

Budget 2023/24 & Medium Term Financial Strategy
Revenue Budget Investment Proposals

Ref per template	Revenue Budget Investments	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000
Every Child able to Fulfil their Potential			
23/24 R&E4	Independent Travel Training – Home to School Transport	85	85
Expanding Economic Opportunity			
23/24 R&E1	Rotherham Markets Redevelopment - Trader Incentives	167	167
A Cleaner, Greener Local Environment			
23/24 R&E2	Household Waste Recycling Centres	188	188
23/24 R&E3	Narrow Access Vehicle Resource Requirements	63	63
23/24 R&E5	Commercial Waste Recycling Service	70	0
One Council Approach			
22/23 FCS1*	Customer Services Additional Call Handling	133	0
22/23 FCS2*	Customer and Digital Programme	118	118
Total Investment Proposals		824	621
Value proposed to be funded via General Fund		524	454
*Value proposed to be grant funded		300	167

Budget Investment Option 2023/24

Directorate: R&E

Investment

Reference:	23/24 R&E4
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2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000
85	85

Proposal Description	Independent Travel Training – Home to School Transport
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Details of Proposal (what will be achieved)	<p>The Home to School Transport Service has been running a pilot to deliver independent travel training to individuals currently requiring transport. The current average cost per passenger within this service is £7.2k with single occupancy routes costing around £20k.</p> <p>Independent travel training is a programme which allows for intensive support to individuals wishing to receive training and travel independently. Not only is this of significant benefit from a cost perspective if individuals can be supported to travel independently but more importantly, teaching key life skills and promotes broader independence.</p> <p>A successful pilot case has been delivered, which had a significant impact. The service is now looking to expand the scheme.</p> <p>When a child receives supported transport provision, it is often the case that continued support into adulthood will be required. This translates to lifetime costs and dependency on private hire services which are becoming increasingly depleted and expensive. By providing independent travel training, the Council is offering a life skill to be able to access public transport safely, confidently, and whenever a person wishes to travel, and therefore enjoy the freedom that comes with this.</p> <p>The investment will fund 2 x Band E additional officers and a Band G officer who will identify, assess and train 12 children that are accessing existing transport provision. It is important in the short-term that acceptance onto the scheme is considered strategically, to ensure delivery of a 'true cost saving' where there is not a detriment to an existing transport route, by making it less efficient. By training 12 children, at an average cost of £7,200 per child per annum for supported transport provision, the investment of £85k will cover the initial outlay of the resource required. It will of course be the intention to train more than 12 if possible and then further expand the scheme in future years.</p>
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Appendix 2 Proposed Revenue Investments 2023/24

Director Responsible for Delivery	Paul Woodcock, Regeneration and Environment
Cabinet Portfolio Holder	Cllr Dominic Beck
Finance Business Partner	Richard Young - Head of Finance (Regeneration & Environment)
Implications on other Services (identify which services and possible impact)	Impact on CYPS and Adult social care through positive impact on individuals engaged in the programme

Budget Investment Option 2023/24

Directorate: R&E

Investment

Reference:	23/24 R&E1
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2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000
167	167

Proposal Description	Rotherham Markets Redevelopment - Trader Incentives
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Details of Proposal (what will be achieved)

The redevelopment of Rotherham Markets is one of the Council's flagship regeneration projects, included in the adopted 2017 Town Centre Masterplan.

Plans have been prepared for the redevelopment and re-purposing of the entire complex, which include a relocated central library, new community hub, extensive public realm improvements and enhanced links to the town centre and Rotherham College.

As design and capital related elements are progressed there are operational and revenue matters to consider in tandem, including:

- An ask from traders for the service to offer 'cost of living' rent concessions
- Agreeing a plan to move traders to the new site
- Implementing transition arrangements with traders that involves ending existing tenancies, providing interim agreements for temporary accommodation during development works and agreeing new tenancies at the redeveloped site

As part of the redevelopment the Council will need to secure control and possession of the site. This could be achieved by serving notices on tenants to end current leases, however, to facilitate a smoother transition to new arrangements, minimise the reliance on formal legal procedures and encourage traders to continue to trade at the market during redevelopment it is proposed to encourage traders to move to new flexible transitional leases.

The transitional leases will encourage traders to move to new locations on new terms and conditions that facilitate the redevelopment taking place. The new transitional leases will be offered at a 50% discount from existing fees and charges.

The discount reflects current trading conditions and impact of the redevelopment and will achieve the following:

Appendix 2 Proposed Revenue Investments 2023/24

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) incentivise the smooth transition of traders onto new flexible leases thereby minimising the need to resort to formal legal processes to end existing leases b) compensate for disturbance and disruption during the construction c) Support businesses to remain active in the market during works thereby retaining trade and goodwill prior to the opening of the new development
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Cabinet Portfolio Holder	Cllr Lelliott - Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy
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Director Responsible for Delivery	Paul Woodcock – Regeneration & Environment
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Finance Business Partner	Richard Young - Head of Finance (Regeneration & Environment)
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Implications on other Services (identify which services and possible impact)	The Asset Management Service also manage several tenancies located within and surrounding the Markets Complex.
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Budget Investment Option 2023/24**Directorate: R&E****Investment**

Reference:	23/24 R&E2
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2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000
188	188

Proposal Description	Household Waste Recycling Centres
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Details of Proposal (what will be achieved)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current Household Waste Recycling Centre Contracts come to an end in October 2023. The Council has explored a a number of options as to how these services should be delivered in future and this included the potential to insource elements of the contracted provision. A report on the Council's proposals for the future service provision was presented to Cabinet in January 2023. • The service is currently delivered in partnership with Barnsley and Doncaster however significant policy differences between the Councils has meant that Rotherham has been unable to proceed in partnership with Barnsley and Doncaster. • The contract costs for 22/23 are forecasted to be £1.023k • As a result of a smaller contract for Rotherham alone, which significantly reduces the efficiencies of scales and the benefit of larger volumes of waste, costs are likely to increase • In addition, the Council is bringing elements of this service in-house, which would also increase revenue costs however may allow for greater flexibility and adaptation of the service • There were three options considered with a range of potential revenue implications. The highest forecasted cost is £1.2m, an additional £178k compared to current costs. The lowest costed option is £1.18m, an additional £157k compared to current costs.
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Appendix 2 Proposed Revenue Investments 2023/24

Cabinet Portfolio Holder	Cllr Dominic Beck
Finance Business Partner	Richard Young - Head of Finance (Regeneration & Environment)
Implications on other Services (identify which services and possible impact)	There are a range of implications across the Council, particularly services such as Environmental Service, Procurement, Legal, Human Resources, Finance and Health and Safety
Director Responsible for Delivery	Paul Woodcock, Regeneration and Environment

Budget Investment Option 2023/24

Directorate: R&E

Investment

Reference:	23/24 R&E3
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2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000
63	63

Proposal Description	Narrow Access Vehicle Resource Requirements
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Details of Proposal (what will be achieved)

Waste Management operate 32-34 rounds daily collecting:

Residual
Recycling
Commercial
And Garden waste collections

These operations are boroughwide, including all rural, town centre and standard collections.

These are all currently collected by 26 ton RCVs. Waste/bin collection processes would be improved through the acquisition of two 'narrow access' specialist vehicles which will assist in ensuring the health and safety of employees.

This new round and vehicle also need staff in order to operate it. The round will collect pink, black, green and brown bins and would possibly be able to support commercial activities in hard to access areas.

This vehicle and crew would also be able to support the service in terms off:

- Growth
- Festivals
- Events
- High foot fall areas
- Missed bins
- Contamination

To meet the requirements to run a successful Narrow Access round the service require an additional Driver and Loader.

Cabinet Portfolio Holder

Cllr Dominic Beck

Appendix 2 Proposed Revenue Investments 2023/24

Finance Business Partner	Richard Young - Head of Finance (Regeneration & Environment)
Implications on other Services (identify which services and possible impact)	No direct implications for other revenue services. There is a link to Fleet Management for the capital investment in vehicles
Director Responsible for Delivery	Paul Woodcock – Regeneration & Environment

Budget Investment Option 2023/24

Directorate: R&E

Investment

Reference:	23/24 R&E5
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2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000
70	0

Proposal Description	Commercial Waste Recycling Service
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Details of Proposal (what will be achieved)	<p>From January 1st, 2015, the UK waste regulations required businesses and households to fully segregate their waste into general and recyclables. This includes dry mixed recyclables such as paper, plastic, metal and glass. RMBC do not currently offer a separate recycling service to trade customers due to the way the Council treats the residual waste, which significantly reduces waste to landfill. However as this is now required, further investment is needed to establish the service.</p> <p>The Environment Act 2021 places a duty on businesses to separate the same recycling streams as households (except for garden waste) and arrange for their separate collection. To ensure retention and expansion of our current customer base and comply with legislation it is necessary to improve the current commercial service by including collection of paper and card, glass, cans and plastics as a minimum. Offering a comprehensive recycling service as well as residual collection to businesses should enable the council to increase its customer base and will contribute to the council's journey to net zero.</p> <p>There are other drivers for collecting commercial recycling including but not limited to: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income and income protection • Reinforcement of household recycling and reputation • Reduce misuse of household services • Optimise resources • Demand for the service <p>Staffing</p>
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Appendix 2 Proposed Revenue Investments 2023/24

	<p>Currently the commercial waste service consists of two vehicles that collect <u>residual</u> waste daily Monday to Friday.</p> <p>To enable us to deliver a recycling commercial waste offering and increase our customer base it is essential we invest in the service to meet the predicted demand of recycling and follow-on increase in customer base once the offers are launched.</p> <p>To add in our required commercial wastepaper and card stream/round we would need to recruit 1 x band e driver and 1 x band c loader so the recycling waste can be collected.</p> <p>The service has reviewed the current level of establishment to see if resources could be allocated from existing rounds, this is not possible as there is no spare capacity.</p>
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Cabinet Portfolio Holder	Clr Dominic Beck
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Finance Business Partner	Richard Young - Head of Finance (Regeneration & Environment)
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Director Responsible for Delivery	Paul Woodcock
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Implications on other Services (identify which services and possible impact)	None
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Budget Investment Option 2023/24

Directorate: F&CS

Investment

Reference:	23/24 FCS1
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2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000
133	0

Proposal Description

Customer Services Additional Call Handling

Details of Proposal (what will be achieved)

This 2022/23 revenue investment is proposed to continue for a further year.

The Council receives in excess of 200,000 calls a year into its main contact centre. Additional revenue investment to reduce call waiting times and to improve and modernise the way that members of the public can contact the Council will improve the customer experience and provide better value.

Over 200K online forms were completed by customers in 2021/22; and 2022/23 continues to show clear evidence that more and more people are choosing to interact digitally - where it works easily and effectively for them. 132,559 were completed by customers between Apr-Dec 2022. It is anticipated that this method of contact and service delivery will continue to increase as more services are moved online.

For those unable to self-serve, providing 'assisted access' remains a key priority for the Customer Services team. Improvements implemented during 2022/23 reduced weekly contact centre demand from 11k per week to 6k per week, which, together with the 5FTE additional will help to reduce call wait times in the future.

Whilst the number of people needing this support is expected to reduce over time, calls being handled by the contact centre increase in complexity as the simpler calls move online. Demand for these types of calls is unlikely to reduce and call wait times through the Corporate Contact Centre remains high and wait times remain longer than the current target of 6 mins; As a result, there is:

- A consistently high level of calls queuing throughout core business hours.
- 'Record high' waiting times that can be more than 40 mins during peak hours.
- High call abandonment rates resulting in customers making repeat calls.
- A generally poor customer experience when lengthy waiting times occur.

Appendix 2 Proposed Revenue Investments 2023/24

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A significant number of customer complaints and multiple reports of customer dissatisfaction; • Customers in emergencies not always being able to make reports as quickly as they would like. <p>The appointment of an additional temporary 5FTE CSRs has had a positive impact to the number and speed of calls answered, hence the reason for requesting that the same investment be continued for a further year.</p> <p>It is proposed that funding for these posts be continued for a further year 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, Finance and Customer Services
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Cabinet Portfolio Holder	Leader (Customer Services Portfolio)
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Finance Business Partner	Rob Mahon, Financial Services
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Implications on other Services (identify which services and possible impact)	<p>Impacts will be positive. There are currently delays for services when receiving reports. Exasperated customers often contact services directly because of not being able to speak to Customer Services and this leads to complaints and puts strains on internal relationships.</p> <p>Increased resource on the front line will reduce the number of customers service-related issues other services must deal with which will allow them greater time to focus on their key activities.</p>
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Budget Investment Option 2023/24
Directorate: F&CS

Investment

Reference:	23/24 FCS2
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2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000
118	118

Proposal Description	Customer & Digital Programme
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Details of Proposal (what will be achieved)	<p><u>This 2022/23 revenue investment is proposed to continue on a permanent basis.</u></p> <p>Ongoing investment in digital technologies will ensure that the Council functions efficiently, effectively and sustainably, reducing avoidable demand on the contact centre.</p> <p>To support the delivery of improved customer experience through the Customer & Digital Programme and increase the pace with which service redesign activities can be completed and digital solutions implemented, permanent funding for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 FTE Business Analyst (Band I) • 1 FTE Digital Designer (Band G) • 1 FTE Customer Services Development Officer (Band F) <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 several 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 £1.015m savings have been secured. A further £300k is to be delivered in 23/24.</p> <p>Whilst projects can vary in terms of size and complexity,</p>
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	<p>each have a critical reliance on several key roles, and it is increasingly difficult to secure this expertise.</p> <p>Maintaining the additional resources will enable the Programme to continue 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> <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 support the Customer Services team with implementing changes, training staff, securing customer feedback, and measuring the impact of any changes.</p> <p>The proposed investment is on a permanent basis.</p>
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Director Responsible for Delivery	Judith Badger, Finance and Customer Services
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Cabinet Portfolio Holder	Leader (Customer Services Portfolio)
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Finance Business Partner	Rob Mahon, Financial Services
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