

Appendix 4

PART B – Equality Analysis Form

As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality and diversity.

This form:

- Can be used to prompt discussions, ensure that due regard has been given and remove or minimise disadvantage for an individual or group with a protected characteristic
- Involves looking at what steps can be taken to advance and maximise equality as well as eliminate discrimination and negative consequences
- Should be completed before decisions are made, this will remove the need for remedial actions.

Note – An Initial Equality Screening Assessment (Part A) should be completed prior to this form.

When completing this form consider the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics Age, Disability, Sex, Gender Reassignment, Race, Religion or Belief, Sexual Orientation, Civil Partnerships and Marriage, Pregnancy and Maternity and other socio-economic groups e.g. parents, single parents and guardians, carers, looked after children, unemployed and people on low incomes, ex-offenders, victims of domestic violence, homeless people etc. – see page 11 of Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance.

1. Title	
Equality Analysis title: Council Plan and Year Ahead Delivery Plan Progress Update.	
Date of Equality Analysis (EA): June 2024	
Directorate: Assistant Chief Executive	Service area: Policy, Performance and Intelligence
Lead Manager: Simon Dennis	Contact: simon.dennis@rotherham.gov.uk
Is this a: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strategy / Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Service / Function <input type="checkbox"/> Other	
If other, please specify	

2. Names of those involved in the Equality Analysis (Should include minimum of three people) - see page 7 of Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance

Name	Organisation	Role (e.g. service user, managers, service specialist)
Tanya Lound	Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council	Corporate Improvement and Risk Officer
Simon Dennis	Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council	Corporate Improvement and Risk Manager
Steve Eling	Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council	Policy and Equalities Manager
Michael Homes	Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council	Partnership Officer
Sunday Alonge	Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council	Policy Officer
Kellie Rodgers	Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council	Research Officer

3. What is already known? - see page 10 of Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance

Aim/Scope (who the Policy/Service affects and intended outcomes if known)

This may include a group/s identified by a protected characteristic, others groups or stakeholder/s e.g. service users, employees, partners, members, suppliers etc.)

The Council Plan is a key document which sets out the Council’s vision for the borough and priorities for serving residents and communities. This plan provides the medium-term basis for targeting resources, informing the budget-setting process and planning cycles, and ensuring that residents can hold the Council to account for delivery.

The Year Ahead Delivery Plan sits alongside the Council Plan. To ensure delivery of the Council Plan, the annual Year Ahead Delivery Plan runs until March 2024 and, following a review, will be updated for the 2024-25 financial year. This is the second progress report to Cabinet for the 2023-24 financial year.

The report focuses on progress made in delivering the 98 priority actions/milestones contained within the Year Ahead Delivery Plan and the 68 headline performance measures that best demonstrate progress in achieving the 26 key outcomes. It also brings together wider information, key facts and intelligence to explain how the Council is working and performing, including timelines and case studies to demonstrate our impact.

This report also contains the proposed revised performance measure targets for 2024-25 and the new Year Ahead Delivery Plan for 2024-25.

Through directorate and service-level business plans the Council carries out wider work to measure performance and quality. This report is intended to provide an overview of the contribution that the Council makes across all its activities to improving Rotherham as a place to live, work and spend time.

What equality information is available? (Include any engagement undertaken)

A mix of contextual equalities information, such as the census, and consultation on the Council Plan is provided here.

Population

- Population estimates indicate that the borough is becoming increasingly diverse with significant international migration, mainly from other EU countries. Based on the 2021 census, the proportion of residents from ethnic minority communities increased from 8.1% in 2011 to 11.7% in 2021. Ethnic diversity is most evident amongst young people, illustrated by the 20.5% of school pupils who were from ethnic minority groups in 2023. The Pakistani community is the second largest ethnic group in Rotherham after White British, with 3.8% of residents in 2021 and 6.3% of school pupils in 2023.
- Rotherham's ethnic minority population is very concentrated in the inner areas of the town (in Boston Castle/Rotherham East and Rotherham West wards 63.3% of residents are from ethnic minority communities) whilst the outer areas were 95.3% White British in 2021. 42% of residents from ethnic minorities live in areas that are amongst the 10% most deprived in the country and for some groups the figure is higher. This compares with the Borough average of 19.5%.
- The population is ageing; Rotherham has 52,228 people aged 65 years or over or 19.6% of the population, above the national average of 18.4%. The population aged over 65 is projected to increase to over 21% by 2026, with the largest increase being in the number of people aged over 75.

Economy

- Rotherham has a polarised geography of deprivation and affluence, with the most deprived communities concentrated in the central area whilst the most affluent areas are to the south, although the overall pattern is complex.
- Rotherham is one of the 20% most deprived areas in England with 11,128 children living in "absolute poverty" 2021/22 (provisional figures).
- The inequality in the pay gap between men and women is substantial. According to the 2023 ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, full-time male workers in Rotherham earn £8,881 more than full-time female workers, on average (median gross annual full time pay). This means women's pay in Rotherham is only 75% of men's pay, compared with 85% nationally.
- In the consultation for the Council Plan, 45% of respondents stated there were not enough job opportunities in their area, as opposed to 19% who stated there were enough. Those with no disabilities were more likely to state there were enough job opportunities in their area (21%) than those with disabilities (15%), with female respondents more likely to be unsure about the opportunities (37%), than men (32%).

Health and wellbeing

- According to the Census, Rotherham had 56,177 people with a limiting long-term health problem or disability in 2021, with 9.8% saying this limits their activity a lot, compared with the average of 7.3% in England. Although there have been health improvements, health inequalities remain.
- Health inequalities are also significant, both between the borough and the national average and between the most and least deprived communities in Rotherham. In addition to these factors, the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated existing inequalities, with the most disadvantaged communities being hit the hardest.
- In the Council Plan consultation, in response to the question on what would have the biggest positive impact on wellbeing and quality of life, men (30%) and those without a disability (27%) were more likely to state environmental improvements (23% overall), while more women and those with a disability stated 'More things to do in the community' (16% women, 22% with disability, 13% overall). Male respondents (14%) and those with a disability (12%) were also more likely to state 'improved working conditions' as factors (8% overall).

Neighbourhoods

- In the survey consultation on the Council Plan, men were more likely to say they used parks daily (46%) than women (28%), while women were more likely to never use parks at all (7%), than men (1.2%).
- With regards to crime and community safety, tackling anti-social behaviour (79%), tackling crime such as car crime (67%), and protecting vulnerable older people (62%) emerged as respondents' top priorities, over preventing harassment and violence against women and girls (42%), and preventing hate crime (includes disability/ racial/ religious/ homophobic/ transphobic crimes) (35%) – which might partly be due to the age profile and the overrepresentation of older age groups, as well as the underrepresentation of religious and ethnic minorities.

The statistics above have been updated to reflect the 2021 Census data.

Resident Satisfaction Survey

The Council Plan includes eight performance measures from the Resident Satisfaction Survey. The 2023 results are set out below and seven of the Council Plan performance measures had improved when compared to 2022:

- **Satisfaction with Local Area as a Place to Live** – 82% of respondents in reported feeling 'very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied' which is just above the average (80%) recorded level across all waves. Adults aged 45-54 were the *least* likely to report being 'satisfied' (74%). People aged 18-24 years and aged 65+ are the *most* likely to be satisfied with their local area (91% and 84% respectively).
Satisfaction with Rotherham as a Place to Live – 65% of respondents said that, overall, they were 'very' or 'fairly' satisfied. This was above the average across all of the previous surveys (61.5%), although there has been considerable fluctuation between waves. Respondents aged 18-24 were most likely to feel satisfied with Rotherham as a place to live, with 73% satisfied. Respondents aged 45-54 had the lowest level of satisfaction with Rotherham as a place to live, with only 59% satisfied. Dissatisfaction with Rotherham as a place to live was highest amongst people aged 45-54.
- **Feelings of Safety** – 92% of respondents in Rotherham said they felt 'very safe' or 'fairly safe' during the day when outside in their local area (higher than the figures observed nationally at 90%). 62% reported the same feelings of safety after dark, lower than the figures observed nationally (71%). There was a significant difference between men and women's feelings of safety after dark in the Rotherham survey, with 71% of men reporting feeling 'very safe' or 'fairly safe' compared to only 54% of women. Young people aged 18-24 are most likely to feel safe after dark and those aged 25-34 least likely to feel safe. People with low skilled, manual occupational backgrounds are least likely to feel safe.
- **Feelings of Optimism** – 56% of respondents reported feeling 'very optimistic' or 'fairly optimistic' about the future of Rotherham as a place to live, above the 54% average across all surveys. People aged 25-34 were the most likely to be optimistic about the future of Rotherham as a place to live (70%) and men were more optimistic than women overall. Fewer respondents felt as positive about the future of Rotherham town centre (27% felt 'very optimistic' or 'fairly optimistic') as they did about the future of the wider borough. This is above the average of 23% across all nine surveys, and the joint highest result since the question was first asked in June 2017. 40% of respondents were not optimistic at all about the town centre. Young people aged 18-24 years were the most optimistic about the future of Rotherham town centre (44% were optimistic), whereas people aged 55-64 were most likely to not be optimistic. There is no comparable national data for these questions.
- **Keeping Residents Informed** – 50% of Rotherham respondents said that RMBC keeps residents 'very well' or 'fairly well' informed about the services and benefits it provides. This is lower than the most recent national result (55%) and the same as the average percentage across all Rotherham surveys (50%). Younger respondents (aged 18-24) were

more likely than older people to think that the Council keeps residents well informed. It should be noted that this measure covers not only corporate communications but could also refer to face to face or any other types of council touchpoint that the customer experiences.

- **Responsiveness of Rotherham MBC** – 51% of respondents in Rotherham answered positively when asked about the extent to which RMBC acts on the concerns of residents (i.e. ‘a great deal’ or ‘a fair amount’). This is the joint highest response across all surveys and similar to the national result (52%). Locally there was an increase of nine percentage points in satisfaction levels between Waves 12 and 13. Respondents aged 18-24 were most likely to think that the Council acts on the concerns of local residents (82% responded positively) whilst those aged 55-64 were least likely to have this view.

Council Plan data

The Council Plan includes three performance measures which aim to create a diverse workforce and Quarter 4 data in the report states:

- Overall proportion of disabled employees – 10.2% against a year-end target of 9%
- Overall proportion of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic employees – 4.7% against a year-end target of 5.4%
- Proportion of the workforce under 25 – 3.4% against a year-end target of 3.8%.

The targets are designed to drive the Council towards having a workforce that better reflects the diversity of the Borough. The new Workforce Plan sets out key activity to become an employer of choice, including a review of how the Council attracts, recruits, develops and retains staff from different sections of the community.

Year Ahead Delivery Plan

When the Year Ahead Delivery Plan undergoes its annual refresh, services are expected to set out the action to be taken to ensure consideration of equality, diversity, and inclusion, including timescales for deliver for each individual milestone. These actions are reviewed as part of the milestone setting process and progress captured as part of the reporting process.

Are there any gaps in the information that you are aware of?

Promoting equality, celebrating diversity, and ensuring fairness for everyone runs throughout all the themes in the Council Plan and Year Ahead Delivery Plan and updates are now obtained from directorates in relation to actions being taken to consider equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) for each of the Year Ahead Deliver Plan actions. EDI has also been built into the case study templates for officers to obtain specific examples.

However, some updates are still lacking detail with regards to actions/activities to gain a better understanding of communities and the equality data being collected and used to better inform activities, along with gaps. It therefore remains unclear, for some areas, how outcomes for different communities and protected characteristic groups are being improved.

What monitoring arrangements have you made to monitor the impact of the policy or service on communities/groups according to their protected characteristics?

Progress updates on the Council Plan Year Ahead Delivery Plan are produced on a quarterly basis (twice internally and twice publicly in January and July). Public updates are reviewed by Cabinet and Scrutiny and are available online. The update reports to Cabinet and Scrutiny include

progress in relation to actions within the Year Ahead Delivery Plan, as well as performance relating to a suite of key performance measures and case studies.

As part of this monitoring process, services are required to specially set out progress on the delivery of equalities, diversity and inclusion outcomes for each individual action in the Year Ahead Delivery Plan. These updates are reviewed and challenged as part of the monitoring process. They are reported as part of the internal monitoring and are also used to inform the public monitoring reports.

In addition, as the Year Ahead Delivery Plan activities are implemented, services are required to complete an equality screening and/or analysis to ensure due regard has been given and that there is an understanding of the effects of a strategy, policy, service or function on those from a protected characteristic group, where this is applicable to do so.

Engagement undertaken with customers. (date and group(s) consulted and key findings)

To help inform the priorities and actions in the Council Plan, various consultation exercises took place between August and September 2021. There were over 1,300 interactions across all engagement methods. The consultation was part of an ongoing dialogue between the Council and members of the public.

Customers are consulted and engaged in different ways by services when delivering the Year Ahead Delivery Plan activities.

The performance measures monitored include resident satisfaction and a resident satisfaction survey is conducted annually in June. In June 2023, a statistically representative random sample of 501 Rotherham residents (aged 18 or over) was polled mainly by landline telephone using quotas set by age and gender. The data was further weighted to reflect the age, gender, and social grade profile of Rotherham. This ensures that the sample is as representative of adults in the borough as possible as there is often a bias in the profile of people who respond to any survey. See results from 2023 survey above.

Some performance measures are also based on customer perceptions in relation to the quality of the service received.

Engagement undertaken with staff (date and group(s) consulted and key findings)

Engagement with staff was undertaken through directorates with regards to the progress made on actions/milestones that applied to them and identifying actions for the new Year Ahead Delivery Plan for 2024-25. Staff also provided performance data and contributed to the gathering of case studies used in this report.

Throughout the development of the report, Cabinet Members are briefed.

Furthermore, the headlines are shared with the Assistant Director Group and Strategic Leadership Teams.

Wider Leadership events and staff briefing sessions also include highlights in relation to the process being made.

4. The Analysis - of the actual or likely effect of the Policy or Service (Identify by protected characteristics)

How does the Policy/Service meet the needs of different communities and groups?

(Protected characteristics of Age, Disability, Sex, Gender Reassignment, Race, Religion or Belief, Sexual Orientation, Civil Partnerships and Marriage, Pregnancy and Maternity) - see glossary on page 14 of the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance)

Equalities is cross cutting throughout the Council Plan and Year Ahead Delivery Plan. Of the five guiding principles, two in particular aim to meet residents' and communities' differentiated needs:

- Expanding opportunities for all
- Working with our communities

Expanding opportunities encompasses the Council's priority to tackle inequality, striving to ensure that the health and life chances of the most disadvantaged communities are improving the fastest. To complement this approach, 'working with our communities' ensures that to achieve the best outcomes for local people, local residents are involved in the things that matter to them and services are designed based on input from those who use them. This will enable service users to take an active role in improving access to services, highlighting any barriers for those sharing protected characteristics in designs and services, making sure that specific needs are met.

There is also an outcome focussed on addressing inequalities and leaving no one behind within the 'people are safe, healthy and live well' theme. This will involve providing support to our communities at a level that is proportionate to the degree of need – taking a universal approach where appropriate whilst also providing targeted support to those who most need it.

Furthermore, the underlying 'One Council' theme encompasses two specific areas, which ensure different needs are met:

- All customers at the heart of everything we do
- Engaged, diverse and skilled workforce who feel empowered to adopt new ways of working to meet the needs of all customers.

The Council's commitment to place all customers at the heart of service delivery includes a strengthened approach to equalities and being inclusive. This will involve working with services and partners to promote equality, celebrate diversity and ensure fairness for everyone. The commitment to an engaged, diverse and skilled workforce is expected to improve the council's response to diverse customer needs, by bringing a more differentiated understanding of equality and diversity considerations and barriers.

The six-monthly progress reports capture progress in relation to all activities within the Year Ahead Delivery Plan and a suite of key performance measures.

Within the **five themes of the Council Plan**, a series of universal offers are aimed at all of Rotherham's residents, while several actions are specifically aimed at tackling inequalities and issues of access. The following expands both on the universal and the targeted offers within each theme.

Every neighbourhood thriving

Activities in this area are aimed at meeting the needs of all residents and ensure they benefit from thriving neighbourhoods. The priorities of making neighbourhoods welcoming and safe, local people having access to libraries, cultural activities, parks and green spaces, improved local town and village centres, reducing crime and anti-social behaviour and improving street safety are for the benefit of all residents regardless of protected characteristics. Residents, organisations and businesses are encouraged and enabled to use their skills and resources to help others.

Individual services, such as parks, libraries, cultural offers and neighbourhood working will each undertake an equality analysis, where required to do so, to identify gaps, making sure that any physical, cultural, language or other access barriers are identified, and all residents have offers meeting their needs.

Progress made which links to improving equality, diversity and inclusion outcomes include:

- 25 Ward Plans produced and published - Borough-wide and local VCS organisations and groups representing communities with protected characteristics were invited to contribute the priorities. Census data and other equalities data also used to inform the priorities and reports to Council include case studies illustrating the impact of neighbourhood working
- Senior Community Engagement Officer now recruited and started in post March 2024. A core element of the new role will be to engage with communities with different protected characteristics from across the borough
- The strength based-working e-learning module was launched November 2023 for staff and the module includes real life examples of how these approaches have supported those with protected characteristics
- In accordance with the Rotherham Compact, in November 2023, Cabinet agreed to progress arrangements for the infrastructure provision, based on the outcome of a co-design exercise
- Thurcroft's library and neighbourhood hub reopened in November 2023 following an extensive refresh. The facilities now offer improved accessibility and provide more opportunities for people to benefit from the library and its services, whilst also providing a new flexible space for activities and events
- Number of cultural events have been held in various locations across the Borough. All events consider equalities including translation services and BSL for entertainment activities. Other examples include ensuring that artists and performers appropriately reflect the demographics for each event and provision at all events for disabled visitors
- Rotherham Show in September 2023 continued to be hugely popular free event for everyone to enjoy, attracting approximately 88,000. This year, there was a sensory area to provide a calming space for neurodiverse and disabled adults and children, delivered in partnership with Sense and mobility access was improved, with an increased number and range of mobility scooters available. The show received a 97% satisfaction rating from survey responders. A commissioned survey from QA also showed that families were the biggest audience, and visitors were made up of 69% Rotherham residents and 31% Outside visitors. The ethnic group split of visitors this year was 79% White British, 8% Asian or Asian British, 7% Black British and 3% Mixed heritage, which is a large shift from last year's audience being 91% White British
- Many of the Towns and Villages Fund programmes delivered during 2023-24 have improved accessibility, for example, the scheme at Aughton and Swallownest has incorporated a new level access entrance into the site, new steps with handrail, as well as a compliant ramped access to one side of the scheme.

People are safe, healthy and live well

Actions in this area are aimed at protecting everyone's physical and mental health, while focusing on the most vulnerable.

Within the priority for people to feel empowered, safe and live independently for as long as possible, actions focus on people with learning disabilities and their carers, independent living and adult social care ensure that the needs of these vulnerable groups are prioritised. Notably, in this area, a range of engagement and co-production exercises have been undertaken, with a range of diverse communities, to ensure that their views are taken into account in service design and delivery and their needs are met. This is central to improving accessibility and enabling inclusive services.

More generally, ongoing monitoring and improvement of services contributing to this theme is key, as the most vulnerable often face the most barriers. Monitoring should identify and address gaps in provision, and in particular ensure that individuals sharing several protected characteristics, and thus potentially facing multiple barriers, can access the support they need.

Progress made which links to improving equality, diversity and inclusion outcomes include:

- A new public health improvement and prevention campaign 'Say Yes' has been launched to provide advice on areas such as smoking, tobacco control, food and physical activity. Engagement with local people has been critical as part of the development of the campaign, and has included targeted work to reach those living in the most deprived communities of the borough. Sessions were also held to ensure that the views of specific target communities were captured, including ethnic minority communities, people with learning disabilities and older people.
- Drug treatment and recovery services continue to be expanded to increase the number of people successfully supported to 1,555. The new service model includes both a dedicated family worker and women specific worker. Which will improve female specific treatment options in the service.
- A new delivery model for mental health services went live on 1 April 2024, informed by public consultation which was accessible to all. This new model ensures a more collaborative offer between health and social care, providing a pathway that focusses on prevention and recovery and strengthening the social care response to crisis.
- Engagement has taken place to co-produce with people with a learning disability, and their carers, the priorities for learning disability services transformation over the next three years. The engagement has been shaped and led by a consortium of organisations that are experienced in co-production and accessibility. The new learning disability strategy was agreed by Cabinet in February 2024 and will be available in an easy read version to ensure this is accessible.
- Work is ongoing to commence the building groundwork for Castle View which will provide new day opportunities for people with high support needs. Engagement with staff, customers and family members is critical to support the development of a diverse and inclusive new day service, accessible to all those who would like to attend. Initial engagement sessions held and further sessions to take place at key stages of the programme. Advocacy support has been arranged for all sessions.
- During 2023, a 90-day consultation exercise was conducted for people who use Rothercare, as well as broader communities and residents. This was accessible to all and included an easy read version of the questionnaire, events in a range of locations across the borough including care settings for people with care and support needs who may not be easily able to engage in more community-based environments, advocacy support at all locations and home visits offered to those with no other means of participation.
- The new Adult Social Care Strategy was developed after consultation with relevant stakeholders, which involved working with Speak Up to develop an easy read version of the questionnaire. The consultation sessions were held in various locations to ensure accessible to all and community drop-in events were supported by advocates from either Speak Up or Absolute Advocacy. Bespoke sessions were also held with organisations such as Deaf Futures and Rotherham Sight and Sound involved a BSL interpreter and at

groups such as the ladies Kashmiri group 2 translators were present. The new strategy is available in an easy read version.

- Carers Conversations (co-production workshops) took place in September/October 2023 to ensure inclusion of diverse unpaid carer groups/individuals, through engagement with a range of VCS organisations to engage representation of organisations that support people with protected characteristics.
- New Council housing is needs led. The latest scheme designs include specialised wheelchair user dwellings and other accessible homes on the sites, which have been designed for old people and those with health conditions.
- Foodbanks are provided by a range of community led VCS organisations. Organisations are engaged as part of co-design to ensure that provision is inclusive and that diverse communities have access.
- Food vouchers have been provided to children eligible for free school meals during the school holidays. The support has provided enhanced support to families across holiday periods so that they are not disadvantaged by deprivation.

Every child able to fulfil their potential

Actions under this theme are aimed at children having the best start in life, children and young people being safe from harm, feeling empowered to succeed and achieve their aspirations, whilst also having fun things to do and safe places to go.

Activities aim to address educational inequalities through collaborative working with schools and partners, so all children are ready to attend school and learn and are able to engage in future education, training, and employment. This will give all young people the opportunity to fulfil their potential, regardless of ability.

Some actions specifically target support to those who are disadvantaged, vulnerable or have disabilities. Specific actions to open new residential homes will enable looked after children to access the best local placements whilst other specific actions aim to improve opportunities and outcomes for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), so they can get the best start in life. Activities for young people to have things to do and safe places to go have also been designed so that accessibility is ensured as much as possible.

Ongoing monitoring of actions within this theme will help to identify further areas where equality, diversity and inclusion outcomes can be improved and considered further.

Services contributing to this theme, again, will carry out equality analyses where appropriate and monitor equality data.

Progress made which links to improving equality, diversity and inclusion outcomes include:

- The Council's Written Statement of Action (WSOA) signed off from the Department for Education in June 2023. Actions taken through the WSOA will support opportunities for pupils with SEND.
- The Rotherham Relationships Charter launched April 2023 seeks to reduce marginalisation and improve outcomes for families experiencing conflict from all communities.
- The Family Hub's Programme has a digital offer available in a number of alternative languages, supporting families who cannot access face-to-face services. Multiple in-person services are to co-locate to increase in-person accessibility.
- New children's residential homes are being developed, enabling looked-after children to remain in the borough where appropriate.
- The new Early Help Strategy was approved by Cabinet in March 2024. EDI is reflected in through the key principles in the document (promoting fairness, respect, equality, dignity,

and supporting autonomy) to ensure that the needs of children, families, and communities are reflected, fully understood, and responded to effectively.

- An independent travel training offer has been developed for children and young people who require home to school transport to increase their independence skills.
- The Rotherham Loves Reading Project has helped increase representation across the range of books available for access and a specific reading for pleasure project has been developed to support Looked after Children in primary schools. There is a clear equalities and diversities agenda to increase the range of representative books accessed.
- The Disadvantaged Pupils Toolkit launched in June 2024 provides clear practical guidance for pupils.
- Children's Capital of Culture is being co-designed with children and young people from all communities to ensure that it offers opportunities for all children and young people in Rotherham e.g., providing free activities and language translations on marketing materials.
- The play improvement programme has included accessible equipment and incorporating BSL panels creating a more inclusive environment for children with diverse needs and ensuring that play areas are welcoming and accommodating for all individuals.

Expanding economic opportunity

Aims for this theme include growing the economy to provide decent jobs and chances to progress; rejuvenating places through regeneration schemes across the borough; giving people the chance to learn, develop skills and fulfil their potential; working with partners and suppliers to create more local jobs paid at the living wage or above and more apprenticeships; and increasing digital access through infrastructure enhancements and skills development.

Contributing to these aims are projects supporting residents to gain skills and enhance their employment prospects, a range of regeneration programmes across the borough, action around social value and local labour policies, and the development of a digital inclusion strategy.

Equality analysis and monitoring will be carried out where appropriate to ensure vulnerable residents sharing protected characteristics benefit from this support. Given the gender pay gap in Rotherham is substantial and above the national average, activities in this area will need to be monitored closely to ensure they do not widen the gap.

Activity that links to improving equality, diversity and inclusion outcomes includes:

- The Council is actively promoting the living wage accreditation
- A range of initiatives are supporting residents to improve their skills and enhance their employment prospects, including the Pathways project which helps unemployed people into work or training, job seeker support sessions in libraries, and the Advance project, which helps people in work to gain skills and further their careers. The Advance project has used participant monitoring data to target groups with a low take-up. For example, the project has worked closely with Working Win, the South Yorkshire work and health project, to target participants with disabilities, as monitoring data showed low registrations from people with disabilities in the first half-year of the project. The Pathways project has increased community-based delivery and used outreach workers to reach and build trust with economically inactive people and those who are furthest from the jobs market. In addition to these projects, the Multiply adult numeracy programme has specifically targeted delivery in deprived communities through the bidding and assessment process. The programme also has specific targets for supporting those with protected characteristics.
- Local labour clauses are being applied to major planning permissions, increasing the chances for local people to access jobs.
- Regeneration project designs are developed in consultation with Rotherham residents and construction of new buildings and facilities includes consideration of accessibility. For

example, at Century II, provision has been made for the needs of wheelchair and semi ambulant users in the design of the new building and development site.

- Consultation with residents to help establish Rotherham's digital inclusion baseline and identify actions to reduce digital exclusion. The digital inclusion strategy, which has now been agreed, will include activity to target places and groups that are most at risk of exclusion.

It will be important to assess and monitor the extent to which these activities are directly addressing the inequalities identified in section 3, for example the gender pay gap and geographical disparities.

A cleaner, greener local environment

The priorities of making neighbourhoods cleaner and greener are for the benefit of all residents regardless of protected characteristics.

This theme encompasses reductions in carbon emissions, working towards net zero targets, better transport systems for future generations, reduced risks of flooding and other environmental emergencies. There are no immediate equality implications in this area, although any direct impacts on residents, such as through actions in housing, transport and in work with community organisations, will be monitored.

Progress made which links to improving equality, diversity and inclusion outcomes include:

- New contract for the four Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) provides a number of benefits, including real living wage being paid across all sites, pop up HWRCs to reach the wider community, new operating equipment; signage.
- Equality Analysis undertaken for the cafes and new facilities at Rother Valley Country Park and Thrybergh Country Park. Disabled carparking spaces will be available, sheltered outdoor seating and tables will accommodate the needs of those who are immune-suppressed and new landscaping down to the water's edge will be accessible to those with prams, people in wheelchairs and mobility scooter-users.
- Delivering bus, tram and cycle improvements aims to connect communities and provide an alternative mode of transport. The work will help to tackle transport poverty and support healthy lifestyles for a wide range of people.
- In response to the Storm Babet flooding skips were provided for residents to use in Catcliffe and Treeton and Council staff visited residents in the affected areas to help clear furniture and household items. A rest centre was also established at Catcliffe Memorial Hall to provide support and advice.
- Work has begun on developing a new Local authority ECO4-FLEX referral route to target vulnerable residents not currently eligible.
- For a number of projects within this theme, equality impacts will be considered at scheme design stage.

One Council

The One Council theme is focussed around working with our communities to deliver modern services which are accessible to all residents. The theme includes priorities and outcomes that reflect how the Council is delivering effective customer services, ensuring residents can access the services that they need, along with an engaged, diverse and skilled workforce who are empowered to meet the needs of all customers.

Over the year, the following areas have progressed which have a direct impact on improving equality, diversity and inclusion outcomes:

- EDI staff networks were engaged in the roll out of the recent Employee Opinion Survey and equalities data has been analysed as part of the approach to reporting the outcomes
- In December 2023, a follow up of the Local Government Association (LGA) Corporate Peer Challenge took place. This examined the Council's progress on the action plan agreed following the original review in June 2023 which involved a wide range of staff groups from a range of backgrounds. The follow up concluded that "The peer team was pleased to see the positive and engaging way in which the council addressed the recommendations of the Corporate Peer Challenge of June 2023, the actions it has taken so far, and the evidence provided to show the progress being made". The high-level action plan already in place will lead to impacts on equalities as the actions either involve both continuing to deliver initiatives already in place or prompt the development of a more detailed action for the future.
- Member Development Sessions have been provided via Teams ensure accessibility and ability for Members to review and refresh understanding via recordings saved on the Member Portal.
- A Senior Community Engagement Officer has been recruited and a core element of their role is to engage with communities from across the borough with different protected characteristics – this includes helping the Council to more reflect its community by reducing the barriers that might be preventing recruitment from underrepresented groups.
- Average customer wait time to corporate contact centre was 3 minutes 48 seconds in Quarter 4 and 3 minutes 7 seconds on average over the course of the whole year. This is compared to a target of six minutes and is the fifth quarter in a row where the target has been beaten and performance has improved. Shortening customer wait times improves access to services for all residents.
- The number of disabled employees working in the Council is now 10% against a target of 9% and has continued to increase over the course of the year.

There are two equality, diversity and inclusion related measures where outcomes have not yet reached the targets. These are:

- Overall proportion of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic employees – 4.5% against a year-end target of 5.4%
- Proportion of the workforce under 25 – 3.3% against a year-end target of 3.8%.

The Workforce Plan sets out key activity to become an employer of choice, including a review of how the Council attracts, recruits, develops and retains staff from different sections of the community. As part of this, the Senior Community Engagement Officer post mentioned above, will enhance our engagement with young people across the borough. There will also be targeted work with the Young Employees Network to recruit young people, as well as with the BAME network to address recruitment barriers facing this group. This work will help to provide a rich source of knowledge on how the Council can promote being an inclusive employer, along with other insights on attracting applicants and work to strengthen partnerships with local universities and colleges to ensure active promotion of local government careers and Rotherham in particular.

Does your Policy/Service present any problems or barriers to communities or Groups?

No problems or barriers have been identified or flagged as part of the reporting process.

Does the Service/Policy provide any positive impact/s including improvements or remove barriers?

Yes as detailed above.

What affect will the Policy/Service have on community relations? (may also need to consider activity which may be perceived as benefiting one group at the expense of another)

No negative impacts expected – any targeted activities are based on known needs and vulnerabilities.

Please list any **actions and targets** that need to be taken as a consequence of this assessment on the action plan below and ensure that they are added into your service plan for monitoring purposes – see page 12 of the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance.

5. Summary of findings and Equality Analysis Action Plan

If the analysis is done at the right time, i.e. early before decisions are made, changes should be built in before the policy or change is signed off. This will remove the need for remedial actions. Where this is achieved, the only action required will be to monitor the impact of the policy/service/change on communities or groups according to their protected characteristic - See page 11 of the Equality Screening and Analysis guidance

Title of analysis: Council Plan and Year Ahead Delivery Plan Progress Update.
Directorate and service area: Assistant Chief Executive, Policy, Performance and Intelligence
Lead Manager: Simon Dennis
Summary of findings:
The Year Ahead Delivery Plan addresses inequalities in several of its key themes, including the overarching theme 'One Council' and guiding principles, with the aim to reduce inequalities and for the council's services to deliver for all residents. Equality and access data will need to be monitored closely, especially in the 'People are safe, healthy and well' and 'Everyone has economic opportunities' themes, as these are areas of considerable existing inequalities, which will make it more difficult for some individuals and groups to access opportunities and services.

Action/Target	State Protected Characteristics as listed below	Target date (MM/YY)
Provide update reports to Cabinet twice a year, including consideration of the equality implications.	All	Six monthly
All services to undertake equality analyses where applicable and monitor.	All	Ongoing
Continue to obtain updates from directorates, regarding what has been done to consider equalities when delivering the Year Ahead Delivery Plan actions/activities.	All	Quarterly

***A = Age, D= Disability, S = Sex, GR Gender Reassignment, RE= Race/ Ethnicity, RoB= Religion or Belief, SO= Sexual Orientation, PM= Pregnancy/Maternity, CPM = Civil Partnership or Marriage. C= Carers, O= other groups**

6. Governance, ownership and approval

Please state those that have approved the Equality Analysis. Approval should be obtained by the Director and approval sought from DLT and the relevant Cabinet Member.

Name	Job title	Date
Jo Brown	Assistant Chief Executive	June 2024
Cllr Chris Read	Leader	June 2024

7. Publishing

The Equality Analysis will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given.

If this Equality Analysis relates to a **Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision** a copy of the completed document should be attached as an appendix and published alongside the relevant report.

A copy should also be sent to equality@rotherham.gov.uk For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file and also published on the Council's Equality and Diversity Internet page.

Date Equality Analysis completed	12 June 2024
Report title and date	Council Plan and Year Ahead Delivery Plan Progress Update.
Date report sent for publication	15 July 2024
Date Equality Analysis sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	25 June 2024