

**THE CABINET  
16th October, 2023**

Present:- Councillor Read (in the Chair); Councillors Alam, Allen, Beck, Cusworth, Roche and Sheppard.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Lelliott.

**64. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**65. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

There was one public question from Mr Arshad Azam:

Mr Azam firstly explained how grateful he was for the meetings between the Assistant Director of Legal Services, Councillor Alam and the Muslim Bereavement Liaison Group. He stated that both of the meetings had been extremely proactive and successful. The meetings were useful but Mr Azam asked what the next steps were? How could the work be more collaborative? There were still a number of issues such as the planning application, the waterlogged graves at Herringthorpe, the end-to-end progress review and the 35-year plan. Mr Azam was looking forward to seeing the 35-year plan in December. The Muslim Bereavement Liaison Group was set up to meet quarterly but Mr Azam did not feel this was sufficient as it did not give enough time to discuss timely issues. It had been demonstrated that the various parties could work together but it was vital that it moved to the next step.

The Assistant Director of Legal Services explained that the planning application could not be discussed as it was currently subject to the planning system procedures. However, interested parties would be kept updated on that as it progressed. The Assistant Director confirmed that quarterly meetings were booked in and stated that other meetings with Dignity had been arranged. The Council were happy to help facilitate these meetings in relation to specific operational matters.

Councillor Alam echoed what the Assistant Director had said and stated that the meetings had been very useful. He also reiterated that the operational matters were the responsibility of Dignity and the overall contract and performance management was the responsibility of the Council. At the meeting it was agreed that certain issues were operational and would need to be dealt with by Dignity such as the flooding of the graves and the planning application. The Council were encouraging Dignity to meet with the liaison group and wider community. The Council would review the performance management data every quarter.

In his supplementary question, Mr Azam stated that he understood the Council's position in terms of Key Performance Indicators, but he felt that sometimes, all parties needed to be involved in discussions and actions to move forward. Whilst Mr Azam acknowledged that the planning application had to go through the proper process, but he had concerns about the road layout and the need for extra capacity. He thought it best that all parties "get around the table" to work through the issues. It was thought that there was around 18 months of space left at the cemetery and therefore there needed to be some urgency.

The Leader explained that it simply was not possible to commit to meeting on a more regular basis due to the amount of resource it took to hold the meetings but the offer of ad-hoc meetings when needed was on the table.

The Leader allowed a second supplementary that related to the new Medical Examiner System that would be coming into effect from 1 April 2024. The new system required a Medical Examiner to review the cause of death of every individual that passed away in order for a death certificate to be produced. Mr Azam raised the question of how this would work in practice and whether there would be capacity issues? He asked how the Council was managing this situation?

Councillor Alam explained that this was a national issue as it was a change that the Government had made. He understood the concerns, particularly from a religious standpoint, where there was a set time in which a burial had to take place. However, the Council was still waiting for statutory guidance from the Government on how to move forward. Councillor Alam did explain that Rotherham and Sheffield should have a pilot to look at out of hours provision and other reasonable adjustments.

The Assistant Director of Legal Services explained that the legislation had been delayed by the Government repeatedly and as such the Council could not move forward. However, the Council was continuing to chase the Government for updates and liaise with the Medical Examiner. Once the information had been received, there would be a briefing and information circulated to all parties. The Leader asked offers to ensure this was done as early as possible.

**66. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 18 SEPTEMBER 2023**

**Resolved:-**

That the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 18 September 2023 be approved as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

**67. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

The Chair advised that there were no items of business on the agenda that would require the exclusion of the press and public from the meeting.

**68. TOBACCO CONTROL REVIEW**

Consideration was given to the report which set out the options and recommendations regarding the funding of Tobacco Control in Rotherham. The Government had set an ambition to make England smokefree by 2030 (defined as achieving a smoking prevalence of under 5%) and had commissioned the Khan Review into smokefree 2030 policies. The review was published in 2022 and found that, without further action, the 2030 target would not be met and therefore recommended an increase in investment into smokefree policies nationally.

Prevalence of smoking in Rotherham was significantly higher than the national average. 16.9% of Rotherham adults (around 35,400 people) were smokers in 2021 compared to 13.0% nationally, creating a significant health, care and productivity burden for the Borough. Smoking was the single greatest contributor to the total burden of disease in Rotherham. It also negatively affected earnings and employment prospects. In Rotherham, the cumulative impact of these effects amounted to a total loss of £81.3 million through productivity losses, £30.4 million in smoking related lost earnings, £43 million in smoking related unemployment and £9.7 million in smoking related early deaths.

Rotherham's Tobacco Control Steering Group had developed the multi-partner Tobacco Control Work Plan for Rotherham (2022-2025) with an ambition for Rotherham to become smokefree by 2030. The Work Plan was aligned to the evidence base behind the Khan Review and structured into the following five key aims which focused on the local actions within the remit of local partners to deliver and recognise that successful tobacco control requires a coordinated approach with a balance of delivery across the five elements: Strategy and Coordination; Quit for Good; Enforcement; Reduce Variation and Stop the Start. Councillor Roche gave details on each element during the meeting and further information was set out in paragraph 2 of the report.

The current spending on Tobacco Control was set out in paragraph 2.7 of the report. The option to continue with this spending was not recommended as it was not balanced across the full Tobacco Control Work Plan. This arrangement assumed budgets were spent according to historical agreements and would see a continuation of focus on smoking cessation, including the Council funding NHS activity on smoking in pregnancy, leaving gaps in sustainable delivery across the wider tobacco control remit.

Cabinet was asked to endorse the Tobacco Control Action Plan and support the approach to re-allocate current Council spending on tobacco control to deliver a more balanced approach in Rotherham. In particular supporting the managed withdrawal of Public Health Grant contribution to the Smoking at Time of Delivery service as NHS partners progress delivery of the NHS Long Term Plan commitments on smoking and health inequalities which include a smokefree pregnancy pathway.

It was noted that whilst the recommended approach would maximise the impact of tobacco control work in Rotherham, current resourcing was still not thought to be sufficient to meet the Smokefree 2030 ambition. The Steering Group would continue work in partnership to maximise the impact of its work and seek additional funding.

During the meeting the Director of Public Health confirmed that smoking was still the biggest public health issue in Rotherham. Councillor Cusworth expressed her support for the proposals, especially in relation to vaping amongst children. This had been an issue raised by the Youth Cabinet.

Councillor Roche confirmed that no alterations were required to the plan following the announcements made at the Conservative Party Conference in October 2023.

**Resolved:-**

1. That Cabinet note that whilst the approach to maximise the impact of stop smoking and wider tobacco control work in Rotherham, the current national investment is still not sufficient to meet the Smokefree 2030 ambition.
2. That Cabinet endorse the Tobacco Control Plan (2022/23 – 2024/25.)
3. That Cabinet agree to invest £139,478 to balance the investment across five areas of the Tobacco Control Work Plan. This funding would be drawn from the existing Smoking at Time of Delivery (SATOD) provision.

**69. ADULT SOCIAL CARE LOCAL ACCOUNT 2022-23**

Consideration was given to the report which presented the ‘How Did We Do?’ Adult Social Care Local Account. The Account summarised the achievements of adult social care from the last twelve months and set out the Council’s Adult Social Care’s priorities for the coming year. These priorities were aligned to the Council Year Ahead Delivery Plan and the Adult Social Care Service Plan. The Account also celebrated the hard work and dedication of the workforce and provided case studies to reflect the real impact of adult social care on residents.

The Local Account was last published in Rotherham in 2017 and was attached to the report at Appendix 2. Since then, the Council had not been required to publish the Local Account. However, this approach changed in 2022, as local Council's commenced their preparedness ready for inspection by the Care Quality Commission from 2023/24.

The Local Account:

- Set out the Council's adult social care ambitions for residents.
- Focused on safeguarding vulnerable adults.
- Provided data insights about the people supported and how their needs had been met.
- Outlined how adult social care used resources to meet people's needs.
- Looked at achievements over the preceding 12 months.
- Reported on the independent care sector and commissioning activities.
- Provided a voice for residents in relation to complaints and compliments.
- Illustrated the impact of the "best work of our lives."

With formal regulation commencing in 2024 of Council Adult Social Care departments by CQC, the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) had recommended that Local Accounts of adult social care performance were formally published. It would also align Rotherham's approach with that of other Council's within the South Yorkshire region.

**Resolved:-**

1. That Cabinet approve the publication of the 'How Did We Do?' Adult Social Care Local Account for 2022-2023.

## **70. SHORT BREAKS INNOVATION PROGRAMME**

Consideration was given to the report which requested that the Short Breaks Innovation Grant 2023-24 be accepted and allocated against the priorities outlined. The report also provided an update on progress made on the Grant since commencement on 1 April 2023. The Short Breaks Grant was made available to Rotherham under the open application round of the Short Breaks Innovation Fund (previously called the Better Integrated Care Fund) for year two of the programme between April 2023 and March 2024 for the Department for Education (DfE).

The current grant funding was a one-year allocation of £569,940 for delivery of the project during 2023/2024. Children accessing the project requiring overnight short breaks received support from existing overnight short breaks provision. The cost of the delivery of existing overnight short breaks was not funded by the short breaks innovation grant. This was provided as matched funding by the Council. The project supplemented

existing short break provision by developing a short break hub incorporating community-based care and support for children aged 10 years upwards with complex SEND needs e.g., children and young people with Intellectual Disability and/or Social Emotional and Mental Health and/or Autism.

The short break offer (maximum 12 weeks) would combine an opportunity for overnight respite with an intensive behavioural offer linking school, community, and home-based support. A comprehensive holistic assessment would be undertaken, and positive behavioural support plans formulated, offering a joint intensive intervention in education and at home. This would transition into a sustainable short break offer utilising (improved) existing provision. Additional key deliverables were set out in paragraph 1.8 of the report.

The aim of the project was to successfully support the young people to access education in a local special school, at an annual average cost of £25k per annum per child. Short breaks would be provided based on assessed need at an annual average cost of £18k for Personal Assistant support at home and in the community and respite of £57k per annum per child. The total cost to support a child in the community and to remain in a special school would total £100k per annum per child, compared to a residential placement of £300k per annum, per child. It was important to avoid out of Borough options as these did not benefit the children and came at a high cost.

Consultation had taken place as outlined in Paragraph 4 of the report. Letters of support were provided for Rotherham Parent Carer Forum and NHS South Yorkshire ICB, Rotherham Place.

During the meeting it was confirmed that it was important that parents were given a break when supporting children with high needs. It was also confirmed that the number of children with the level of need discussed was around 12.

**Resolved:-**

1. That Cabinet accept the Short Breaks Innovation Grant Funding from the Department for Education and approve the approach to management of the Grant as outlined in the Cabinet report.

**71. FAMILY HUBS UPDATE**

Consideration was given to the report which provided a progress update on the implementation and the spend associated with the Family Hubs and Start for Life grant since the previous update provided in February 2023. The grant was made available to Rotherham from the Department for Education (DfE) and the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) as one of 75 pre-selected Local Authorities. It provided additional investment of around £3.4m over three years to the Council (to March

2025). The funding was predominantly allocated for transformation, (with 5% ring fenced for capital adjustments & upgrades to existing buildings).

Family Hubs were a way of joining up the planning and delivery of family help and support services to improve access, connections between families, professionals, services, and providers, and to put relationships at the heart of family support. For families this meant that they could access support digitally through a self-serve option, by visiting their local Family Hub or a Family Hub Satellite site.

A family could typically expect a range of support, from learning parenting strategies to supporting family life, to information on infant feeding through the digital offer, through self-referral or self-serve. Families could also attend group provision through the Hubs, such as a 12-week parenting programme or a Baby Massage group. These programmes would be available on a regular basis in the hubs and other community venues across Rotherham.

The key funded strands were:

- Family hubs transformation/ digital offer
- Perinatal mental health and parent-infant relationships
- Parenting support
- Infant feeding support
- Home learning environment support
- Publishing a start for life offer
- Establishing a parent carer panel

Further information on each of these strands was set out in paragraph 2 of the report.

During the meeting it was confirmed that this work was being done in conjunction with Public Health. Officers confirmed that this was a good opportunity to have more funding to add value to what was already in place.

Consultation had taken place as outlined in Paragraph 4 of the report.

The Governance Arrangements for the Family Hubs were attached at Appendix 1 to the report with the Hub Locations outlined in Appendix 2.

**Resolved:**

1. That Cabinet note the update and progress made in delivery of the Family Hubs programme.
2. That Cabinet agree to the approach in relation to utilising existing Early Help sites for continued delivery of Family Hubs.

3. That Cabinet agree to hold a formal launch in the Autumn of 2023.
4. That Cabinet agree that the next update report should be submitted for consideration in October 2024, with an update to the Improving Lives Select Commission in March 2024.

**72. ROTHERHAM COUNCIL ELECTRIC VEHICLE INFRASTRUCTURE**

Consideration was given to the report which outlined the progress made to date with regards to installation and commissioning of Electric Vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure and presented several sites for future infrastructure expansion for approval as part of the forward programme of EV infrastructure installation. The report also covered the proposed programme of work for the 2023-2025 period, covering sites at seven locations across the Borough, plus one reserve, which would be considered for EV infrastructure installations and if suitable, progressed and commissioned.

In March 2019, the Council declared a climate emergency. Since then the Council had annually produced a climate change action plan which covered seven themes, one of which related to transportation. Transport was the largest emitting sector of greenhouse gas emissions, producing 24% of the UK's total emissions in 2020 and in November 2020 the Government announced the end of the sale of new petrol and diesel cars in the UK by 2030. This was pushed back to 2035 in September 2023. Therefore, part of the Council's climate change action plan focussed on expanding the Council's operational and Borough-wide Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure in support of the transition to low carbon modes of transport.

In 2019 the Council installed 39 public bays of fast EV chargers at 12 sites across the Borough, with 4 sites connected to Solar PV, to supply or offset the electricity used in charging. The infrastructure for these sites was owned by the Council but the operating system was run by MER Charging UK Limited. The existing Council EV charging infrastructure in Rotherham was set out in paragraph 1.6 of the report.

The proposed forward programme of work was set out in paragraph 2.5 of the report and included sites in Greenlands Park (North Anston); Clifton Park (Doncaster Road); Laburnum Parade (Maltby); Mowbray Gardens Library; Greasbrough Library; Kiveton Park Library and Customer Service Centre (Maltby.) Main Street in Rotherham Town Centre was the reserve site.

**Resolved:-**

1. That Cabinet note the progress of the EV infrastructure expansion in Rotherham.



2. That Cabinet approved the delivery of the schemes as set out in the proposed forward programme.
3. That Cabinet delegate authority to make any necessary technical and feasibility adjustments to the Strategic Director for Finance and Customer Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment.

**73. CABINET'S RESPONSE TO SCRUTINY REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS - MODERN SLAVERY**

Consideration was given to the report which set out the proposed Cabinet response to the recommendations from the Scrutiny spotlight review into Modern Slavery which took place on 1 November 2022. The nine recommendations had been presented in the report to Cabinet on 19 June 2023 and the table at paragraph 1.4 of the current report outlined those recommendations and how it was proposed that they would be addressed.

Recommendation 1 related to a programme of targeted learning and development. This recommendation was accepted and activity to date included discussions with training providers and a Members Seminar had been planned.

Recommendation 2 related to if the Safer Rotherham Partnership (SRP) would consider mapping the local modern slavery landscape. This recommendation was accepted and activity to date included discussions with relevant partners.

Recommendation 3 related to establishing an internal RMBC governance group. This recommendation was accepted, and the first meeting of the Council's Modern Slavery Steering Group was held in June 2023. Further meetings were arranged.

Recommendation 4 related to how young adults at risk of experiencing modern slavery were safeguarded during the transition from children to adults services. This recommendation was accepted and was due to be discussed at the Modern Slavery Steering Group.

Recommendation 5 related to developing referral pathways to ensure that modern slavery victims had access to appropriate support. This recommendation was accepted. It was noted that local and national pathways were already available, and these would be communicated to all partners. Quality assurance mechanisms would also review the effectiveness of these pathways.

Recommendation 6 related to the relaunching of the Strategic Partnership Information Sharing Group at the earliest opportunity. This recommendation was accepted. The Council's Community Safety team

would work with local partners to ensure data sharing took place through the South Yorkshire Slavery Tactical Partnership Group and other groups.

Recommendation 7 related to widening the levels of investigation and auditing of contracts procured by the Council to focus on the “layers” of sub-contractors. This recommendation was accepted, and training would be developed and delivered to the Council’s Contract Managers.

Recommendation 8 related to how the Procurement Team could engage with the South Yorkshire Mayoral Authority Supply Chain Advisor to improve processes, joint working and awareness. This recommendation was accepted as the Council’s Procurement Services Manager was a core member of the Council’s Modern Slavery Steering Group and the Procurement Services team already worked with the SYMCA Supply Chain Advisor on a regular basis.

Recommendation 9 related to how victim advocates could make recommendations to the Housing Assessment Panels on behalf of victims of modern slavery. This recommendation was accepted as the process was already in place.

Councillor Alam thanked the Chair and Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board for their important work on this matter.

**Resolved:-**

1. That the Cabinet response to the Scrutiny Review Recommendations in respect of Modern Slavery, as set out in section 1.4 of this report, be approved.

**74. HOUSING ACQUISITIONS POLICY**

Consideration was given to the report which sought approval for the new Housing Acquisitions Policy which was attached at Appendix 1. The objectives and principles were set out along with how acquisitions would be identified and prioritised and how newly acquired homes would meet local housing needs.

The report also sought Cabinet approval for a delegation to the Assistant Director of Housing, which would allow the Council to acquire up to an additional 100 homes as part of the Housing Delivery Programme. This was in addition to the strategic acquisition opportunities approved in previous Cabinet reports.

Between 1 January 2018 and 31 May 2023, the Council had completed 366 homes for rent and 118 homes for shared ownership. The Council had also built 125 new homes for market sale. Delivery so far had been via a Council build programme, conversions of existing Council stock, and “strategic acquisitions” of new build homes from developers as part of Section 106 planning agreements. 83 homes had been secured through

strategic acquisitions and further forthcoming strategic acquisitions were identified in the Housing Development Report to Cabinet on 10 July 2023.

The methods of acquisition of properties were set out in paragraph 2.15 and 2.16 of the report. These included exercising the Right of First Refusal; acquiring Empty Homes; Open Market acquisitions; Disposals from Housing Associations that were offered to the Council; and Ad-Hoc Section 106 acquisitions.

It was recommended that the Policy be approved by Cabinet to help increase the overall number of Council homes available in Rotherham to contribute towards delivering hundreds of new homes.

The loss of Council Houses over the decades and the implication this had had on residents was set out by the Leader. The Assistant Director of Housing explained that the Policy would mainly be used for general needs housing but could be used to respond to children's and adult social care need where appropriate.

**Resolved:-**

1. That Cabinet note that since January 2018, the Council has completed 484 homes for rent and shared ownership.
2. That Cabinet note that, of the 484 homes, 83 were "strategic acquisition" of new homes from developers as part of Section 106 planning agreements, and none were acquisitions of homes available on the open market.
3. The Cabinet approve the Housing Acquisitions Policy at Appendix 1 to increase the number of housing acquisitions.
4. That Cabinet delegate authority to the Assistant Director of Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing, to acquire up to 100 homes by 31 March 2026, in line with the Housing Acquisitions Policy and subject to available budget. This was in addition to any acquisitions already approved by Cabinet.

**75. EASTWOOD SITES HOUSING DEVELOPMENT**

Consideration was given to the report which sought approval from Cabinet to develop the Council-owned Netherfield Court and York Road sites in Eastwood to build a projected 31 new homes for Council rent. Both sites were held in the Housing Revenue Account and were situated in areas comprising existing Council homes.

Netherfield Court was projected to deliver 14 three-bed houses and 5 four-bed houses. York Road was projected to deliver 2 two-bed houses, 6 three-bed houses and 4 two-bed apartments for older people. Local need

had indicated that these types of housing were most needed in the Eastwood area.

The latest project Programme forecasted that a start on site should take place in Summer to Autumn 2023, with completion of all dwellings by Spring 2026.

The indicative site plans were attached to the report at Appendix 1.

**Resolved:-**

1. That Cabinet approve development of the Netherfield Court and York Road sites in Eastwood to build a projected 31 new homes for Council rent.
2. That Cabinet delegate authority to the Assistant Director of Housing in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing to make amendments to the scheme design, where this is necessary to comply with planning and other statutory consultee requirements, or where site conditions prescribe a design alternation.

**76. MALTBY SITES HOUSING DEVELOPMENT**

Consideration was given to the report which sought approval from Cabinet to develop the Council-owned Addison Road and Larch Road sites in Maltby to build a projected 43 new homes for Council rent. Both sites were situated within a large Housing Revenue Account managed housing estate.

Addison Road was projected to deliver 1 four-bed wheelchair user dwelling; 3 three-bed wheelchair user dwellings; 4 two-bed houses; 13 four-bed houses and 6 two-bed apartments. The Larch Road site was projected to deliver 10 two-bed apartments and 6 two-bed houses. Local need had indicated that these types of housing were most needed in the area.

The latest project Programme forecasted that a start on site should take place in Summer to Autumn 2023, with completion of all dwellings by Spring 2026.

The indicative site plans were attached to the report at Appendix 1.

**Resolved:-**

1. That Cabinet approve development of the Addison Road and Larch Road sites in Maltby to build a projected 43 new homes for Council rent.

2. That Cabinet delegates authority to the Assistant Director of Housing in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing to make amendments to the scheme design, where this is necessary to comply with Planning and other statutory consultee requirements, or where site conditions otherwise prescribe a design alteration.

**77. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD**

There were no recommendations to consider from the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.

**78. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

**Resolved:-**

The next meeting of the Cabinet would take place on Monday 20 November 2023 at 10.00am in Rotherham Town Hall.