the Government's <i>Covid-19 Response: Living with Covid-19</i> strategy published 21st February 2022 and the removal of specific Covid-19 central grant funding to support the operation of the service through the Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) for 2022/3.</p>	Nathan Atkinson	Not Applicable
	<p>c) Whereas the current Community Hub model is due to end in March 2022, should there be a further evolution of the Community Hub model, that an update be brought in 12 months' time.</p>	Accepted	<p>At the time of publication of the Cabinet report, there are no proposals to continue with the operating model of the Rotherham Community Hub into 2022/3. However, the learning from the service; the principles and approaches will be considered in the delivery of the Councils wider offer to the community.</p>	Nathan Atkinson	Not Applicable

2.	That Cabinet formally consider its response to the above recommendations by June 2022, in accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.	Accepted	A Cabinet report has been produced for 20 th June 2022 in line with requirements.	Nathan Atkinson	20 th June 2022
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