

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT

2021/2022

A NOTE FROM THE CHAIR OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD, CLLR MAGGI CLARK

Scrutiny is an important non-political process carried out by elected members on behalf of the people of Rotherham by challenging performance to raise standards and checking whether services meet peoples need, considering the work of outside bodies, using the Council's Forward Plan to strengthen their ties with decision making and examining the council's Cabinet decisions and holding them to account.

This report presents a summary of the scrutiny work programme undertaken recently by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB) and the Select Commissions - Health (HSC), Improving Lives (ILSC) and Improving Places (IPSC). It encompasses the full range of scrutiny work since the previous annual report was published in 2020 including pre-decision scrutiny; focused work on specific issues; standard agenda items considered each year; reviews and reports from independent persons or outside bodies and areas such as service transformation that continue over a longer period.

Although an outline work programme is developed early in each new municipal year, Scrutiny also needs to have sufficient flexibility to consider and respond to other important issues as they arise. This was the case again last year with the inclusion of additional items for all four scrutiny committees.

It is hoped that with the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions and now we are back to face to face meetings, scrutiny commissions will be able to hear directly from service users about their experiences. Hopefully, service user input will be something which can be incorporated more consistently into scrutiny work across the committees.

In pre-decision scrutiny, OSMB considered various major strategies and policies. The Board maintained a close eye on the in-year budget position and service pressures and will continue to do so in these challenging times.

One of the highlights of the year is the opportunity to work with Rotherham Youth Cabinet when they take over an OSMB meeting in the Children's Commissioner Takeover Challenge (CCTOC). This year's theme was climate change, and the young people made many good recommendations, with the response due back in the autumn.

This has been my first year as Chair of OSMB, and for most of the members it has been their first time on the committee. I wish to thank all Scrutiny Members for their hard work and commitment to carrying out meaningful scrutiny in Rotherham. Together we have worked cross party to hold the executive to account, scrutinise key decisions and provide feedback to the cabinet before their decision making.

I would also like to thank our co-opted members who have given their time voluntarily to enhance the scrutiny process.

I feel very confident that the scrutiny function in Rotherham will continue to develop and provide the challenge needed to deliver improvements and positive outcomes.

Clrr Maggi Clark, Chair of OSMB



Cllr Maggi Clark, Chair, Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

Cllr Emily Barley, Vice Chair, Overview and Scrutiny Management Board



FAQ:

WHAT IS SCRUTINY?

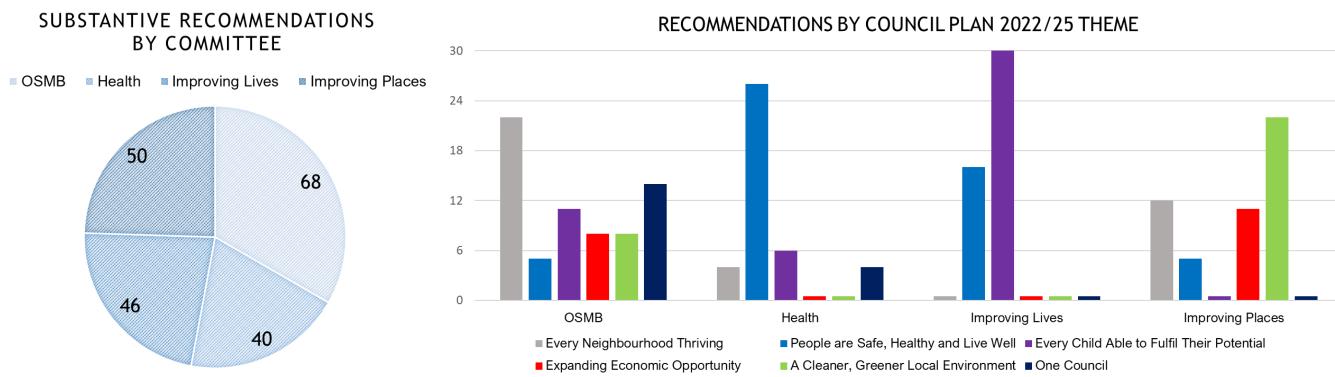
Scrutiny aims to ensure that public services and policies best meet the needs of Rotherham Residents. Scrutiny acts as the check and balance to the Council's Executive decision makers, the Cabinet, by

- ◊ Contributing to policy review and development
- ◊ Holding the Council's Cabinet and partners to account for their decisions and performance
- ◊ Investigating issues that matter to Rotherham residents
- ◊ Working with Council officers and partners to improve services

WHO IS INVOLVED?

Any Councillor who is not a member of the Cabinet can participate in Scrutiny work. Committees also include Co-opted Members and receive dedicated officer support. Cabinet Members, Strategic Directors, and representatives of partner organisations are invited to attend meetings to discuss issues that OSMB or Commission Members have identified as a priority (cont. next page).

THE YEAR OF SCRUTINY AT A GLANCE



26 NEW CABINET DECISIONS SCRUTINISED

96 HOURS OF PUBLIC DEBATE

204 SUBSTANTIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

103 ISSUES CONSIDERED

100 PERCENT OF RECOMMENDATIONS IMPLEMENTED BY CABINET

11 BUDGET & FINANCE ITEMS SCRUTINISED

9 IN-DEPTH REVIEWS/SPOTLIGHTS

ROOTHERHAM YOUTH CABINET TAKEOVER CHALLENGE

Rotherham Youth Cabinet chose the topic of climate change, covering energy efficiency, electric vehicle use, recycling and waste reduction, and biodiversity concerns. In the autumn, the Youth Cabinet will receive a formal response to their recommendations, which seek to amplify the voices of young people in shaping positive outcomes for the future:

- Enhanced action to reduce pollution and single-use plastics
- Strong, inclusive engagement with young people on the climate and environment agenda for Rotherham, for example through the development of an environmental awards scheme for schools.
- Arrangements for provision of carbon literacy training and a Youth Cabinet visit to the local recycling



Image Description: Youth Cabinet gather in Council Chamber, March 2022

FAQ: CONTINUED

WHAT KINDS OF THINGS CAN SCRUTINY LOOK AT?

Councillors and Co-opted Members decide which issues they wish to prioritise, with the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board being responsible for managing the overall Work Programme. Carrying out effective scrutiny takes a lot of time, commitment and effort so it is simply not possible to look at every issue. When choosing issues, Overview and Scrutiny will always consider whether it can make a real difference by looking at an issue, particularly for example where recommendations could result in improved services.

IS THERE ANYTHING SCRUTINY CAN'T EXAMINE?

Scrutiny cannot consider individual complaints or investigate regulatory or 'quasi-judicial' decisions, such as planning or licensing decisions.

IS SCRUTINY POLITICAL?

Scrutiny is carried out by councillors from across all political groups. Councillors aim to leave their party politics at the door to look objectively at issues, basing their findings on the evidence they receive.

CAN I SUGGEST A TOPIC FOR SCRUTINY?

Yes, contact your ward Councillor to suggest a topic.

OSMB OUTCOMES—TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN IMPLEMENTATION



ID: An angular, double-facing bench composed of wooden slats in a modern style installed in a Town Centre public realm area in front of trees and shrubs.

PICTURED LEFT is an example of the bench seating recently installed amid trees and shrubs to provide a welcoming place to take in the public realm near College Street. OSMB Members recommended that more seating be established in the Town Centre and were active in consultations around design and placement of seating.

OSMB recommended trees in the Town Centre be protected, unhealthy trees replaced, and more trees planted where appropriate. All healthy trees have and will be kept and new specimens brought in to replace unhealthy trees. Additional trees and greenery are being added where appropriate, including in the new public spaces to be created: Riverside and Market Gardens. Numbers have yet to be agreed.

BUDGET AND FINANCIAL SCRUTINY

- OSMB monitored the allocation of COVID-19 business support grants; derivation of staffing budgets and use of agency staff; and regular reports on the Council's budget and financial outturn.
- OSMB recommended that the Council capture learning around how the pandemic has informed new ways of operation and service provision that have informed budget management procedures, especially where changes have highlighted new opportunities where future budget savings could potentially be made.
- OSMB recommended the addition of member seminars to the development programme on the topics of Community Infrastructure Levy Spending Protocol and Towns and Villages Fund. These seminars ensure Members have solid understanding of how to utilise these to support local improvement projects.

EQUALITIES OUTCOMES

- In respect of the Cycling Strategy, OSMB recommended facilitating provision of safety equipment and taking measures to ensure all families across the Borough have better access to green spaces by cycle, encouraging budding cyclists to start cycling in safety. Future scrutiny will seek assurances that the Strategy is breaking down the barriers that currently discourage many residents from cycling.
- In respect of the Adoption of Heritage at Risk Strategy and Register, the list of local heritage assets recognises a wide range of heritage assets, including those of importance to BAME heritage.
- OSMB identified working with vendors and contractors on equalities as an area for expansion, as the Council looks to utilise further the Social Value Portal for equalities outcomes.
- Equalities training was added to the Member Development forward plan, so that Members can effectively scrutinise and oversee the equalities agenda at the Council, ensuring the best equalities outcomes are obtained for both residents and Council employees.
- OSMB recommended reviewing the complaints procedures of the Council to harness complaints and compliments to drive service improvement. Learning from the Housing Services complaints improvements is being implemented across the Council where appropriate.

HEALTH SELECT COMMISSION

Health Select Commission scrutinises issues relating to the Rotherham health and public health agenda including

- Health services commissioned for the people of Rotherham
- Partnerships and integration of health and social care services and budgets
- Measures for addressing health inequalities and promoting wellbeing for Rotherham's adults and children
- Food standards and environmental health.

The Commission also examines issues referred by Healthwatch Rotherham and participates in regional scrutiny carried out by the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Commission for South Yorkshire, Nottingham, and the Humber (JHOSC).

Chair: Cllr Taiba Yasseen



Vice-Chair: Cllr Tim Baum-Dixon



ID: Socially distanced HSC Members in the Council Chamber

QUALITY ACCOUNTS 2021/22

Paused by the Government during the pandemic, annual reports on service quality from key health partners resumed in spring 2022. Here's some of what HSC asked key partners to improve in 22/23:

ROTHERHAM DONCASTER AND SOUTH YORKSHIRE NHS FOUNDA- TION TRUST (RDASH)	<p>Members need to see the Trust follow through on engagement and improvement plans within target timescales and, most importantly, demonstrate how each action raises quality of care for Rotherham residents.</p> <p>Future Quality Accounts should include results of the Friends and Family Test (FFT) which is described as the best quality indicator. Members need to see a full, transparent breakdown and analysis of the results and how insight from the FFT is being turned into action to drive improvement.</p> <p>Members need to see leadership set a positive example in future by engaging in public scrutiny so that the voices of patients and stakeholders and their elected representatives can inform progress.</p>
THE ROTHER- HAM NHS FOUNDATION TRUST (TRFT)	<p>Foremost priority is ensuring patient safety by improving leadership and shop-floor practice in the Emergency Department. Keep working on ambulance handovers to ensure patients are seen as quickly as possible and sent to the right place in the first instance.</p> <p>Members are eager to see how the new sepsis quality improvement group will revise pathways for non-elective and elective patients.</p> <p>Improving life expectancy in Rotherham will require more emphasis on preventative work in the community.</p>
YORKSHIRE AMBULANCE SERVICE (YAS)	<p>Response times remain the single priority for residents. YAS needs a robust plan to rectify the failure to achieve national targets in any category.</p> <p>More accessible training for new or prospective ambulance workers, whilst looking after wellbeing of current staff are priorities for retention of staff and safer services overall.</p> <p>Future Quality Accounts should include sub-regional breakdowns of performance information to show how well services are being delivered to Rotherham residents.</p>

HEALTH SCRUTINY PRIORITIES 2021/22

Health Select Commission agreed three main priorities for Health Scrutiny in 2021/22. Some topics and associated outcomes intersect all three priorities as indicated below.

MENTAL HEALTH	ACCESS TO SERVICES	HEALTH INEQUALITIES
<p>Mental health for children and adults remained top priority based on the known continued impacts of the pandemic on wellbeing.</p>	<p>This priority was chosen in order to ensure health services are fully accessible to all Rotherham residents at the point of need.</p>	<p>The pandemic has widened health inequalities, requiring urgent consideration of wider determinants of health and focus on vulnerable communities.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scrutinised RDaSH's delivery of crisis services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, and pathways into mental health care. Scrutinised Suicide Prevention, resulting in councillor training and further small grants work in the community. Reviewed impact of befriending services offered through the Rotherham Community Hub during the pandemic. Reviewed support for young carers, resulting in Key Performance Indicators being drafted for the service 22/23 in collaboration with Barnardo's, development of a system-wide plan to respond to the identified data gap around young carers who continue to have caring responsibilities into adulthood, and improved access to education, skills and training. Scrutinised early phase of a prevention-led strategy around physical activity, aiding in development of an inclusive strategy to help Rotherham residents have equal access to the benefits of physical activity leading to longer healthy life expectancy in Rotherham. Scrutinised Rotherham's Autism Strategy and Pathway, recommending that lead officers undertake discussions with relevant partners to lay the groundwork for enhanced local support for annual medical checks in anticipation of forthcoming government guidance. This is needed because the NHS has promised the health checks in its long term plan, but has offered no timeline. Toward a more person-centred Strategy, further work taking into account diversity within the identities and experiences of autistic people was recommended. Oversaw delivery of COVID-19 vaccination programme whereby 85% of residents took up at least one dose of the vaccine. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prompted by Healthwatch Rotherham, conducted a review of Access to Primary Care, which identified a need to communicate realistic wait times and promote understanding of patients' care options. Monitored the evolving situation around the Health and Care Act 2022 and what it means for Rotherham. Referred an issue around bus connectivity to the hospitals from remote areas of the Borough to the Transportation Advisory Group for discussion with relevant bus service partners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scrutinised Maternity Services, recommending more inclusive consultations with hard to reach communities where new mums are statistically most at risk. Scrutinised the improvement work of TRFT in respect of inclusion and diversity. Scrutinised wider determinants of Health reflected in the refresh of the JSNA/Rotherham Data Hub. Provided feedback on the Health and Wellbeing Board Annual Report, Director of Public Health Annual Report, and the Place's approach to winter surge planning and discharge planning.

IMPROVING LIVES SELECT COMMISSION

The aim of Improving Lives Select Commission (ILSC) is to ensure that services delivered across the Borough support both children and adults to achieve the best possible outcomes in their lives.

CHAIR:
CLLR LYNDsay
PITCHLEY



VICE-CHAIR:
CLLR WENDY
COOKSEY



ILSC PRIORITIES 2021/22

- SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN
- SAFEGUARDING ADULTS
- EDUCATION RECOVERY

REVIEW OF POST CSE SUPPORT

PURPOSE: to gain assurances on the services in place in Rotherham to support survivors of CSE.

APPROACH: Councillors met with senior officers, as well as the providers of the commissioned services in Rotherham. This enabled Councillors to establish a sound understanding of the services that were being delivered in Rotherham to support survivors of CSE. Members conducted desktop research and held a series of online meetings with officers and Cabinet Members at other local authorities to learn how they supported survivors of CSE.

FINDINGS: Members made 8 recommendations. Here is a summary of the outcomes:

1. Post CSE services relocating under the direction of Adult Social Care, Housing and Public Health within the Council, to coordinate support pathways for adults who were victims of trauma as children.
2. Working with partners and survivors to improve how survivors' voices inform future reviews of post abuse services (i.e., by developing voice and influence groups or other survivors' forums).
3. Councillors having opportunities to steer activity taking place within the Borough to stop CSE/CCSE and to support survivors.
4. Improving Lives Select Commission continuing to scrutinise provision of post abuse support to survivors of CSE.
5. Considering how survivors' voices can inform the work described in recommendations 3 and 4 above.
6. Delivering annual training to ensure elected members are up to date with the activity within the Borough to protect young people from being at risk of harm from CSE/CCE and to support adult survivors to move forward in their lives.
7. Strategic Directors exploring options for sharing best practice with other local authorities in Region.
8. Using positive and inclusive language in Post CSE support.

SPOTLIGHT WITH IPSC: ROTHERHAM'S CULTURAL STRATEGY

Members sought assurances that, following the pandemic, as many families have less extra income, all Rotherham residents—especially young people—had access to cultural activities and events, and that young people had fun things to do and safe places to go. 4 areas for action were recommended:

- Working with partners to offer more activities tailored for young people
- Expanding access to safe recreational swimming
- Prioritising access to leisure and culture as respite for young carers
- Hosting events at a variety of venues across the Borough with clear signage

Improving Lives Select Commission: Key Outcomes 2021/22

TOPIC	KEY FINDINGS	OUTCOMES ACHIEVED
Pause Project Progress Report	Scrutinised targeted work with women at risk of repeat removals of children from their care, supporting them to make positive choices, helping them improve their relationships with their children and prevent further children being taken into care.	Members reinforced positive online engagement strategies that built relationships during pandemic to support and empower women who find traditional ways of engagement difficult due to previous negative experiences of accessing services. Next progress report requested 2022/23.
Domestic Abuse - Identifying Hidden Victims	Examined how the Council and partner organisations identify and support victims of domestic abuse across the Borough, focussing on access to support and the delivery model meeting the needs of victims of domestic abuse who are also CSE survivors. Discussed the Council's new responsibilities following on from the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.	Because the changes associated with the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 required further development of the Safer Rotherham Partnership's Domestic Abuse Strategy, Members reviewed and fed into the development of the draft strategy. The revised Safer Rotherham Partnership Domestic Abuse Strategy with input from ILSC Members was subsequently approved by Cabinet in January 2022.
Youth Offending Team Improvement Plan	Reported on 43 completed actions of the 46 planned actions in response to five areas identified in September 2020 as needing improvement. Assured Members that weaknesses resulting in the overall rating had been associated with recording and evidencing the work that took place to support young people who were accessing YOT services, rather than a reflection on the quality of the support provided.	Better understanding of the unique needs of young people known to the YOT who are also in care. Enhanced cross partnership working and joined approach with Corporate Parenting Panel to further develop the support for young people who are also in the care system.
One Adoption South Yorkshire	Since joining with three other South Yorkshire adoption Teams to form the regional One Adoption South Yorkshire, over the first six months of operation, the agency had met performance targets.	Elected members requested to be involved in promoting the work of One Adoption South Yorkshire in their wards and in encouraging potential adoptive parents to come forward. Adoption has been named a work programme priority for 2022/23.
Adult Safeguarding Annual Report	Described challenges of "making Safeguarding personal" and noted that 90% of individuals who had been subject to a Safeguarding enquiry had advised that they had felt satisfied with the ultimate outcome of the interventions that had been put into place to support them.	Members recommended that a seminar be delivered to all members of the Council to increase their awareness of Adult Safeguarding issues. The all-member seminar that was subsequently delivered was well received by members. Next report requested 2022/23
Rotherham Children's Safeguarding Partnership Annual Report	Strong lines of sight around safeguarding had been maintained during periods of school closures; schools remaining open to vulnerable children throughout the pandemic rose to the challenge of keeping vulnerable children safe. Operation Makesafe ensures hoteliers recognise and report CSE warning signs by identifying and training hoteliers who had not picked up on the warning signs of CSE and had not provided an appropriate response when they had been subject to an assurance visit.	Assurances that robust safeguarding practices continued during school closures. South Yorkshire Police are persistently working to ensure all hoteliers are vigilant in carrying out their responsibility to recognise and report warning signs of CSE. Recent training has produced an uptick in neglect cases across South Yorkshire being reported as such, which has not always been the case. Next Annual Report due 2022/23. Image Description: Councillors and teachers in front of brick school buildings
SEND (Special Education Needs and Disability) Provision and Sufficiency	Outlined three-phase strategy to address key areas of need against amid increasing demand for SEND services. Provision of special educational facilities is being developed further alongside support for children and young people in mainstream educational settings where appropriate.	PICTURED RIGHT: To better observe the educational environment at the new Newman School, Members carried out a site visit to the school in March 2022. SEND provision is a work programme priority for 022/23.
Holiday Hunger and Holiday Activity Fund	Members scrutinised attendance information as a way of measuring uptake in various parts of the Borough and as a way of identifying potential ways to expand the impact of the programme.	Prior to the next report, work will be undertaken to increase attendance in areas where attendance had been lower than hoped. Members affirmed the Council's resolve to ensure that no child goes hungry over school holidays. The Programme has been extended through October 2022.



IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION

The remit of the Improving Places Select Commission (IPSC) includes scrutiny of all matters pertaining to the Borough of Rotherham as a place: business and economic development, employment, emergency planning, environment and climate change, housing, leisure, culture and tourism, transport and highways, as well as regulatory services such as trading standards and environmental health. IPSC focus for 2021/22 was on Recovery from the pandemic and Climate & environment.

CHAIR:
CLLR KEN WYATT

VICE CHAIR:
CLLR SIMON BURNETT



Image Description: Socially-Distanced group photo of IPSC Members in front of Council Chamber



REVIEW OF MARKETS ENGAGEMENT AND RECOVERY



Scrutiny Councillors, with input from National Market Traders Federation (NMTF) and The National Association of British Markets (NABMA), fed into redevelopment plans for Rotherham Town Centre Markets and refresh of the rules and regulations governing the markets, which have been in place since 1971. IPSC Members consulted with lead Markets officers and regional and national experts around vision for redevelopment



during a site visit to the indoor and outdoor Town Centre Markets.

Image Descriptions: Left, a Councillor and an officer stand in front of a fruit stall beneath a vaulted canopy ceiling. Right, two Councillors and an officer with arm outstretched over market railings with Rotherham College buildings in the background.

Recommendations centred around thoughtful redesign and sustainment through stronger engagement with traders, young people, and national markets organisations:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">Strong face-to-face communication with market traders to support trust in relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Designing for functional, accessible redeveloped spaces that are attractive to young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Re-evaluating the support offer to help retain new vendors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Expanding the young traders scheme for young entrepreneurs and college students
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ensuring trader retention and safety during redevelopment phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Working with traders to modernise ways of conducting business	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Incorporating advice and resources from national markets organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ensuring long term sustainability

SPOTLIGHT OUTCOMES: EXTERNAL FUNDING SOURCES

IPSC Members met with the Regeneration team to discuss the ambitious programme of bids for Levelling Up funds. Per request, Government feedback on the Dinnington and Wath bids was shared with the Chair of IPSC on 28 April. Insights and workstreams from the scrutiny review of Markets recovery and engagement will feed into future bids involving Markets. Members and officers continue to work with the Mayoral Combined Authority to ensure equitable distribution of gainshare funding is achieved.

IPSC WORK PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS 21/22

RECOMMENDATIONS	OUTCOMES
HOUSING ENERGY EFFICIENCY discussions revealed a need for a plan to help families experiencing fuel poverty to access support.	The Family Support Fund, extended by Cabinet in May 2022, provides support pathways for qualifying families and people on fixed incomes.
ROADS maintenance and Multihog schedules needed to be better publicised and footpaths prioritised in 22/23.	A 12-month Multihog delivery programme was drafted and circulated to Members along with their Highway Inspector's contact details. Plans for maintenance of more footpaths figure in the 22/23 Indicative Highway Repair Programme.
FLY-TIPPING discussions led to Members feeding into early development of an Enviro-Crime Plan, June 2022.	On the forthcoming Enviro-Crime Plan, Members recommended strong community/landlord engagement and digital/printed messaging, i.e. on bin calendars; clear processes; and restorative justice approaches.
BEREAVEMENT SERVICES were recommended to investigate reports of flooded graves as a matter of urgency, develop and share a 5 year maintenance plan, and consult with relevant professionals and clergy.	A plan for immediate, medium term and longer term actions to improve cemetery conditions was shared with Members in June 2022, with full report expected October 2022.
ROUGH SLEEPERS services needed financial sustainability to aid retention of skilled staff.	The Rough Sleeper programme subsequently underwent internal review with the outcome expected at IPSC September 2022.
HOUSING policies needed a process for ensuring those in greatest need are served first for aids and adaptations to make their homes safe and accessible.	The Housing Policy has been subsequently under review, with details of the updated aids and adaptations process reported to IPSC July 2022.
TREES services were asked to expand community involvement and equalities in consultations and planting strategies, and to expand planting of fruit trees.	The next iteration of the Tree Programme comes back to IPSC in spring 2023.
TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION should partner with local organisations to keep driving high quality, green solutions, and cultural offer in Rotherham Town Centre.	The next update on Town Centre Masterplan is expected December 2022, will include details of cultural value experiences in the Town Centre.
RECYCLING strategies responsive to the Environment Bill 2021 that are tailored for Rotherham and upstream waste prevention were highlighted for further work.	On a site visit to the local recycling centre, RENEWI, to view the capabilities of the anaerobic facility, Members attended a full safety briefing before touring the plant. ID: 3 Councillors wearing hard hats in a classroom
IPSC also scrutinised Flooding Alleviation, CCTV, Neighbourhood Working, Libraries, Allotments, and Active Travel. IPSC Members reviewed the Cultural Strategy jointly with Members of Improving Lives Select Commission.	