

Proposed Revenue Budget Investment Proposals 2024/25

Ref per template	Revenue Budget Investments Supported	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000
Every Child able to Fulfil their Potential			
INV1	Early Help	370	370
INV2	Baby Packs	360	360
People are safe, healthy, and live well			
INV3	Homelessness prevention and temporary accommodation	205	205
INV4	Empty Homes Officer - Strategic Housing and Development	45	45
INV5	CQC Lead	70	70
INV6	Restorative Hate Crime Service	30	30
Expanding Economic Opportunity			
INV7	Community Wealth Building	120	120
A Cleaner, Greener Local Environment			
INV8	Biodiversity Net Gain	50	50
INV9	Principal Towns Cleansing	366	366
INV10	Tree Service Improvements	79	79
INV11	Bulky Waste Service	211	211
One Council Approach			
INV12	Customer Services Call Handling	133	133
INV13	Customer Services – Digital Customer Experience	157	157
Total Requirement		2,196	2,196

Revenue Investment Plan	
Early Help	
Directorate:	Children and Young People's Services
Service Area:	Early Help
Director Responsible for Delivery:	Nicola Curley
Cabinet Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Cusworth
Head of Finance	Ian Muffett, Finance Manager
Unique Reference	INV1

Financial Impact		
Financial Saving to be achieved £'000	2024/25 Perm	£370k investment
	2025/26 Perm	£370k investment

Details of Proposal (what will be achieved)
<p>This proposal is based on a request to improve the Council's universal offer whilst taking the opportunity to consider the principles in the Government's 'Stable Homes Built on Love' plan and the flexibility this now facilitates in providing services across early help and social care boundaries.</p> <p>At present, RMBC's Early Help offer is based around:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well-established children's centres that offer universal support to all new parents supporting the challenges of nurturing a new baby, parenting and links to health and early years' services to support all children up to 5. • Targeted support for the whole family (0-19 years) for more vulnerable parents and children to address a range of issues that impact on families, including support in pregnancy; specialist parenting support; poor home conditions, neglect, substance misuse and special educational needs and disabilities etc. • For older children, support is offered to help with understanding positive relationships, confidence and self-esteem, positive community engagement, behaviour management and continuing special educational and employment needs. Engagement is via outreach, street-based working, 1-2-1 and group support. • The Council's Early Help teams also work with teenagers in families via an Early Help Assessment and support them with issues such as poor school

attendance; prevention of involvement in anti-social behaviour and crime; relationship issues; and reducing the impact of parental conflict.

- The Council is keen to enhance the relational (restorative) and resilience focused approach to adolescent risk and to give Rotherham's young people the tools that they need to progress positively in life despite having grown up in families with entrenched issues.
- The nature and causes of adolescent risk differ to those faced by younger and older cohorts, teenagers have a distinct set of interconnected needs. Adolescents don't cope better because they are older, but this is an opportune time to explore strengths and opportunities as physiological changes occur during this time.
- Additional capacity in the Service will enable a stronger focus on self-efficacy, positive identity development, aspirations and life skills, using the relationship with workers as a tool to build the emotional resilience that they need which will be highly beneficial.

Building on this strong early help offer for Rotherham's children and families, the Council now wants to offer more varied activities and support, changing needs and aspirations of young people, particularly in light of the impact that the COVID 19 pandemic has had on young people.

Together with parents/carers and families, universal services seek to meet the needs of all children and young people so that they are happy, healthy and able to learn and develop securely. The Council wants to ensure that there is capacity to deliver a clear universal offer for all families in Rotherham, to support parents in caring for their children, and ensure that they know how to access this across the early help system. This needs to be evident in all Rotherham's children's centres and hub sites as well as in partner buildings and online, and families need to feel welcomed into local provision.

The Family Hubs programme is in its second year of development, and work is progressing to bring all services and partners together in the children's centres to provide easier access to a holistic offer in terms of health care, child development and parenting support. This is well underway, but there is considerably more to do prior to the programme end in 2025.

It is important that the Council is offering timely support and the opportunity for positive change as problems begin to emerge. It is important to equip young people and families with the tools that they need to develop increasing resilience and independence and encourage Partners to do the same. Universal youth work provision continues to be important in the pathway to adulthood, and it is important to provide access to services to support young people in dealing with the typical challenges of adolescence and helping to ensure that they remain in education and securely at home with their families.

To achieve this, the Council wants to do 3 things:

1. Add capacity to increase the reach of the offer to under 5s across the borough through the delivery of Rotherham's Statutory Children's Centres.

This includes delivery of additional universal activities including new birth celebration sessions; baby massage; baby first aid; treasure basket sessions; reach, roll and play sessions; talking tots; toddler yoga; stay and play groups; and baby weigh sessions. The locations for extra sessions will be divided equally across the north, south and central areas of the Borough and additional resource will enable additional delivery of group and digital support, adding 5 sessions per week, (300 sessions per annum) to the current offer.

2. Add capacity to further collaborate and develop the skills and expertise of the VCS sector to enhance their ability to deliver services to more children and young people across the Borough and increase the impact of the universal offer capacity of the voluntary sector. This will make it easier for young people and families to understand and access sessions as part of the Council's youth offer including creative, musical, gaming and sporting activities available for all young people. The added capacity will enable an additional 8 sessions per week (416 per annum) of the outreach & engagement offer across the borough and increase delivery of street-based work to engage with young people. Based within Early Help Outreach & Engagement teams this additional resource will enable a wider offer for children and young people across north, south and central areas. Work with the voluntary sector to build capacity will also be enabled with this additional resource. A key benefit of street-based youth work is that it can be delivered flexibly across the Borough targeting 'hot spot' areas in response to identified issues, such as anti-social behaviour or exploitation risk, as well as extending youth provision across the borough. Street-based youth work can also be delivered from community and leisure venues, however, it engages with young people in their own communities and 'on their own turf'. Street-based provision allows the flexibility to utilise creative and innovative approaches to engage with young people, help them to identify their skills, passions and to share their voice on issues which are important to them. Through this provision, young people are engaged positively with opportunities, support and guidance to be able to make safe choices and to engage with other opportunities such as universal youth work provision. The Council also wants to build on its strong links with the VCS sector to enhance shared ownership of youth provision and group delivery and there is a firm foundation from which to do this via the Universal Youth offer.
3. Add capacity to develop work with partners at the Front Door to improve the effectiveness of initial contact with families to ensure that they receive the right help at the right time from a range of agencies. It is planned to change the way that the Council works with children in thresholds between early help and child in need, as part of the response to the updated Working Together Framework (Dec 2023). This development will align with the creation of a new extra-familial harm/contextual safeguarding framework, that will enable more targeted and effective plans to support young people at risk of extra-familial harm. The impact of adversity manifests differently in teenagers than younger cohorts and this will strengthen delivery to this group of young people, enabling them to gain independence and success as they move to adulthood.

In order to achieve the above, an investment of £370,000 is being proposed to fund:

- 7 posts across Early Help
- 2 posts in the Safeguarding Service

Impact on Service Provision / Residents / Customers

A refocused Early Help service will increase availability of support and group/1-2-1 sessions for children, young people and families to access. (416 per year) This will add value to universal provision for all children and young people, with a particular emphasis on under fives and teenagers. Increased delivery through the children's centres, youth venues and schools will be visible to the community, whilst an enhanced online offer will increase accessibility for families in the wider borough.

Maximising the skills and expertise of VSFCE partners will maximise the potential of the wider workforce to meet the needs of children, young people and families. Building confidence, self-reliance and resilience in the long-term is a key aspect of this work.

Redefining approaches through a pilot on Early Help and Children in Need thresholds will enable learning from a broader offer of early support to smaller group of families in the least intrusive way possible.

Developing targeted provision for adolescents alongside development and implementation of the Extra Familial Harm framework will prevent escalation to statutory service interventions e.g. youth justice, safeguarding, exclusion from education.

Implications on other Services (identify which services and possible impact)

Reduced demand on statutory services:

Children's and Adults social care

Youth Justice

Attendance/ Exclusion services

Reduced, public sector spend that is reactive and crisis focused.

Impact on staffing

The proposal will provide an additional 9 posts across Early Help and Safeguarding.

Timeframe for delivery	
Please use the sections below to identify the key delivery milestones	
Step 1: design of phased model	Nov – Dec 23
Step 2: Consultation with staff, Members and partners	Dec 23 – Feb 24
Step 3: Design of new Strategy	March 24 to Cabinet

Revenue Investment Plan	
Baby Packs	
Directorate:	Children and Young People's Services
Service Area:	Commissioning, Performance and Quality
Director Responsible for Delivery:	Nicola Curley
Cabinet Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Cusworth
Head of Finance	Ian Muffett, Finance Manager
Unique Reference	INV2

Financial Impact		
Financial Saving to be achieved £'000	2024/25 Perm	£360k
	2025/26 Perm	£360k

Details of Proposal (what will be achieved)

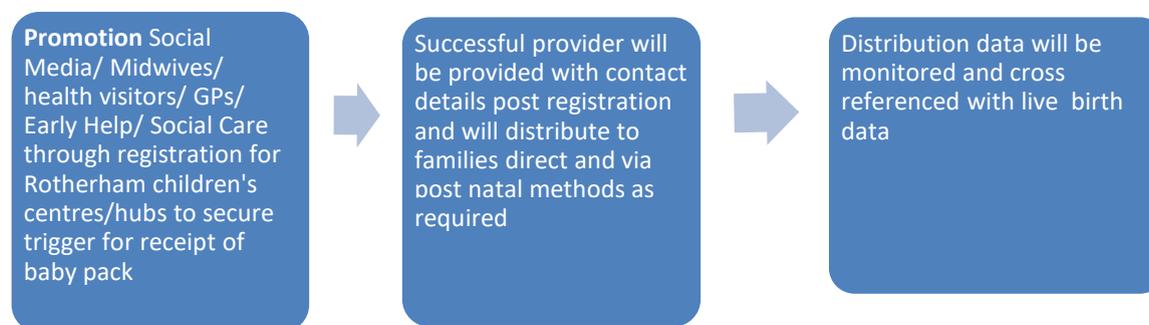
The Baby Pack scheme aims to promote a fair and equal start for all children and to aid in supporting the best possible outcomes for all Rotherham's children with intended benefits including:

- Reducing socio-economic and health inequalities by encouraging registration with family hubs
- Enabling information sharing to promote targeted engagement when families may benefit from additional help and support.
- Offering parents evidence based programmes to enhance parenting strategies that will positively impact on outcomes for the child, including safe sleep practice, attachment, and parent-child interaction.

Public Health colleagues have agreed to take the lead on the programme through the Better Start & Beyond Group and Start for Life aspect of the wider Family Hubs programme. Families will need to register with a Family Hub to be eligible to receive their baby pack and trigger the mechanism for receipt of the pack. Registration with a family hub can be online, on a home visit, in a children's centre or on the hospital ward. Family Hub registration will also enable access to the range of children's centre and 0-19 activities as well as digital resources available for children and families.

Promotion of the baby packs will take place via the Council's website, Social Media and Rotherham Together Partners, including Early Help, TRFT and RDASH, the Family Hubs digital offer and Local Offer. Both midwives and health visitors will promote registration with Rotherham family hubs via ante natal clinics and live birth data will support monitoring of distribution. Packs will be sent to families immediately after the birth of their baby. Families not registered will be followed up as usual via the New Birth Visit or Childrens Centre outreach staff and health visitor contacts to ensure that all families are offered the right to registration and a pack.

Referral Mechanism



The pack will include high quality items that promote positive parent and child interaction and safety improving outcomes for the child. Examples of the items it could include are:

- Baby Cotton Tote Bag
- Voucher to help purchase basics (Nappies, Baby Wipes etc.)
- Travel Changing Mat (Promoting safe hygiene/ safety)
- Digital Thermometer (under arm) (Promoting safe hygiene/ safety)
- Bath and Room Thermometer (Promoting safe hygiene/ safety)
- Muslin Cloths x 3 (Promoting parent/ child interaction and attachment)
- Play Mat (Promoting parent/ child interaction and attachment)
- Teething Ring Soother (Promoting self-soothing/ safe crying - safeguarding)
- Comforter Toy (Promoting self-soothing/ safe crying - safeguarding)
- Book x 1 (promoting development and play)
- Buggy Book (promoting development and play)
- Fleece Jacket with Hood
- Hooded Bath Towel
- 1 x Baby Grow (0-3 Months)
- 1 x Baby Grow (3-6 Months)
- 1 x Vest (0-3 Months)
- 1 x Vest (3-6 Months)

Options have been costed in preparation for a competitive procurement process with a view to achieving significant social value. Additionality has been incorporated to cover necessary overheads for any successful charity, voluntary, independent, or private sector organisation.

Identification of mothers and families in the target groups would be supported through the registration process for Family Hubs and distribution of the universal baby pack offer, providing an attractive additional gift to new mothers and families who need it.

Also included in the packs will be:

Signposting to advice & Support (including online digital family hubs start for life resource)

Oral / Dental Health Advice

Communication with Baby advice

Baby Massage Advice

Safe Sleeping Guidance

Nurture Advice

Attachment Advice

Parenting Support

Perinatal Support

Infant Mental Health Support and Advice

Health Eating Advice (parent and child)

Infant feeding Support

Early Years Education

Based on the average of 2,740 births per year in Rotherham over the last 5 years, if every baby was supplied with a box with the items above, this would cost circa £360,282 per annum.

A procurement exercise would ensure that best value is achieved for the production and distribution of the boxes.

The options given above are examples and the contents could be tailored to include or exclude items prior to the agreement of the final contents.

Impact on Service Provision / Residents / Customers

The Baby Pack scheme will be universally available for all babies and new parents. It aims to promote a fair and equal start for all children and to promote access to universal and targeted provision available through whole family support in localities.

The pack will include high quality items that promote positive parent and child interaction and safety improving outcomes for the child. This will support a reduction in childhood accidents and promote robust education for new parents.

The scheme aligns to Rotherham's Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the commitment in Rotherham's Integrated Health and Social Care Place Plan to enable a strong start in life for children and young people. This also supports the

aim in both the Rotherham Together Partnership Plan and the Rotherham Council Plan to ensure that children get the best start in life.

Implications on other Services (identify which services and possible impact)

Increased engagement via Public Health and CYPS with midwifery services and family hubs/ early help services (including infant mental health, 0-19 and early education).

Impact on staffing

The resource will require a commissioning and procurement exercise and ongoing contract management. This can be set up within CYPS and then transferred to Public Health colleagues to administer through the Start for Life programme. There will be a data collection/ monitoring requirement to enable quantitative and qualitative performance management of the scheme.

Timeframe for delivery

Please use the sections below to identify the key delivery milestones

Step 1: Commissioning and Procurement exercise	31/01/2024
Step 2: Contract award	28/02/2024
Step 3: Contract start (parents begin registering to receive packs)	01/04/2024

Revenue Investment Plan	
Homelessness prevention and temporary accommodation	
Directorate:	Adult Care, Housing and Public Health Directorate
Service Area:	Housing Options
Director Responsible for Delivery:	James Clark
Cabinet Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Allen
Head of Finance	Gioia Morrison
Unique Reference	INV3

Financial Impact		
Financial Investment to be achieved £'000	2024/25 Perm	£205k Additional Cost
	2025/26 Perm	£205k Additional Cost

Details of Proposal (what will be achieved)
<p>Introduction</p> <p>The request is for £205,000 per annum to invest in homelessness prevention and managing temporary accommodation pressures.</p> <p>The investments compliment the Council's broader strategy to address growing rates of homelessness, which include a proposal to increase the size of the Council's temporary accommodation portfolio in order to reduce the financial pressure from B&B accommodation.</p> <p>The investments also recognise that many of those presenting as homeless have support needs, which if not addressed will negatively effect outcomes including how quickly they move-on from temporary accommodation and the sustainability of any new settled accommodation arrangement.</p> <p>Context</p> <p>The service is developing a strategy to address homelessness pressures. This includes:</p>

- Reducing the flow into the service as far as possible, through stepping up prevention work (including delivering the commitments in the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy); developing a more robust approach to homelessness assessments and decision making including intentionality; and strengthening preventative pathways including with agencies like Probation.
- Reviewing the stock of temporary accommodation properties. This includes improving performance management of stock turnaround times and reviewing the number, type and location of properties in the portfolio.
- Developing a temporary accommodation policy to improve the Council's controls in relation to the suitability of placements, management of occupancy agreements, safeguards etc.

Currently the Council has 115 self-contained temporary accommodation units. These are a cost effective way to manage the increased homelessness pressures being faced by all local authorities. However, demand continues to grow and the support needs of those presenting as homeless are harder to address due to availability of support services. This is one of the reasons why the Council has increasingly had to supplement its own temporary accommodation with placements in hotels / B&B accommodation, the costs of which are fast becoming a significant pressure on the General Fund – forecast to reach £1.6m in 2023/24. As at the first week of December 2023, 157 homeless households were temporarily accommodated in RMBC accommodation or hotels. Nationally, homelessness is at record levels, and Rotherham's neighbouring authorities are seeing significant increases in hotel placements, with Doncaster and Sheffield currently housing hundreds of households in B&B accommodation.

Needs analysis undertaken by commissioning and housing between March 2024 and June 2024 has shown that approximately 40-50% of people in temporary accommodation or hotel provision had identified support needs.

Probation homelessness accommodation

Total annual cost for the scheme is £50k (with £25k from probation.) This is an essential accommodation and support service which has been funded previously through time-limited funding pots that are no longer available. The cost is shared with Probation. The scheme would provide continuous provision of accommodation and support for 24 single individuals exiting custody. The scheme is provided by Target Housing. Its funding pays for 2 FTE support workers who provide assertive engagement, crisis interventions and a range of recovery-based support interventions including mentoring, therapeutic discussions, life-skills coaching, and learning-focussed based activities in addition to the housing management support funded through intensive housing management.

People within this cohort often have mental health issues and/or substance dependency, can be difficult to engage, rarely have secure housing in place and can struggle to maintain a tenancy without intensive support. Failure to address

these challenges would create more substantial pressures on RMBC services in future.

Along with the staff, Target will continue to provide 24 units of accommodation.

Housing Related Support

Housing Services is currently looking to expand its portfolio of temporary accommodation utilising the Housing Acquisition Policy agreed by Cabinet recently. The proposed £180k investment would support commissioning of a service to provide resettlement support to people who are homeless and residing in hotels or this newly acquired accommodation. Referrals will come from the homelessness team with the aim of the service to support people with a wide range of needs to move onto independent living and prevent repeat homelessness. The service may be onsite in the accommodation/s to ensure easy and rapid access to clients and staff. The service will be focused on the gaps that are preventing independent living and ensuring clients are enabled to access wider support networks.

Each package of support will need to be flexible to the needs of service users, and the whole offer will need to cover a wide range of client needs, including families and single men.

Examples of the areas that will be included in the specification are below, the list is not exhaustive at this point as this will be developed with a needs assessment and in consultation with the market:

- Assistance with budgeting and accessing services to advise on money management.
- Future housing solutions and move-on options, including the Council application process and allocation policy, other Registered Social Landlord, Private Rented or specialist accommodation.
- Support to access and apply for grants and access to white goods, furniture and aids and adaptations.
- Enable Service Users to use correct process for reporting repairs and other tenancy concerns and to understand tenancy obligations and plans in place to address this e.g. payment plans.
- Support with maintaining and managing appointments or regular activities such as repeat prescriptions.
- Maintaining personal safety and manage the home environment safely.
- Build confidence around rights and responsibilities and knowing how to fill in forms.
- Accessing essential services in the neighbourhood e.g. the post office, GP, schools and primary care services.
- Understanding the local area and transport links.

In order to attain a level of stability the aim will be to secure a service provider for a 3 year term with the option to extend up to 2 further years. This is in line with the other contracts.

The procurement opportunity will be advertised with a bespoke specification and outcomes measurement framework at the first opportunity after the overall scheme is agreed in April 2024. The process of advertising, evaluating and awarding this work will take at least 3 months with a further period of 3 months being required for a provider to set up the service, employ and train staff. The service can be in place from the start of October 2024 and every opportunity will be explored to shorten this period. As the funds will be available for the whole 12 months it may also be possible to accelerate the support available for the 6 remaining months of 2024/25 to deliver more of the outcomes more quickly with additional staffing.

Financials

A typical nightly hotel placement for a family of 4, where 2 rooms are required, costs in the region of £130 to £200 per night, multiplied by 7 nights is between £910 to £1,400 per week.

Estimated contract value of up to £180,000 per year, based on a 10 bed provision, the Service could support up to 25% (86 per year) of the current hotel placements (347), with a proposed initial contract term of three years.

- Accommodation service average cost £52.48 per day (at 90% occupancy rate).
- Hotel average cost £73.79 per household per day (across all household types).

The difference in average costs would equate to 28.88% of current spend, equating to a minimum of £73,093 cost avoidance per year, should the Council continue with the current 'steady state' demand.

Impact on Service Provision / Residents / Customers

- Homeless households would not need to be placed outside of Rotherham, this will avoid long, tiring journeys to school and work and families becoming isolated from support networks.
- Help to deal with demand for temporary accommodation.
- The households will have their own cooking and laundry facilities.
- Lower costs, which will help to reduce budget pressures/allow the Council to be in a healthier financial position should demand increase.
- Housing Related Support will help to prevent repeat homelessness.
- Increased the ability to have a planned move or stay in their home.
- Reduces, stress and anxiety of becoming homeless.
- Reduces demand on homelessness services and provision of temporary accommodation.
- Reduces spend on hotel usage.
- Assists the acquisition programme.

- Sustainable tenancies - new tenants being more knowledgeable to sustain their tenancy thereby reducing void costs.

Implications on other Services (identify which services and possible impact)

Housing related support services help people to live independently or move on to independent living, this will help to reduce pressures on Adult Social Care services.

Impact on staffing

The additional units will reduce staff time needed to find suitable hotel placements, reducing stress levels with smaller cases loads.

The additional staffing provided by the contract will reduce the need to RMBC Homelessness Officer time around acute support, allowing the Homelessness Officer to concentrate on move on options.

Timeframe for delivery

Please use the sections below to identify the key delivery milestones

Step 1: Develop the Procurement Business Case, including market engagement	January 2024
Step 2: Call off of the FPS and award contract	April 2024
Step 3: Contract start	July 2024

Revenue Investment Plan	
Empty Homes Officer – Strategic Housing and Development	
Directorate:	Adult Care, Housing & Public Health
Service Area:	Housing
Director Responsible for Delivery:	Adult Care, Housing & Public Health
Cabinet Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Allen
Head of Finance	Gioia Morrison
Unique Reference	INV4

Financial Impact		
Financial Investment to be achieved £'000	2024/25 Perm	£45k
	2025/26 Perm	£45k

Details of Proposal (what will be achieved)
<p>Empty Homes is one of six key priorities set out in the Rotherham Housing Strategy 2022-25.</p> <p>The Empty Homes Officer (EHO) post was initially created as a pilot to see how such a dedicated role could impact on the number of empty homes in the Borough and bring them back into use to meet local need. Due to the complexity of reasons why homes become empty, cases can take several years to resolve. To resolve each individual case, it is important to be able to commit to long term case management and consistency of practice.</p> <p>The EHO post is currently funded by the Housing Transformation Fund. However, this funding is time limited and is not a sustainable or permanent funding source.</p> <p>The officer has been successful in putting in place monitoring and case management processes which have supported 43 empty homes to be brought back into use, including cases which had created blight in communities or had been long standing empty properties. The post also ensures linkages with the strategy and development workstreams, by identifying ways in which homes can be brought back into use to address wider council pressures including the need</p>

for more supported accommodation, housing acquisitions and partnering opportunities.

It is proposed that the post is made permanent to prevent the empty homes cases reverting back to being addressed on a 'reactive' basis, by the Council's Private Sector Housing Coordinator (PSHC), which would result in the Housing Strategy commitment not being achieved.

Should the post not be made permanent then responding to new and existing cases would revert to the Council's Private Sector Housing Co-ordinator. This would mean a reversion back to responding on a reactive basis and a reduction in the current pace of activity.

Impact on Service Provision / Residents / Customers

With the creation of a permanent EHO:

Impact on service provision

- The Housing Strategy commitment of bringing empty homes back into use will be achieved.
- Existing approaches, processes and officer/customer relationships will be retained contributing towards an efficient and effective service.
- The post will enable the Strategic Housing and Development team to identify potential properties that would be suitable for acquisition and contribute towards the Council's target of 1,000 'new' homes by 2026.
- Local and borough wide empty property statistics will be analysed regularly and used to inform local estate based initiatives and the housing strategy.

Impact on residents

- Residents will be assured that the Council are committed to meeting their promise to bring problematic empty properties back into use.
- Blight will be removed and local confidence will be raised, contributing to investment in the local economy and increased property values.

Impact on customers

- Customers will be able to raise concerns regarding empty properties with the Council, through the dedicated EHO post, and will have a point of contact for any future correspondence. Therefore, ensuring that the Council provide an efficient and effective service for the customer.

Implications on other Services (identify which services and possible impact)

Without the EHO, the day to day responsibility will fall to the Regulation & Enforcement Service.

This team have a statutory obligation to respond to private sector housing enquiries, with this role currently accommodated by the EHO, and will create a further burden on an already stretched team.

Impact on staffing

Should the current EHO post not be made permanent, the current officer will return to their substantive post, within the Housing and Estate Management Service.

Timeframe for delivery

Please use the sections below to identify the key delivery milestones

Step 1: Convert Empty Homes Officer role to a permanent role in the establishment structure	1/4/2024
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Revenue Investment Plan	
CQC Lead	
Directorate:	Adult Care, Housing and Public Health
Service Area:	Adult Care and Integration
Director Responsible for Delivery:	Ian Spicer, Strategic Director
Cabinet Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Roche
Head of Finance	Gioia Morrison
Unique Reference	INV5

Financial Impact		
Financial Investment to be achieved £'000	2024/25 Perm	£70k
	2025/26 Perm	£70k

Details of Proposal (what will be achieved)
<p>The Health and Care Act 2022 gave the Care Quality Commission (CQC) new powers to provide a meaningful and independent assessment of care at a Local Authority (LA) level.</p> <p>The new powers came into force in April 2023, together with the assessment of Integrated Care Systems (ICSs); they are intended to support greater understanding of the quality of care in a local area and provide independent assurance.</p> <p>The new assessment is in addition to the CQC regulation of the adult social care and health provider market and Ofsted regulation of children's social care. The CQC has implemented a new single assessment framework and will apply the principles to the assessment of different parts of the health and care system.</p> <p>Local authority adult social care assessments will focus on how LAs discharge their duties under Part 1 of the Care Act (2014) and will centre on four overarching themes with a number of quality statements. The four themes are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How local authorities work with people. 2. How local authorities provide support.

3. How local authorities ensure safety within the system.
4. Leadership.

The local authority assessment framework was published on the CQC website on 21 March 2023 and formally ratified by the Department of Health and Social Care in December 2023. The guidance clarifies the following:

- Themes and quality statements.
- Evidence categories.
- How LAs will be assessed.
- Reporting and sharing information, and
- Intervention and escalation.

A rating of inadequate, requires improvement, good or outstanding will be given following assessment.

The powers will enable the CQC to provide independent assessment of Care Act delivery to better understand the quality of care in local areas. The approach is intended to complement existing sector-led improvement initiatives and aims to support improvement by celebrating and amplifying good practice as well as indicating the areas where more focus and attention may be needed to improve outcomes for local people.

The CQC Inspection Programme Assurance Lead will oversee, develop, and lead a programme of preparedness and continuous improvement for the CQC assessment of adult social care. This role is pivotal to prepare the service for regulation.

Impact on Service Provision / Residents / Customers

With a renewed focus on adult social care under a regulatory framework, it is critical that a programme of assurance is progressed to enable the Council, and adult social care, to evidence how our approach is underpinned and supported by a robust, quality, legally compliant model of delivery which is built on collaborative models of partnership working, and clearly demonstrates evidence in terms of the impact for local people and their lives.

A joint CQC Assurance Board has been established across the ACH&PH directorate with the full and active engagement of key partner services across the Council. This operational officer board is taking forward activity to address the key areas of regulation. An action plan has been developed to address the areas for improvement. This has included a number of quality assurance reviews and sectoral support across the region.

The Programme Assurance Lead will be central to all aspects of ASC inspection preparedness and delivery. This is a strategic priority for the directorate and Council to enable the best possible rating to be achieved in 2024 and the

Councils continuous improvement journey to be embedded in practice and demonstrate impact for residents and communities.

Implications on other Services (identify which services and possible impact)

There are broader implications for the Council, reputationally and depending on the rating, this could result in support/ intervention from central government.

Impact on staffing

The establishment of a dedicated Programme Assurance Lead will ensure overall programme delivery, working with stakeholders across the directorate, Council, and our partners, as appropriate, to embed learning in practice. The direct staffing impact will be the creation of a full time role to lead on these priorities.

Timeframe for delivery

Please use the sections below to identify the key delivery milestones

Step 1: Recruit Programme Assurance Lead	01/04/2024
Step 2: Programme Assurance Lead in post	01/05/2024

Revenue Investment Plan	
Restorative Hate Crime Service	
Directorate:	Regeneration and Environment
Service Area:	Community Safety and Street Scene
Director Responsible for Delivery:	Paul Woodcock – Strategic Director
Cabinet Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Alam
Head of Finance	Jayne Close
Unique Reference	INV6

Financial Impact		
Financial Investment £'000	2024/25 Perm	£30k
	2025/26 Perm	£30k

Details of Proposal (what will be achieved)
<p>The restorative hate crime service provides an early intervention and prevention approach to tackling hate crime/incidents and the attitudes that drive hate through delivery of two elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One to one hate crime interventions for young people and adults who have been involved in, or are at risk of, becoming involved in hate crime offences. • Hate crime awareness workshops for groups of young people in schools, colleges and young people's groups across Rotherham. <p>Interventions deal with issues across all hate crime strands – disability, homophobia, race, religion, transphobia - and also tackle wider issues such as misogyny. The main objectives of the interventions/workshops are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To understand and raise awareness of hate crime. • To understand the impact hate crime has on victims, families and communities. • To understand what influences attitudes and behaviours and develop strategies to build resilience to hateful narratives. • To empower people to have the confidence to identify signs and challenge and/or report hate when encountered in a safe and responsible way. • Promote sources of support for victims of hate crime.

The project is currently delivered under a funding agreement with Remedi, a specialist restorative justice charity. It is in its fourth year of delivery. It was funded through external funding sources in years 1 to 3 which are no longer available. RMBC funding has contributed the majority of the funding to continue the programme in 2023/24, again from a source no longer available, alongside a small (£3,000) contribution from South Yorkshire Police.

Outputs (2023/24)

- Employment of a dedicated worker for 2 days (16 hours) per week for one year.
- Delivery of a series of three one to one interventions for a minimum of 25 young people and adult hate crime offenders.
- Delivery of awareness raising workshops for a minimum of 300 young people.

Costs (2023/24)

16 hrs a week practitioner	£13,714
2 hrs a week Management	£1958
Expenses and Training	£3000
Total	£18672

Proposal for 2024/25

Required outputs will be based on the delivery model for 2023/24 above.

The provider (Remedi) has reported that demand for both the group sessions and one to one interventions in 2023/24 has already reached capacity by November 2023. Therefore, the proposal is to increase the programme by 33% allowing for a dedicated worker for 3 days a week to deliver increased interventions.

Background to the programme

The restorative hate crime service was developed collaboratively with the Council (Community Safety Team and Youth Justice Service), Remedi and South Yorkshire Police. It was a response to consistent community feedback calling for educative work with hate crime offenders to understand the impact of their behaviour and focus on behaviour change. This is particularly the case for “lower level” offences such as hate related verbal abuse and harassment, where victims may not want to pursue prosecution but they do want authorities to take action with offenders/potential future offenders. The need for early education and prevention work with young people was also highlighted as a community priority.

Outcomes are evaluated by:

- Pre and post attitudinal questionnaires to measure changes in attitude, knowledge and understanding.
- Evaluation questionnaires following 1:1 sessions to understand how the service has benefited the young person/adult.

- Case studies.
- Post-workshop feedback from teachers/youth group leaders to identify learning/changes in behaviours.

Rotherham, in line with the rest of the UK, is seeing a year on year increase in hate crime. Nationally this is largely attributed to more accurate Police recording and increased public awareness about reporting, however alongside this, is growing public expectation of action by public authorities. Growing concern about extremist activists, particularly in the online space, who seek to stoke hate and cause division in communities also provides an imperative to build the resilience of young people who may be susceptible to being drawn into hateful views and behaviours. A key priority of the Safer Rotherham Partnership is to take an early intervention and prevention approach and to tackle attitudes that drive hate.

Impact on Service Provision / Residents / Customers

- The programme provides a valuable additional support service to schools in providing educational group sessions that build resilience of young people to hateful narratives and promote respect and responsible citizenship.
- Post intervention feedback from teachers, parents and individuals (adults and young people) who have completed interventions has been overwhelmingly positive and indicates positive attitudinal change is being achieved.
- The provision of interventions for hate crime offenders is an important referral option to achieve positive outcomes for victims who report hate crime.
- Tracking of reoffending rates of participants, carried out by the South Yorkshire Police Safer Neighbourhood Team has highlighted positive results. Of the 55 young people and adults who completed one to one interventions over the last two years, only 6 have reoffended (however 4 of these individuals have complex behavioural/neurodiversity needs).
- The Government Hate Crime Action Plan highlights the importance of preventing hate crime by addressing the beliefs and attitudes that can lead to discrimination and divisions within society. It goes on to state that it is particularly important to challenge these beliefs among young people before they become more deeply ingrained.
- The one-to-one interventions with offenders and those at risk of offending, are an innovative part of the programme offer and has been publicised as good practice by the Local Government Association.

Implications on other Services (identify which services and possible impact)

The young people's group sessions in schools supplement interventions provided by the South Yorkshire Police Hate Crime Coordinator and RMBC Community Safety Officer. Loss of this service would mean capacity to support schools/colleges is reduced.

The offer of one to one interventions and group work is part of the Council's support offer to schools who report hate incidents to the Council via the CYPS schools hate incident procedure. It has proved a useful tool in addressing a serious hate related incident in a secondary school where all pupils/teachers attended group sessions delivered by the hate crime service provider in partnership with South Yorkshire Police.

One to one interventions for adult and young people responsible for hate incidents/offences may be utilised as either an out of court (prevention) programme and/or as a required intervention post charge, thus providing a greater range of options for dealing with offenders as well as improved positive outcomes for victims.

Impact on staffing

The programme provides extra capacity to support services, including Youth Justice Services, CYPS Early Help, Community Safety team, schools and colleges.

Timeframe for delivery

Please use the sections below to identify the key delivery milestones

Invite expressions of interest from suitable external providers	March/April 2024 (following approval)
Evaluation of expressions of interest and selection of provider	April 2024
Commencement of contract	May 2024

Revenue Investment Plan	
Community Wealth Building	
Directorate:	Regeneration and Environment
Service Area:	RiDO
Director Responsible for Delivery:	Paul Woodcock
Cabinet Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Lelliott
Head of Finance	Jayne Close
Unique Reference	INV7

Financial Impact		
Financial Investment £'000	2024/25 Perm	£120k
	2025/26 Perm	£120k

Details of Proposal (what will be achieved)
<p>This proposal is focused on providing support to increase employee ownership across the borough. It will support the delivery of the Council's Social Value Policy. It will also form a complimentary part of the Council's wider approach to creating a more inclusive economy.</p> <p>It builds upon the two-year national pilot that has been undertaken at a sub-regional scale, co-ordinated through the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA), working with Co-operatives UK and the Employee Ownership Association. This was designed to provide support and resources to promote the benefits of employee ownership and increase this within the region.</p> <p>It is believed that this scheme would be unique in a local authority setting in the UK.</p> <p>The funding proposal of £120k would enable the delivery of targeted activity within the borough to promote and increase employee ownership. This will comprise the following three strands of activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employ an ownership hub project manager: who will be responsible for growing employee owned businesses in the borough, embedded

within the RiDO team, to ensure that this becomes an embedded element of the advice and support provided to companies.

- **Promoting employee ownership, including utilising its wider networks to promote this across the borough:** part of the role of the project manager will be to raise awareness through business engagement and a knowledge building campaign to support the growth of employee ownership in the borough. Part of the role of the project manager will be to build new relationships with all areas of the local business support environment and stakeholders as well as signposting business owners and workers to where they can get further support.
- **Mapping the wider interventions in business support and skills development that can support businesses to adopt an employee ownership model.** As part of the Council's wider work on creating an inclusive economy, an initial part of the project manager role will be to undertake this mapping exercise to see where their support can be embedded into other activity being undertaken by the Council.

A £120k investment is required to implement this proposal. This will provide for a permanent Band J member of staff to act as the project manager, with the remaining funding used to promote the take up of employee ownership in the borough.

Impact on Service Provision / Residents / Customers

Impacts will be positive.

Businesses in the area will have a raised awareness of the benefits of employee ownership and as a result there will be a growth in employee ownership in the borough.

Research shows that employee-owners have higher wages and net worths, receive better benefits, and are less likely to lose jobs to cuts and outsourcing during a downturn, compared with workers who do not have ownership stakes in their organisations. Consequently, increasing these types of businesses in the borough will contribute to the Council's ambitions to create a more inclusive economy, where everyone benefits from the process.

Implications on other Services (identify which services and possible impact)

This workstream could be progressed in a way that would complement the additional resource being funded through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) to provide support to businesses on social value. In particular, opportunities could be explored to link / integrated the second workstream above

on business engagements with the wider engagement programme being progressed on social value.

Impact on staffing

The provision of this additional resource would provide the Council with greater capacity to deliver and make progress on the social value agenda. A core part of this role would be to ensure that the benefits of employee ownership become embedded and integrated within the Council's wider business support and skills / employment offer to companies and residents.

As such this would help to further embed social value in the everyday ways of working by staff across the Council, helping to deliver a One Council approach.

Timeframe for delivery

Please use the sections below to identify the key delivery milestones

Step 1: Revenue Investment approved and posts in situ	01/09/2024
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Revenue Investment Plan	
Biodiversity Net Gain	
Directorate:	Regeneration and Environment
Service Area:	Culture, Sport & Tourism
Director Responsible for Delivery:	Paul Woodcock
Cabinet Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Sheppard
Head of Finance	Jayne Close
Unique Reference	INV8

Financial Impact		
Financial Investment £'000	2024/25 Perm	£50k
	2025/26 Perm	£50k

Details of Proposal (what will be achieved)
<p>From November 2023 the Council will have a new statutory duty to administer Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) as a planning requirement within the Environment Act. It has been identified by both Planning and Green Spaces that this will increase demand and work on this subject for these services.</p> <p>This proposal will add a second officer who will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop BNG strategy and processes. • Administer and monitor schemes in accordance with the Environment Act. • Develop strategies with regard to the implementation of BNG. • Under the guidance of the Ecologist, help review BNG applications from developers and give guidance to planners and applicants on applications received. • Support the delivery of BNG schemes within the Council's estate. • Be 1 x Band H FTE (£42,572 incl. on costs; non-staff costs - £7.5k)

Impact on Service Provision / Residents / Customers

Will allow the Council to meet its new BNG responsibility under the Environment Act and support its work to reduce carbon impact.

Implications on other Services (identify which services and possible impact)

Meeting new Government-set responsibilities for both Green Spaces and the Planning Service.

Impact on staffing

Will increase capacity within Biodiversity to support both the Planning & Green Spaces services.

Timeframe for delivery

Please use the sections below to identify the key delivery milestones

Step 1: Recruitment	01/04/2024
Step 2: Embedding with service	01/06/2024

Revenue Investment Plan	
Principal Towns Cleansing	
Directorate:	Regeneration & Environment
Service Area:	Grounds and Streets delivery
Director Responsible for Delivery:	Paul Woodcock – Strategic Director
Cabinet Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Sheppard
Head of Finance	Jayne Close
Unique Reference	INV9

Financial Impact		
Financial Investment	2024/25 Perm	£366k
	2025/26 Perm	£366k

Details of Proposal (what will be achieved)
<p><u>Background</u></p> <p>There is an increased focus on high-footfall areas across the Borough, which are benefiting from regeneration schemes, Towns and Villages Funding and wider capital investment to enhance local communities. It is critical that the Council continues to develop its Environmental Service to ensure the cleanliness of high footfall areas and in turn maximise the benefits brought about by regeneration.</p> <p><u>High Footfall Areas</u></p> <p>As well as Rotherham Town Centre, Environmental Services have identified four areas of high footfall, in the areas listed below primarily in and around High Street areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wath • Maltby • Dinnington • Swinton <p>These areas are cleansed and maintained by Zonal teams with a focus on cleansing of litter and emptying of bins. There is some provision for mechanical sweeping, but this would benefit from dedicated staffing alongside increasing resources to deliver ongoing littering, grubbing and weeding works throughout the year.</p>

Enhanced Littering and Grubbing and Weeding Capacity

Previous investments in the Ground and Streets Service, which provided staffing year-round, has allowed the Council to enhance the environment through a highly successful winter works scheme, providing added value works such as grubbing and weeding. There is currently no capacity for this activity during the growing season and this can have an impact on the built environment and particularly high footfall areas across the Borough. The introduction of one additional multi-skilled officer would allow for on average one additional full day of provision to each of the high footfall areas identified above. This role would focus on year-round grubbing and weeding activities as well as enhancing the general street scene through activities such as ad-hoc litter picking. Such a post would also allow the service to provide more consistent support to Love Where you Live volunteers across the Borough by providing consistent operational support alongside the existing coordination and promotion activity. An additional multi-skilled post to provide this enhanced offer would be at Band E, costing £31k.

Sweeper Capacity

Mini sweeper and large mechanical sweepers have a significant impact on the appearance of the street scene and reduces the impact of heavy manual activities on the workforce. The need to increase the availability of mechanical sweeping capacity has been identified by the service as a key opportunity to improve the overall street scene appearance across high footfall areas and more widely in local communities, building on previous investments and ensuring all assets are routinely operated.

The Grounds and Streets cleansing service currently have a provision of 6 sweepers which includes 3 x Large Sweepers, with 1 x full time staff member paid at Band E assigned to each. The service also have 3 x Mini Sweepers, however limited staffing means they are not in use as much as they could be, and the large sweepers suffer with resource allocation when staff are on annual leave/absence periods. This is because the current level of resources is assigned daily within each zone on other functions such as street bin collections, litter picking, and grounds maintenance operations.

Increasing sweeper resources will improve the Council's cleansing operations by focusing on:

- A formal schedule for towns/villages, high street sweeping in each zone.
- More regular high street sweeping of high footfall areas.
- Sweeping of cycle routes in each zone, that the large sweepers cannot get on.
- Side street sweeping of areas that large sweepers struggle to access such as cul-de-sacs and narrow access streets, this reduces the annual provision for the large sweepers making it possible to sweep each street in the borough.
- Better provision for events in the town centre so additional sweeping can be done around the pedestrian areas.
- Cover for the large sweepers when the resources or vehicle is not available.
- Quicker response to ad-hoc sweeper request from residents and members

Large mechanical sweepers require an HGV licence and driver roles are graded at Band E. Mini Sweeper drivers are graded at Band D and a standard driving licence and vehicle specific training is required to operate. This aspect of the proposal is

seeking to introduce a further 3 mini sweeper posts and an additional large sweeper position at a total cost of £116k. This is in addition to the staffing shown in the table below for town centre cleansing.

Rotherham Town Centre Cleansing

Currently central cleansing is undertaken by the Street Scene team. This currently comprises 6 staff, utilising a range of equipment to undertake works such as litter removal and bin cleansing, road sweeping, weed spraying and grass cutting within the town centre as well as 9-12 hours a week in neighbouring areas.

There are approximately 14,400 Square metres of hard landscape, 2,950 Square metres of soft landscape as well as additional trees/planting and street furniture being newly installed due to regeneration projects (excluding the Forge Island development site). The Council's existing resources and equipment are not able to maintain the upkeep and high quality of this new public realm infrastructure, which attracts significantly higher footfall than other areas and naturally brings further cleansing challenges.

The Council is investing in multiple regeneration projects; this will lead to changes in areas and will see increased visitors in these areas plus more residential accommodation. The night-time and weekend economy is also likely to see growth, primarily due to the Forge Island development. These changes will lead to the need for more frequent cleansing/upkeep of public realm and as a result, a review of operations has been conducted which has led to the development of this investment proposal.

Town Centre Schedule of works for cleansing operations, current vs new provision (Environmental services)

The table below shows the current activities delivered in the town centre and identifies the additional activities linked to this proposal. In order to deliver these enhanced activities, which consists of 3 additional Band B posts, 4 Band C posts and 1 Band D post at a total cost of £212,511. It has also been proposed that these roles are uniformed roles so they are identifiable as the Town Centre team, which will cost an addition £6,454.

Appendix 2 Proposed Revenue Investments 2024/25

Cleansing details	Frequency	Current	New Service Provision
Cleansing Bins	3 times p/w	✓	
	Daily		✓
Litter Removal	3 times p/w	✓	
	Daily		✓
Wash Down Bins	Weekly		✓
Mechanical Sweeping	3 times p/w	✓	
	Daily		✓
Furniture/ Clean Down / Remove Graffiti	Monthly		✓
Hard Surface Gum Removal	Qtrly(Adhoc)		✓
Hard Surface Weed Spraying	Annual	✓	✓
Weed & Detritus Removal (by hand)	Ad Hoc		✓
Planting Prune Cut Back	Annual	✓	✓
Planting Visit	Ad Hoc (Chemical Treatment/Remove Litter)	✓	
	Fortnightly (Hoe/Weed/Remove Litter)		✓
Maintenance of Tree Bases	Ad Hoc		✓
Maintenance of Flower beds / Long Handle Shearing Work	Fortnightly		✓
Grass Cut	Every 3 weeks	✓	✓
Staff Working Hours	Mon- Fri 07:00 until 15:00 Weekend Cover 7am to 15:00	✓	
	Mon- Fri 07:00 until 22:00 Weekend Cover 7am to 20:00		✓

Overall additional staffing cost to deliver activities referenced above:

The table below shows the total number of additional staff included within this proposal:

Grade	Number of Posts
B	3

C	4
D	4
E	2
TOTAL	13
Addition al Cost	£359,511

Key risk to consider for alignment with additional footfall and hours of cleansing operations:

There are over 450 Businesses within the Town Centre and footfall data shows that during 2022 there were 11.8 million visitors to the Town Centre, current footfall for 2023 up to August 2023 shows that there were 6.8 million visitors. Based on the 2023 footfall compared to 2022 it is expected to see a 10% overall increase in footfall.

In 2023 the Forge Island development will open with a new Cinema, hotel, restaurants and a new public realm created. Work is also due to commence on the Market regeneration and new public library which will further increase facilities and footfall. Public streets and spaces have been updated and improved (e.g. Howard St, Frederick St, College St) with further coming forward (e.g. Snail Yard, Corporation St) and these spaces will require cleansing and maintenance. The indoor covered market has moved onto the street for a number of years (to allow for the regeneration of the complex) and this has also resulted in a revision of cleansing operations.

The Council has also created 171 new Council homes within the Town Centre and there are also a number of private rented homes either completed, underway or within the planning stage which will further increase the number of people living within the Town Centre.

It should also be noted that additional capital is required to support these revenue proposals and is detailed in a separate proposal.

Impact on Service Provision / Residents / Customers

Enhanced Cleansing

- The suggested new provision increases the cleansing and maintenance operations within the service.
- Evening and weekend cover is essential for increased footfall in the evenings and weekends.
- New and/or enhanced public areas can be maintained.
- Clear difference in budget and schedule of works, underpins what investment the Council wants to make into cleansing operations.
- Cleaner, greener Town Centre to visit and work in.

- Maintaining an attractive landscape/public realm, visible staff in higher footfall areas, positive public opinion of town centre due to safe and inviting environment, higher footfall, and strong economic growth.

Sweepers

Street sweeping services serve a variety of functions across a host of contexts. From rural villages to built up areas – keeping roads and cycleways clean is important. When people see a street sweeper on the roads, it is seen as making a difference and having pride in an area.

Regular use and weather conditions can make it easy for excess materials to accumulate on our roads. The debris collected by street sweepers contains a variety of different materials. These materials include sediment, rubbish, metals, petroleum products and green waste to name a few.

When large amounts of debris build up on streets, it can make them more hazardous for pedestrians and drivers and have a variety of environmental implications. For example, the accumulated debris can impact air quality, and even make its way into rivers and marine environments.

Environmental benefits of road sweeping include:

Improve Stormwater Management - Without road sweeping, a wide variety of materials accumulate on road surfaces. Regularly sweeping roads reduces the quantity of these materials that enter stormwater systems. When storm drains become overfilled and blocked up, the risk of localised flooding increases. Depending on seasonal climate, the combination of flooding and cold weather icing could also pose issues for drivers, pedestrians, and animals.

Reduce Pollutants and Dust Entering Air - When assessing air pollution, dust is one of the biggest factors to consider. Dust can cause a host of both environmental and health problems, so implementing systems to effectively combat excess dust has numerous benefits. Regular street sweeping reduces the likelihood of dust accumulating and causing such issues, by controlling its distribution in the atmosphere.

Remove Algae Causing Materials - A more specific issue related to stormwater is the accumulation of algae forming materials. Green waste is a common example of road debris. Green waste is comprised of items such as grass cuttings, hedge clippings, and leaves. These materials are high in nitrogen and phosphorous. On one hand, small amounts of these chemicals are essential to the growth of microorganisms; large amounts, however, can be damaging to a stormwater systems. In particular, too much of this green waste and its composite chemicals results in increased production of algae with large quantities of algae having disruptive effects on ecosystems.

Reduce Damage to Wildlife and Water Supplies - When a particular ecosystem becomes home to large amounts of algae, there can be disruptive effects for the life that resides there. Algae can influence a variety of ecosystem factors such as water quality, food chain, and the behavioural habits of fish and other aquatic life. In addition, an excess of algae in an aquatic environment can modify the chemical balance of the water. An algal bloom can cause a phenomenon known as eutrophication; where excessive algal growth depletes the oxygen from the water, resulting in the death of all aquatic life.

In addition to issues born from algae growth, regular road sweeping reduces the likelihood of waste or other products being consumed by animals and outdoor pets. Reducing roadside appeal for animals and pests also reduces the

likelihood of undesirable infestations which may be troublesome and challenging to remove.

Implications on other Services (identify which services and possible impact)

- HR – as this proposal covers additional staff and therefore recruitment, payroll etc.
- Procurement - for the related Capital items.

Impact on staffing

- Increase in number of staff and/or hours to meet the schedule of works.
- The driver roles could be seen as a progression step then for staff who want to advance within services.
- The service can also build more resilience into operations by training additional staff to cover holidays/absences while increasing skillsets in each zone.

Timeframe for delivery

Please use the sections below to identify the key delivery milestones

Step 1: New posts advertised	01/04/2024
Step 2: Posts filled and new rota's operational	01/06/2024

Revenue Investment Plan	
Tree Service Improvements	
Directorate:	Regeneration and Environment
Service Area:	Culture, Sport & Tourism
Director Responsible for Delivery:	Paul Woodcock
Cabinet Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Sheppard
Head of Finance	Jayne Close
Unique Reference	INV10

Financial Impact		
Financial Investment £'000	2024/25 Perm	£79k
	2025/26 Perm	£79k

Details of Proposal (what will be achieved)
<p>The Tree Service has been reviewed to ensure that it is meeting good practice standards as well as legislative requirements. This has led to improvements being introduced to ensure that the service has the required number of Tree Officers to carry out inspections and ensure the safety of the Council's Tree stock of c.80,000 trees.</p> <p>The total investment needed in staffing to sustain the service at the new level is £78,658. This investment will cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The regrading of 5 existing posts • The creation of two new roles: Administrative Assistant and Tree Inspector • The introduction of an apprentice role

Impact on Service Provision / Residents / Customers
<p>Increased safety of the Council's tree stock.</p> <p>Improvements to response times and faults rectified earlier through proactive inspections, leading over time to reduced casework from Elected Members, MP Enquiries and Customer Service Requests.</p>

Implications on other Services (identify which services and possible impact)

Improved services to landholding services such as Green Spaces, Highways, Housing & Schools. Improved response times to Planning Enquiries and Tree Protection Orders.

Impact on staffing

Improvements to recruitment & retention of key staff.

Increased capacity to undertake proactive tree inspections as well as reactive caseworks.

Apprentice role with tailored training that meets the business needs.

Timeframe for delivery

Please use the sections below to identify the key delivery milestones

Step 1: Recruitment

01/04/2024

Step 2: Apprentice starts work

01/06/2024

Revenue Investment Plan	
Bulky Waste Service	
Directorate:	Regeneration and Environment
Service Area:	Community Safety and Street Scene
Director Responsible for Delivery:	Paul Woodcock
Cabinet Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Sheppard
Head of Finance	Jayne Close
Unique Reference	INV11

Financial Impact		
Financial Investment £'000	2024/25 Perm	£211k
	2025/26 Perm	£211k

Details of Proposal (what will be achieved)
<p>The Council currently offers a Bulky Waste Collection service for residents of the Borough. The current charge is £33 for the first three items with a further charge of £10.60 for each additional item. Rothercard holders currently receive a 50% discount on these prices. Enhancements have been made to the service over the last year and customers can now book and pay for this service online, choosing the day of the week and whether morning or afternoon.</p> <p>This proposal is seeking to reduce the price to residents, to provide a cheaper service at a time when many are struggling with the cost of living, as well as drive up demand for the service to encourage more residents to use the trusted and efficient service available. It is anticipated this will also have the added benefit of reducing fly tipping.</p> <p>This investment proposal is seeking a 50% reduction on the current charge to residents who use the service. The proposed fee for 2024/2025 is therefore £16.50 for the first three items with a further charge of £5.30 for each additional item. The proposal is that Rothercard holders will receive a fixed discount which reduces the charge to £10 for the first three items and £5 for each additional item.</p> <p>Whilst it isn't possible to predict accurately the impact on demand for the service there will likely be an increase in popularity and it will be important to ensure</p>

resources are in place to respond to any rise in demand. This will require further resources for collection and disposal. During 2022/23 the service collected just under 16,000 items which, if evenly split per team would equate to 5,300 items with each team spending 50% of their time on bulky waste duties. One additional team could therefore manage an additional 5,300 items, which would broadly equate to a 30% increase in demand. However, due to the split zonally and the distances involved travelling borough wide, the efficiency of one team would be compromised compared to that of the zonal teams. It is likely that an additional full-time team would be required and this would need to be subject to review in line with demand. Should all the additional resource not be needed to manage increased demand, they could be deployed to cleansing and maintenance duties with a focus on activities which add value, such as litter picking or grubbing and weeding, alongside more general duties such as litter bin emptying and fly tipping removal.

The service is currently resourced in line with the zonal model of the Environmental Service, so a team (2 officers and one vehicle) in each of the North, Central and South Zones routinely collect bulky waste during the morning and then focus largely on fly tipping during the afternoons. In order to ensure all three zones can respond to any increase in demand, additional full-time resources are being requested which includes an additional team and vehicle. A team consists of a Band C and a Band E role costing £59k as well as vehicle and running costs of circa £15k therefore totalling £74k in additional cost.

Any growth in demand for the service will increase the Council's disposal costs, leading to an estimated increased cost £68k. The exact increase will depend on the nature of the items collected and their associated disposal cost.

In addition, the reduction in income due to the reduced price based on current usage would be £99k netted off by increased income through increased demand. Based on a 30% increase in demand this would equate to a £30k impact, so the overall income would therefore be £69k less. The exact effect on income would depend on whether the increase in demand was equal across types of collection and those eligible for Rothercard discount. This would need to be monitored. The demand for the service has already grown from 22/23 to 23/24 by circa 6.7% based on year to date data.

The overall net cost to the Council of this investment proposal is therefore estimated to be £211k as set out below.

Item	Cost p.a. (30% increase in demand)
Net income reduction	£69k
Staffing Costs to manage additional demand	£59k

Vehicle and running costs	£15k	
Increased waste disposal costs	£68k	
Total	£211k	

Impact on Service Provision / Residents / Customers

The Bulky Waste service is a popular service for residents across the Borough with the service collecting over 16,000 items over the previous financial year.

The service is quick and effective and provides for collection throughout the week and is now bookable online. A reduction in the price will provide a benefit to all who use the service as well as encouraging those who perhaps do not currently use the service.

Not only is the service popular but it also provides customers with confidence in terms of the management and disposal of their waste. A cheap, effective and trusted service may contribute to a reduction in fly tipping across the Borough by increasing the affordability of disposals and reducing demand for unlicensed waste disposal services, which are a known contributor to fly tipping nationally and within the Borough.

Implications on other Services (identify which services and possible impact)

An additional benefit of a reduction in price may be an impact on the levels of fly tipping, which have consistently grown over recent years both locally and nationally. One of the contributing factors to fly tipping is unlicensed waste carriers offering cheap disposal services, or licensed waste carriers disposing of waste illegally. This is evidenced in significant prosecutions conducted by the Council as well as reported in the national media and a contributing factor, if not the driving factor, for those choosing waste disposal services is likely to be cost. It is a reasonable assumption that the cheaper a service can be provided, the more likely it is that people will choose it.

Impact on staffing

As noted within the proposal above, any further demands on the services could not be accommodated by existing staff and therefore additional staffing is factored into the model presented.

Timeframe for delivery	
Please use the sections below to identify the key delivery milestones	
Step 1: Reduced charge introduced on the 1st April 2024	01/04/24
Step 2: Staff recruitment to take place by the 1st June 2024	01/06/24

Revenue Investment Plan	
Customer Services Call Handling	
Directorate:	Finance & Customer Services
Service Area:	Customer Services
Director Responsible for Delivery:	Judith Badger
Cabinet Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Alam
Head of Finance	Rob Mahon
Unique Reference	INV12

Financial Impact		
Financial Investment £'000	2024/25 Perm	£133k
	2025/26 Perm	£133k

Details of Proposal (what will be achieved)
<p>This 2023/24 revenue investment is proposed to continue on a permanent basis.</p> <p>The Council receives in excess of 320,000 calls a year into its main Contact Centre.</p> <p>Continuing revenue investment to maintain the reduced call wait times achieved as a result of previous temporary investment 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.</p> <p>Over 185K online forms were completed by customers in 2022/23 and there is clear evidence that more and more people are choosing to interact digitally where it works easily and effectively for them.</p> <p>Being available to provide “assisted access” for those unable to self-serve remains a key priority for the Customer Services team as does the ability to educate, encourage and support customers who want to engage digitally but who might lack the knowledge or confidence to do so.</p>

Improvements implemented during 2022/23 reduced weekly Contact Centre demand from 11k per week to 6k per week and this continues to be the average amount of incoming calls. This has been achieved by implementing a number of changes to the telephony platform which have reduced the number of repeat calls for example, a call-back facility is now in place across the majority of enquiry lines into the Contact Centre, allowing customers to leave their details rather than waiting in the queue; and improved customer welcome messages helps to direct customers to the right team more quickly.

Further work undertaken in 2023/24 has enabled Customer Services to identify pressure points and implement improvements to minimise customer wait times. This, together with the additional 5FTE that resulted from the previous temporary revenue investment has meant that the Council KPI quarterly average call wait time of 6 minutes for the corporate Contact Centre has been achieved from Qtr1 2023/34 onwards.

It is expected that the number of people needing to contact the Council by telephone will reduce over time as the range of self-serve options continues to grow. The completion of simpler/transactional enquiries online means, however, that the type of calls being handled by the Contact Centre increasingly become those of a more complex or sensitive nature which extends average call durations.

The appointment of the additional temporary 5FTE Customer Service Representatives has therefore had a positive impact to the number and speed of calls answered.

It is proposed that the same investment continues on a permanent basis so that those customers who make contact by telephone can access the help and support they need easily and quickly.

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.

Impact on Service Provision / Residents / Customers

Impacts will be positive.

Customers will be less likely to experience long call wait times, which in turn means they are more likely to focus their conversation on the enquiry topic rather than the delay in answering a call.

The number of complaints and/or negative feedback relating to long call wait times will reduce.

Implications on other Services (identify which services and possible impact)

If the customer’s call is not answered within a reasonable time, they are likely to end their call. This can mean a delay to the reporting of problems and issues and/or the service that the contact relates to being unaware of something they need to take action on.

Exasperated customers who have been unable to speak to Customer Services might then contact services directly, senior managers and elected members to complain which causes additional time and resource input that could and should be avoided. Increased resource on the front line will reduce the number of customers service related issues that other people/services must deal with, allowing them to have more time to focus on their key activities.

Impact on staffing

The proposed additional resource reduces the likelihood of long wait times and customer complaints, which has a positive impact on customer behaviour and the relationship the customer service representative has with the customer. Overall, this has a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of the staff.

Timeframe for delivery

Please use the sections below to identify the key delivery milestones

Step 1: Revenue Investment approved and posts in situ	01/04/2024
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Revenue Investment Plan	
Customer Standards	
Directorate:	Finance & Customer Services
Service Area:	Customer Services
Director Responsible for Delivery:	Judith Badger
Cabinet Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Alam
Head of Finance	Rob Mahon
Unique Reference	INV13

Financial Impact		
Financial Investment £'000	2024/25	£157k
	2025/26	£157k

Details of Proposal (what will be achieved)
<p>Customer Standards</p> <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>Customer experience encapsulates everything the Council does to engage with the customer, manage their request, keep them informed and support them from the start to the end of their journey.</p> <p>To support the ongoing delivery of an improved customer experience and increase the pace with which effective and customer focused services are designed and implemented, funding is proposed for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 FTE Customer Standards Officers • 2 FTE Digital Designers <p>2 FTE Customer Standards Officers</p> <p>To work with directorate colleagues to improve customer experience by aligning</p>

all aspects of service delivery with customer standards.

For example:

- Identifying and removing barriers that make it difficult for the customer to deal with the Council through their chosen access channel e.g. telephone wait time, accessibility, poor customer service. The Council is committed to ensuring all customers, regardless of how they contact the Council, can get the information and help they need.
- Making sure that across all channels of communication, customers are automatically kept informed throughout their journey by:
 - Telling the customer what to expect or how long something will take.
 - Providing the customer with clear, up to date and understandable information.
 - Keeping the customer updated with progress and letting them know if there is going to be a delay.
- Reviewing customer enquiries (such as calls to the Contact Centre) to identify failure demand where the Council has not done what it said it was going to do.
- Enabling internal and external customers to easily find information about requests previously made and submit follow up enquiries that are appropriately escalated.
- Engaging with customers and communities to make sure the Council gets it right first time and does what it says it is going to do; asking for views, listening to what customers say, and using qualitative feedback and complaints data to identify opportunities to further enhance customer experience.

2 FTE Digital Designer

To design, create and implement the improvements identified by the Customer Experience Officers. Typically, this will include:

- Complex end to end digital processes.
- Case management workflow.
- Dynamic web content.

Impact on Service Provision / Residents / Customers

Impacts will be positive:

- Customer experience will improve as services will be aligned to Customer Standards.
- It will be easier for the customer to deal with the Council.
- The customer will be automatically kept informed.
- New ways of working will deliver the principle of 'get it right first time'.

Implications on other Services (identify which services and possible impact)

Implications will be positive:

- Ensuring a positive customer experience is not something to be delivered solely by the customer service team but is something that everyone needs to own and be responsible for in terms of their role, their actions and behaviour.
- Through identifying opportunities to improve the customer journey, unnecessary, repetitive, or manual actions can be removed; allowing service experts to use their skills more appropriately.
- There will be a reduction in avoidable contact as services will be working to the principle of 'get it right first time;' which will reduce repeat demand and associated resource pressures.
- Customers' experience will improve which should reduce the number of complaints and time spent trying to resolve enquiries that have been escalated because services are not currently delivered to customer standards.

Impact on staffing

Impacts will be positive:

- The resource can be used to extend the number of services that are supported and developed and increase the pace of change.
- Staff will have the opportunity to collaborate with others, challenge existing and future solutions, and create new and more effective customer journeys; all of which provides staff with variety, purpose and makes best use of their skills to add value.
- There will be more time to make use of qualitative data and engage with customers and communities to deliver meaningful improvements.

Timeframe for delivery

Please use the sections below to identify the key delivery milestones

Step 1: Revenue Investment approved and posts in situ	01/04/2024
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