

**THE CABINET**  
**20th January, 2025**

Present:- Councillor Read (in the Chair); Councillors Alam, Allen, Baker-Rogers, Cusworth, Sheppard and Taylor.

Also in attendance Councillor Steele (Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board)

**97.           DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

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

There were two questions from members of the public:

1. Mr Hussain: In relation to Herringthorpe cemetery, had there been any progress on the renegotiation of the contract, how far had the Council got, how would they proceed, what was the situation with Dignity?

Councillor Sheppard explained that negotiations were still ongoing with Dignity. It was not a quick exercise and the Council wanted to make sure that whatever they did was the right thing for the residents of Rotherham, both with Herringthorpe cemetery and the wider Dignity contract. Councillor Sheppard offered assurances that the work was still in progress.

The Assistant Director, Legal, Elections and Registration Services, confirmed that a response was still awaited from Dignity.

In his supplementary question, Mr Hussain stated that at a previous Cabinet meeting, the property director from Dignity had attended and said that they had submitted their full proposal, and they were awaiting a response from the Council.

The Assistant Director explained that the property director had attended a scrutiny meeting, not Cabinet. The submitted documents referred to at that meeting were the operational plans, not the responses to the negotiations.

2. Mr Azam: In the operational plan submitted to Scrutiny last year, 18 months of capacity was left at Wath. Just over two years capacity was left in the Muslim section at East Herringthorpe. The number of earthen graves nearly reached zero. Another earthen grave had been provided but that was in the space where the road was initially going to go. The planning application that was submitted in October 2022 was therefore no longer valid. Mr Azam stated that it did not matter if the issues were with Dignity or if it was for Dignity to answer. The

accountability sat with the Council. Various commitments had been made to bring the proposals back to Cabinet to show how the Council would move forward with providing the service to the community of Rotherham. Mr Azam asked which Cabinet meeting the proposals would be brought to: February, March or April?

The Leader explained that he had continued to reassure Mr Azam that the cemeteries would not run out of space. The current situation was frustrating and not satisfying, however, graves continued to be made available. The day-to-day operation of the cemeteries continued, and progress had been made on some of the issues raised. The process of renegotiating with the provider was necessary and took time. The conversation was ongoing with Dignity about whether they could deliver the service to the standard that was required by the Council and the community. The Leader explained that a commitment could not be made for a specific Cabinet meeting. A commitment was made however to consult with the community when sufficient progress had been made. A complete failure would mean the cemeteries would be shut and people were unable to be buried and that had not happened. The Council continued to operate a contingency model whilst the new plan was drawn up.

Mr Azam stated that he appreciated the honesty, but the situation was taking too long to resolve. It had been going on for over two years and the tit-for-tat and lack of answers was very frustrating.

Mr Azam stated that he had not received a response to the questions he had submitted for scrutiny, and he asked Councillor Sheppard to look into that.

In his supplementary question, Mr Azam referenced the Kaushar Tai Review and stated that it was supposed to have been released for review by the January Cabinet meeting. The Muslim Bereavement Liaison Group meeting was taking place on 20 February and Mr Azam stated that the Group would want to discuss the review at that meeting. Mr Azam wanted to remind Councillor Sheppard about the Group meeting as he had not attended the previous two meetings. As the review document had not been received, Mr Azam asked for the Council's position.

The Assistant Director explained that the Council were still targeting delivery for the February meeting.

## **99. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

Resolved:- That the Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 16 December 2024 be approved as a true and correct record of the proceedings and signed by the Chair.

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

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

**101. RE-COMMISSIONING OF ROTHERHAM'S DOMESTIC ABUSE REFUGE**

Consideration was given to the report which set out the recommendations for the future of the Domestic Abuse Refuge Service at the end of its current contract in September 2025. The service offered temporary emergency accommodation with support for victims and survivors of domestic abuse and their families fleeing their homes.

The Council commissioned a Domestic Abuse Refuge service. This was currently provided by a specialist local domestic abuse charity – Hopian – (formerly known as Rotherham Rise). The contract commenced on the 1 October 2021 following a competitive tender process, with a contract term of 2 years and the option to extend by a further 1-year term resulting in the contract expiring on 30 September 2024. An Officer Decision was taken to award a further 1-year domestic abuse refuge contract to the same provider on a direct basis in order to complete a review of the requirements for the service. This extension commenced 1 October 2024 and would expire on the 30 September 2025.

Outcomes experienced from the Domestic Abuse Refuge Service had been overwhelmingly positive. Additionally, quotes from service users and case studies from the service demonstrated the impact these services had had for victims/ survivors of domestic abuse and their families who had had to flee their homes.

For the year 2023/24, 37 service users had accessed and left both Refuge and Safer Option Properties with the majority of service users accessing the service for less than 6 months (56%). The Refuge service had also supported a high number of children - this ranged between 16 - 29 children per quarter in 2023/24.

60% of service users had a reduction in risk upon leaving the service (22 service users) and 40% of service users maintained the same risk level (15 service users). 69% of service users who left the service were able to secure and obtain their own settled accommodation upon leaving the service and for 51% of service users this was within Rotherham. Reasons for those service users who did not meet this outcome included when a service user abandoned their tenancy (2.5%), chose to return to perpetrator (5%) and they move in with friends and families (11%).

During the meeting, Cabinet Members expressed their support for the Refuge and the phenomenal work it did. They fully supported the proposals.

**Resolved:**

That Cabinet approve the recommissioning of Domestic Abuse Refuge and Temporary Accommodation Services, through a competitive procurement process, for a four-year term from 1 October 2025 to 30 September 2029 with the option to extend up to 2 years.

**102. OUTCOMES FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD RELATING TO THE CHILDREN'S COMMISSIONER'S TAKEOVER CHALLENGE - HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

Consideration was given to the report which outlined the issues raised by Rotherham Youth Cabinet at the takeover challenge. The Children's Commissioner's Takeover Challenge (CCTOC) was a national initiative, where children and young people took over an organisation or meeting and assumed management / leadership roles. As part of Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council's (RMBC) commitment to the CCTOC, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB) supported Rotherham Youth Cabinet (RYC) in undertaking a focused piece of work on a topic chosen by the young people. RYC had chosen Health and Wellbeing as the theme for this year's takeover challenge, as it was identified as an issue nationally and locally within their manifesto's aims.

The theme had been broken down into four sections:

- Section 1 Vaping
- Section 2 Mental Health
- Section 3 Physical Health
- Section 4 Healthy Eating

A series of questions were put by members of the RYC to Council officers covering a range of topics associated with Health and Wellbeing. The questions were set out in sections 2.1.1 to 2.1.4 of the report.

In light of the responses to the questions provided by the Council officers the RYC developed the recommendations. These recommendations aimed to:

- Identify the sources where vapes could be purchased by young people.
- Reduce the amount of vaping marketing on view.
- Work with schools to highlight the effects of vaping.
- Increase the provision of dedicated spaces for young people.
- Enhance early detection and diagnoses of children and young people.
- with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.
- Work with schools to increase extracurricular clubs.
- Increase the maintenance and provision of equipment within parks
- and create activity-based walks.
- Ensure healthy food options were available in schools.

- Create a marketing campaign directed toward teenagers to promote.
- healthy eating.
- Organise a visit to the allotments for members of RYC in relation to
- healthy eating.

Cabinet were asked to receive the report and consider its response to the recommendations. In accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, Cabinet were required to consider and respond to the recommendations made within two months.

**Resolved:**

**That Cabinet:**

1. Receive the report and considers the following recommendations:

**A. Section 1 – Vaping:**

1. That consideration was given to several young people from the Youth Cabinet to support a mystery shop in vape shops to identify sources, where possible.
2. That the Council identified and considered any potential opportunities to reduce vaping adverts on shopfronts, including areas where the Council does not have direct control, where possible.
3. That the Council sought to encourage all secondary schools to work together, to ensure a synchronised response to the vaping.

**B. Section 2 – Mental Health:**

4. That the Council sought to encourage all schools in the Borough to ensure that young people feel listened to within the schools, and that schools were committed to support their young people.
5. That consideration was given to how the provision of a dedicated youth space for young people could be achieved, for example, a development of a space similar to the Barnsley Youth Zone.
6. That the Council worked with its partners to enhance early detection and diagnoses of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and the potential need for an Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP) to assist with the reduction of potential waiting times for the young person to access the EHCP provisions.

**C. Section 3 – Physical Activity:**

7. That the Council seeks assurances from schools within the Borough that they would consider increasing extracurricular clubs, including the range of sports.
8. That the Council aimed to ensure that all parks within the Borough were kept in good condition and safe.
9. That consideration be given to providing exercise equipment to all parks in the Borough, where possible and that activity-based walks were considered at popular locations, in conjunction with the Rotherham Youth Cabinet.

**D. Section 4 – Healthy Eating:**

10. That the Council sought assurances from schools within the Borough, that they ensured that healthy food options were available to all young people.
11. That schools in the Borough give consideration to the young inspectors completing an inspection of school lunches and lunches provided as part of Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme, where possible.
12. That the Council and its partners gave consideration to producing a teenage-specific campaign to support healthy eating.
13. That a site visit to the allotments be arranged for members of the Youth Cabinet

2. Formally consider its response to the above recommendations within two months of receipt, in accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

**103. CABINET RESPONSE TO SCRUTINY REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS - PREPARATION FOR ADULTHOOD**

Consideration was given to the report which set out Cabinet's response to the findings and recommendations of the Improving Lives Scrutiny Review on Preparation for Adulthood for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND.)

Preparation for adulthood (also known as transition) was the process by which young people who needed support or care, moved from services provided exclusively for children, to services provided for those over the age of 18, aiming to ensure a seamless transition. The Local Government Association described successful preparation for adulthood as "A

successful transition from children's and young people's services to adult care services, needs the young person, their families, and professionals to work together with the young person at the centre of discussions. Legislation gives local authorities a legal responsibility to co-operate, and to ensure that all the correct people work together to get the transition right for a young person."

Preparation for Adulthood had been an on-going area of interest for the Improving Lives Select Commission (ILSC) over recent years, following the SEND inspection in 2021. In discussions with the Improving Lives Select Commission, the Rotherham Parent Carers' Forum highlighted that a greater focus was required to identify what was in place, to support successful preparation to adulthood for children and young people in Rotherham with SEND and consider whether there were any gaps in the available provision.

The review itself took place over a single afternoon, with many partners present to provide a range of perspectives and information. This work enabled the sub-group to establish an understanding of the services that were being delivered in Rotherham to support preparation for adulthood. The review group consisted of Councillor Lyndsay Pitchley (Chair), Councillor Wendy Cooksey (Vice-Chair), Councillor Tony Griffin, Councillor Maggi Clark and Councillor Taiba Yasseen. The recommendations from the sub-group were presented to Cabinet on 14 October 2024 and Cabinet agreed to provide a response.

All of the recommendations had been accepted by Cabinet and Appendix 1 to the report set out further detail on how the recommendations had been or would be actioned.

During the meeting, Members and Officers stated how important this work had been and that they remained committed to delivering the outstanding recommendations.

**Resolved:**

That Cabinet approve the response to the recommendations, as detailed in Appendix 1, and note the report.

**104. NOVEMBER 2024-25 FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT**

Consideration was given to the report which set out the financial position as at the end of November 2024 and forecast for the remainder of the financial year, based on actual costs and income for the first eight months of 2024/25. Financial performance was a key element within the assessment of the Council's overall performance framework and was essential to the achievement of the objectives within the Council's policy agenda. To that end, this was the fourth financial monitoring report of a series of reports for the current financial year which would continue to be brought forward to Cabinet on a regular basis.

As at November 2024, the Council estimated an overspend of £4.6m for the financial year 2024/25. This was largely due to demand led pressures on children's residential placements, adults social care packages, home to school transport and the impact of the Local Government Pay Award. In addition, the Council was still impacted by the inflationary pressures in the economy. Even though inflation had fallen to 2.3% (albeit an increase from 1.7% in October), the Council's base costs had significantly increased across the recent high inflation period by well in excess of 20%. Increased costs across this period were also being felt by the social care market, in particular leading to market prices increasing at above inflation levels and placing further pressures on the Council's Budget.

Whilst the Directorate overspend which stood at £15.5m was concerning, it had reduced from a peak of £17.2m and elements of this overspend were forecast with two key Budget contingencies created as part of setting the Council's Budget and MTFs for 2024/25. The Council had set a Social Care Contingency of £3.4m and a Corporate Budget Provision of £3.5m to support anticipated pressures across Social Care and Home to School Transport, whilst detailed review work of these services was undertaken, and operational improvements were delivered to reduce cost pressures and create cost avoidance.

The Council's Treasury Management Strategy continued to perform well with the Council's approach to borrowing adapted to minimise the level of borrowing and borrow short term, to ultimately minimise interest costs. It was estimated that this should see the Council generate savings of at least £4m for 2024/25, though again market conditions were out of the Council's control.

As a result of the corporate provisions and savings, an underspend of £10.9m was forecast within Central Services bringing the Council's net overspend down to £4.6m, an improvement of £0.7m since the last Cabinet report. Although the £15.5m Directorate overspend was significantly mitigated, the residual pressure would need to be addressed in year by the Council to prevent further use of reserves. As such, Directorates continued to develop in year budget recovery plans and identify actions and opportunities to reduce the current overspend position. Further corporate operational budget controls had been implemented to assist with reducing the overspend position.

Looking ahead to 2025/26, the financial environment looked more positive for Councils with new funding announced within the Autumn Statement and Policy update. The new Government had declared that they would provide a further one-year settlement for 2025/26 with the aim of bringing in longer term financial settlements thereafter.

The report was considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB), who advised that the recommendations be supported.



**Resolved:**

That Cabinet:

1. Note the current General Fund Revenue Budget forecast overspend of £4.6m.
2. Note that actions will continue to be taken to reduce the overspend position but that it is possible that the Council will need to draw on its reserves to balance the 2024/25 financial position.
3. Note the updated position of the Capital Programme, including proposed capital programme variations to expenditure profiles and funding.

**105. NEW APPLICATIONS FOR BUSINESS RATES RELIEF - SOCIAL EYES**

Consideration was given to the report which presented the application for the award of Discretionary Business Rate Relief for Social Eyes. Social Eyes was a registered charity providing a day care service to support and care for adults with learning disabilities and autism. They provided social and recreational opportunities from Monday to Friday with a varied offer including arts and crafts, sport and walking groups, performance arts, DIY, sensory sessions, meal planning and life skills groups. The service also extended to running a community café with service users serving members of the public.

Social Eyes opened its first dedicated premises in 2020 having previously used other small community venues. Due to an increase in service demand, additional premises were opened in Wath Upon Dearne in 2023. The charity currently supported 85 adults from the local community.

The total value of the relief for the financial year 2023/2024 was £1,369.16, for the financial year 2024/25 was £3,213.56 and for the financial year 2025/26 was £3,213.56. The cost to the Council was £670.89 for the financial year 2023/2024, £1,574.64 for the financial year 2024/2025 and £1,574.64 for the 2025/26 financial year based on the Council's 49% share.

In line with the Council's Business Rates Discretionary Relief Policy, having regard to the financial cost of the proposed relief, the charitable use of the premises and the contribution that this organisation made to the local community, it was recommended that an award for discretionary relief be granted to Social Eyes.

**Resolved:**

That Cabinet approve the application for Discretionary Business Rate Relief for Social Eyes in accordance with the details set out in Section 6 to this report for the 2023/2024, 2024/25 and 2025/26 financial years.

**106. TENANT SATISFACTION MEASURES AND HOUSING REGULATORY COMPLIANCE UPDATE**

Consideration was given to the report which provided the latest six-monthly update to Cabinet on Tenant Satisfaction measures (TSMs) and regulatory compliance. Following the passing of the Social Housing (Regulation) Act in July 2023, the Regulator for Social Housing consulted on revised consumer standards for social housing landlords. The new consumer standards came into force on 1 April 2024. The Regulator of Social Housing (the Regulator) would gather evidence and assess providers' ability to deliver a housing service which met the standards through inspections at least every four years and through desktop reviews of performance data such as Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs), a mixture of performance measures and tenant perception survey results. This proactive regime replaced the largely reactive regulatory framework that was in place prior to 1 April 2024.

The Council submitted its first year of TSM data covering the 2023-24 financial year in June 2024. Surveys for the 2024-25 financial year began in the summer and mid-year results were now available. The Regulator of Social Housing had also published the first national dataset of TSM results. This data was summarised in the report and contained in full at Appendix 1.

Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) were a series of 22 performance measures, which had to be collected by all social housing landlords with more than 1,000 properties. Data for ten of the performance measures was submitted directly by the Council. Data for the other 12 performance measures was captured through a Tenant Perception Survey. The performance measures, including the survey questions, were prescribed by the Regulator and could not be deviated from.

In 2023-24, the Council reported that 76.9% of tenants were satisfied overall with the service. The equivalent national figure for all social landlords was 70%. The Council's position as at 22 November 2024 showed a 1.5% increase in overall satisfaction, at 78.4%.

The November 2024 results showed an improvement across all property related satisfaction measures. Satisfaction that homes were well-maintained now stood at 78.4%, and satisfaction that homes were safe stood at 81.5%. The most marked improvement between the two sets of results was in relation to repairs: satisfaction with the overall repairs service rose from 74.1% to 79%, and satisfaction with the time taken to complete the most recent repair increased from 72.1% to 77.4%. The

percentage of tenants who felt generally well-informed had increased, from 74% to 76.6%, while those who felt they were treated with fairness and respect had dropped very slightly from 83.6% to 83%, albeit both measures remained higher than peer benchmarked averages.

In 2023-24, satisfaction with the way the Council dealt with anti-social behaviour, at 64.9%, was lower than many of the other scores, albeit it was above the median score for other housing providers (58%). In the mid-year results for 2024-25, satisfaction levels in Rotherham dropped slightly to 62.3%. Another notable change between the 2023-24 results and the November 2024-25 results was in relation to satisfaction with the cleanliness and maintenance of communal areas, which dropped from 71.6% to 68.8%. These scores remained higher than the median for other housing providers based on data available.

**Resolved:**

That Cabinet:

1. Note the contents of the report.
2. Agree to receive a further update in six months' time.

**107. COUNCIL PLAN AND YEAR AHEAD DELIVERY PLAN PROGRESS UPDATE**

Consideration was given to the report which was the first monitoring report for the Year Ahead Delivery Plan 2024-25 and Council Plan. The first progress report for 2024-25 was attached at Appendix 1 to the report and included performance measures for Quarter 2 (July to September 2024) whilst Year Ahead Delivery Plan actions had been updated to reflect progress up to 19 December 2024.

The Quarter 2 (mid-year) progress report (Appendix 1) included a high-level overview overall and was then presented by Council Plan theme, with each thematic section including achievements and challenges, Year Ahead Delivery Plan trackers and performance scorecards. The report also included wider information, key facts and intelligence, specific case studies and a timeline of key achievements/activities to demonstrate activity during the first half of the year.

As of 19 December 2024, the activities within the Year Ahead Delivery Plan were rated as follows:

- 25% (25) complete
- 59% (59) were on track to be delivered by original target date
- 9% (9) were delayed by less than 3 months
- 7% (7) would not be met within 3 months of original target date.

For the mid-year report covering Quarter 2, the status of the performance measures and direction of travel for each was set as follows:

- Performance was on or above target – 33 measures (49%)
- Currently performance was not at expected levels. Confidence that the target would be achieved by year-end – 5 measures (7%)
- Performance was not currently on target. High risk that year-end target would not be achieved – 19 measures (28%)
- Target could not be assessed this quarter. (i.e. Annual measure or awaiting publication of data) – 6 measures (9%)
- Information measure targets not applicable. (i.e. Volume / Demand measures where 'good' is neither high or low) – 5 measures (7%)

During the meeting, each Cabinet Member gave a verbal report on progress within their portfolio:

*Social Inclusion and Neighbourhood Working* – Councillor Sheppard stated that 25 ward plans had been produced and published, informed by local communities. Food vouchers worth £1.586 million had been provided to children eligible for free school meals, for the school holidays through to October half term 2024. 71 new volunteering opportunities had been created in the first two quarters against an annual target of 80. Other highlights included the restoration of Waterloo Kiln; Clifton Park, Greasbrough Park, Rother Valley Country Park, and Thrybergh Country Park achieving the Green Flag status and Natural England Accreditation being awarded to Rother Valley; Thrybergh; and Ulley Country Parks. The Section 19 Storm Babet report had been published and distributed to those affected. Finally, Councillor Sheppard stated that the Children's Capital of Culture year-long festival was underway with the "Otherham" Winter Light festival to take place from 24 – 26 January 2025.

*Finance and Safe & Clean Communities* – Councillor Alam highlighted the work ongoing to Deliver improvements in response to the Employee Opinion Survey 2023 results. The sickness absence performance measure missed its target but had improved in the period to the end of September 2024. Additional support continued to be provided to managers including absence management clinics and appropriate absence data and information. Initiatives to increase the cleanliness of the borough were continuing, with additional cleansing in and outside of Rotherham Town Centre. Councillor Alam also noted that, during Quarter 1 and Quarter 2, there were 34 effective enforcement actions against fly tipping and 2,445 effective enforcement actions for other environmental crime. This was the highest number recorded to date. Work was ongoing alongside partners to ensure that Rotherham was a safe, inclusive and welcoming place for local people. This included responding effectively to community safety issues such as anti-social behaviour and hate crime.

*Housing* – Councillor Allen referenced the Tenant Satisfaction Measures considered earlier on the agenda. The work done to reduce homelessness was highlighted. A homelessness improvement plan was in place, focused on prevention and temporary accommodation. This included expansion of the Council’s temporary accommodation portfolio to meet demand and reduce hotel usage. 14 additional temporary accommodation homes had been completed so far and as of end Quarter 2, 161 households were in temporary accommodation (both temporary accommodation and hotels), which was a reduction on the previous two quarters. Over 630 homes had been delivered as part of the Council’s Housing Delivery Programme. Councillor Allen also highlighted the work done across South Yorkshire on homelessness and development partnerships.

*Children and Young People* – Councillor Cusworth explained that in November 2024, Rotherham’s services for children and young people with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) had received the highest rating. The procurement process for the Baby Packs scheme to support families with essential items was complete. Work had also been focussed on increasing the number of families registered with a Family Hub so that children, young people and their families had somewhere to go when they needed help, advice or support. As at the end of Quarter 2, 75% of families with a child up to six months old had registered. The latest available data for the proportion of two-year-olds taking up an early education place indicated that 83.6% had taken up a place in the 2023/24 academic year. Although this was below the Council Plan target of 85%, performance remained positive when compared to the latest published benchmark data (74.8% national and 77.9% statistical neighbour averages). Councillor Cusworth also explained that the Council continued to provide new residential homes, so more Children in Care and young people in Rotherham could stay in the borough and remain safe from harm. Other highlights included the provision of additional school places for children with SEND at schools across the borough; the launch of the Children’s Capital of Culture 2025 and the delivery of universal youth work sessions.

*Transport, Jobs and the Local Economy* – Councillor Taylor highlighted the opening of the Forge Island site. The hotel had opened in July 2024 and the cinema in September 2024. A case study on this was included at page 97 of Appendix 1. After a significant tenant for the food and drink units fell away, negotiations had taken place with alternative operators and were in advanced stages with the most likely timescale for opening, following operator fit-outs, being Spring 2025. The development of Forge Island had been a Council-wide endeavour, spanning ten years of collaborative work, to revitalise Forge Island into a family-friendly destination. Delivered with the Council’s partner, Muse, Forge Island was a key development in the Town Centre Masterplan. Councillor Taylor also highlighted that the structural repair of the Centenary Way viaduct achieved practical completion in November 2024, nine weeks ahead of its originally scheduled completion date.

*Adult Care and Health* – Councillor Baker-Rogers highlighted the New All Age Autism Strategy that had been agreed in February 2024. The Strategy set out the vision for all autistic people living and working in Rotherham to have the same opportunities as anyone else to live rewarding and fulfilling lives, whatever their age. 75% of Care Homes had now signed up as Infection Prevention and Control Champions. Mental health enablement services had launched in May 2024 and the New Learning Disabilities Strategy, which sets out Rotherham’s aspirations for people with a learning disability, was formally launched April 2024. Construction of the Castle View Day Service and new homes at Canklow had started with ‘spade in the ground’ events in September and October 2024.

The report was considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB), who advised that the recommendations be supported.

**Resolved:**

That Cabinet:

1. Note the overall position in relation to the Year Ahead Delivery Plan activities.
2. Note the Quarter 2 data for the Council Plan performance measures.
3. Note that a progress report covering the remainder of the year will be presented to Cabinet in July 2025.

**108. ROTHERHAM ARCHIVES AND LOCAL STUDIES COLLECTIONS POLICY RENEWAL**

Consideration was given to the report which set out the updated Collections Management and Access Policy for the Rotherham Archives and Local Studies. As a recognised Place of Deposit under the Public Records Act 1958, Rotherham Archives and Local Studies was required to resubmit an application under the Archives Accreditation Scheme. This Scheme was the UK standard for archive services maintained by The National Archives and defined good practice and supported the ongoing development of archive services across the country. A successful Archives Accreditation application was essential not only for members of the public but also for future funders and partners, who could have confidence in the delivery of this Service.

Rotherham Archives and Local Studies was successful with its application for Archives Accreditation in 2019. A mid-term review in 2022 demonstrated the service’s progress on recommendations identified within the application. The Service was due to reapply for Archives Accreditation in March 2025.

The Archives and Local Studies Collection Policies were last approved in 2018 for the last Archives Accreditation application. An interim update was done in 2022 and was approved by the Museums, Arts and Heritage Manager. However, approval by Cabinet was required for the next full Archive Accreditation return. Following January 2023 Cabinet, the policies were published as four individual policies (Collections Development Policy; Collections Information Policy; Care and Conservation Policy; Access Policy) as set out in paragraph 2.1.2.

The new Archives and Local Studies Collections Management and Access Policy rationalised these four policies creating a single Collections Management and Access Policy which covered the above requirements and took on board the areas for improvement recommended in the recent Museum Collection Audit. It would also include a further four policies, which operated previously as procedural guidelines but were more appropriate to become part of the consolidated Collections Management and Access Policy. These included the Cataloguing Policy; the Digital Preservation Policy; the Digitalisation Policy; and the Reprographics Policy, as set out in paragraph 2.1.3.

To implement the Archives Collection Management Policy, the Service required two annual closure weeks spaced throughout the year. The closure weeks enabled the staff team to focus on undertaking important and necessary back of house collections management work including stocktaking and cataloguing. This involved closing the Archives and Local Studies Search Room at Clifton Park Museum to the public and pausing the remote enquiry service for the two weeks. The proposed weeks would be in March and September each year.

**Resolved:**

That Cabinet:

1. That Cabinet approve the Archives and Local Studies Collections Management Policy 2024 (Appendix 1).
2. Approve the delegation to the Assistant Director of Culture, Sport and Tourism in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion for any future minor or legislative changes to the Collections Policy. Should a full update to the Policy be required it will return to Cabinet for approval.
3. That Cabinet approve an annual closure week in March and September to enable the service to undertake important and necessary administrative collections management work.

**109. BASSINGTHORPE FARM SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT**

Consideration was given to the report which presented the draft Bassingthorpe Farm Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), attached to the report at Appendix 1, for public consultation. Bassingthorpe Farm was identified as a Strategic Allocation in the Rotherham Local Plan, including provision of around 2,400 new homes, 11 hectares of employment land, a local centre and a primary school. The draft Bassingthorpe Farm Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) provided more detail on existing planning policies to help bring forward the site for development.

The purpose of the Bassingthorpe Farm SPD was to:

- Guide submission of planning applications and ensure timely delivery of strategic infrastructure on and off site.
- Ensure the provision of appropriate social and community facilities.
- Support any future funding bids for national grant opportunities.

The report set out various details from the SPD including the vision and principles; policy compliance; school provision; flood prevention; topography; climate change; the spatial framework; character areas; phasing; infrastructure; design codes and land ownership and delivery.

Preparation of the draft SPD attached at Appendix 1 had been undertaken by consultants appointed by the Council. This included consultation with other relevant services within the Council including Transportation, Housing, Climate Change, Public Health, Ecology, Rotherham Investment and Development Office (RiDO), and Drainage, and with representatives of Fitzwilliam Wentworth Estates. It was anticipated that further engagement would be arranged during the consultation period to allow stakeholders to raise any specific questions and provide feedback on the detail of this draft SPD.

Consultation would be undertaken in accordance with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement. This Statement set out how the Council involved the public and stakeholders in producing planning policy documents and consulting on planning applications. A full consultation and communication plan would be developed. Consultation would involve engagement with the public and stakeholders through a series of in person events and drop-in sessions, accompanied by online accessibility to the document and response form.

Subject to approval by Cabinet, it was proposed to undertake public consultation over a four-week period in Spring 2025. The exact dates would be confirmed nearer the time. Following consultation, any comments received would be considered in producing the final version of the SPD and a consultation feedback report prepared detailing the main issues raised and how these had been addressed. A further report would



be brought to Cabinet later in 2025 seeking adoption of the SPD. The timing of this further report would be dependent on the timing of the consultation and the volume and nature of the consultation responses to the draft SPD.

**Resolved:**

That Cabinet:

1. Approves public consultation on the draft Bassingthorpe Farm Supplementary Planning Document.
2. Authorises the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment in consultation with Assistant Director – Legal Services to explore collaborative arrangements and negotiate draft terms with the majority landowner to progress delivery of Bassingthorpe Farm.
3. Notes further reports will be submitted to seek Cabinet approval of the Bassingthorpe Farm Supplementary Planning Document following consultation and any proposed terms with the majority landowner for the delivery of the site.

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

Consideration was given to the circulated report, the contents of which were included as part of the relevant items and the details included accordingly.

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

**Resolved:-**

The next meeting of the Cabinet will be held on Monday 10 February 2025, commencing at 10.00am in Rotherham Town Hall.