

Appendix 2 Proposed Revenue Budget Investments

Ref per template	Revenue Budget Investments	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
<b>People are Safe, Healthy, and Live Well</b>			
INV1	Street Safe Team	570	570
<b>Expanding Economic Opportunity</b>			
INV2	Employment Solutions Team	718	718
<b>A Cleaner, Greener Local Environment</b>			
INV3	Road Marking	100	100
INV4	Street Cleansing and Fly Tipping Improvements	307	307
<b>One Council Approach</b>			
INV5	Cost of Living Support	188	188
INV6	Customer Services – Call Handlers	62	62
	<b>Total Requirement</b>	<b>1,945</b>	<b>1,945</b>

Revenue Investment Plan	
<b>Street Safe Team</b>	
<b>Directorate:</b>	Regeneration & Environment
<b>Service Area:</b>	Community Safety and Street Scene; Regeneration and Neighbourhoods
<b>Director Responsible for Delivery:</b>	Sam Barstow
<b>Cabinet Portfolio Holder:</b>	Cllr Alam
<b>Head of Finance</b>	Chloe Parker
<b>Unique Reference</b>	INV1

Financial Impact		
<b>Costs</b>	<b>2025/26 Perm</b>	£570k
	<b>2026/27 Perm</b>	£570k

Details of Proposal (what will be achieved)
<p>This proposal is seeking to improve feelings of safety and security in town and village centre areas by providing a visible, uniformed Council presence, with a particular focus on Rotherham Town Centre and the Principal Towns, alongside the ability to deploy to tackle particular challenges in local communities.</p> <p>As noted under the Council Plan theme 'People are safe, healthy and live well', 'everyone deserves to feel happy, healthy and secure' and reducing crime and the fear of crime is a key area of concern for the community, the Council, and its partners. Negative perceptions of the town centre are seen to have a significant impact on people choosing to spend time in the town centre and when they do, not fully enjoying the experience, which is improving because of the Council's focus on regeneration.</p>

This investment will establish a 'Street Safe Team' with dedicated resources and the ability to deploy various powers to bolster enforcement and, alongside existing uniformed presence, provide a welcoming and reassuring presence in town and village centres. As a highly visible presence, the Team will act as the eyes and ears of the Council and will be expected to identify and report issues where they are unable to intervene directly as well as understand thoroughly the areas they are working in and be a familiar face able to advise and engage with members of the public who approach them across the boroughs principle towns and beyond.

The Street Safe Team will focus on making best use of intelligence, data and information in order to target resources and problem solve Community Safety issues. The team will do this by increasing capacity for both preventative and responsive interventions such as building and coordinating local intelligence, dealing with street drinking, anti-social behaviour, parking enforcement, as well as enforcement for issues such as littering and wider environmental issues (commercial waste etc.). With investment in a dedicated team, the aim is to reduce both actual and perceived crime and increase feelings of safety. This was a significant factor in the recent consultation exercise for the Long-Term Plan for Towns submission, and reflected the priority given to the issue in the Council Plan consultation in 2024. The team will also be well briefed in relation to Council functions and services, with the expectation they act as eyes and ears for the Council and other partners in relation to identifying and reporting issues they are unable to deal with directly. The Team will also be well briefed on the areas they are working in and able to assist members of the public who may approach them.

Alongside direct delivery, a communications plan will also be established to promote the investment and refreshed focus as well as routinely promoting the work of the team to improve perceptions of safety.

Specific Duties and Requirements to Include:

- Enforcing the terms of the Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) and wider relevant legislation,
- Patrolling the Town Centre within the PSPO boundary,
- Patrolling within other Principal Town Centres - Dinnington, Wath, Swinton and Maltby – with the opportunity to work more widely on a demand-led basis,
- Contribute towards the improvement and feeling of safety in and around the Town Centre, Forge Island and pedestrian areas throughout the town centre,

- Pro-actively address street drinking, substance misuse and anti-social behaviour which may include developing cases for escalated enforcement such as injunctions, CBO's or other,
- Proactively network, support and intelligence gather from other RMBC town centre services and resources,
- Conduct littering enforcement,
- Enforce relevant aspects of the Environmental Protection Act,
- Maximise the proportion of available time providing a visible presence in the target locations, focus upon priorities and determine a working pattern to ensure appropriate coverage for daytime, evening and weekend issues,
- Identify and report issues in the areas the team are deployed,
- Provide advice and guidance when approached by members of the public.

**Resource Breakdown front line team of 10**

£420k (approx.) – 10 x Band G Enforcement Officers

£57k (approx.) 1 x Band J Principal officer/Supervisor

£93k (20%) for management, administration, uniforms, equipment and associated costs

**Total £570,000**

**Impact on Service Provision / Residents / Customers**

Outputs referenced below will be subject to specific targets in relation to use of enforcement powers, which are to be established and agreed.

- Reduction in ASB in town centres
- Increased feelings of safety
- Improved environment
- Reductions in commercial waste presentation issues
- Reduction in littering
- Increased use of Enforcement Powers

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

This work will impact across Neighbourhood working, Community Safety and Street Scene, Communications, Planning, Regeneration and Transport as well as Events. All services will need to be involved in the production and delivery of relevant plans and initiatives.

The Strategic Town Centre Group will be responsible for overseeing the development of proposals and activities which will be informed also by the Town Centre Operational Group and the Town Centre Community Coordinator.

An increase in enforcement activity may impact on Legal services where prosecutions are necessary.

**Impact on staffing**

This proposal seeks additional staffing which will allow for existing staff to maintain focus on existing key performance indicators.

**Timeframe for delivery**

Please use the sections below to identify the key delivery milestones

Step 1: Commence Recruitment	7/03/2025
Step 2: Conclude Recruitment	30/04/2025
Step 3: Potential start date (assuming 1 month notice),	31/05/2025
Step 4: Training and onboarding,	01/06/25- 01/07/2025
Step 5: Full implementation, 01/07/2025	01/07/2025

Revenue Investment Plan	
<b>Employment Solutions Team</b>	
<b>Directorate:</b>	Adult Care, Housing & Public Health
<b>Service Area:</b>	Housing Services - Housing Income and Support Service (HISS)
<b>Director Responsible for Delivery:</b>	James Clark
<b>Cabinet Portfolio Holder:</b>	Cllr Robert Taylor
<b>Head of Finance</b>	Gioia Morrison
<b>Unique Reference</b>	INV2

Financial Impact	
<b>2025/26 Perm</b>	£718k
<b>2026/27 Perm</b>	£718k

Details of Proposal (what will be achieved)	
<p>The proposal is to mainstream the existing Employment Solutions Team. The team was set up in 2020 to deliver the European Social Fund – Pathways to Work Programme. Subsequently the Council was successful in securing UKSPF funding which will reduce from 31 March 2025. The team have been extremely successful to date and are on target to achieve or exceed contractual outcomes having supported 1,253 people. The table below shows some key outputs achieved and breakdown of outcome area on the UKSPF contract to date:</p>	
Outcome	Total achieved to date
Number of economically inactive people engaging with keyworker support services	198
Number of socially excluded people accessing support	418
Number of people supported to access basic skills courses	318
Number of people supported to engage in job- searching	198
Number of people in employment, including self-employment, following support	73
Number of people in education/training following support	48
The employment solutions team will continue to offer an integrated programme of	

bespoke pre-employment activity designed to support economically inactive and socially excluded unemployed residents of Rotherham to move towards and access the labour market.

Our approach will ensure provision is flexible to respond to local needs and is one which fundamentally addresses the issues of preparing for and getting into employment for those furthest from the labour market with multiple barriers to address, thereby, adding value to current mainstream services and supporting the hardest to reach economically inactive residents.

The Employment Solutions Team acknowledge the different entry points for residents, depending on (1) the extent of the barriers they face to the labour market, (2) their specific goals, in terms of moving towards and into employment, and (3) any previous support they may have received. Each customer journey from economic inactivity / social exclusion is likely to be different, based multiple influences (e.g. educational attainment, employment record, home/family/economic circumstances, location, health, age, ethnicity).

The integrated programme of support will allow seamless progression from significant distance to the labour market into targeted, employment-focused access activity including job and apprenticeship brokerage, sector-specific training with work experience at a pace appropriate for the individual. Residents will be able to enter through a single door where their situation, needs and barriers and be triaged before being directed to the most appropriate support for them.

The programme is flexible, sensitive to individual participant needs (adopting a 'no wrong door' approach to referral and/or support) and is more streamlined/cost-efficient than previous funded programmes.

### Participant Entitlement

Each participant, following triage to determine the general nature of their needs, will receive as part of Strand 1:

- Access to a keyworker who will work with them 1:1.
- A recorded whole-person diagnostic of need to understand their current position, barriers and need.
- A personalised action plan which identifies the most relevant support and interventions.
- Continued ongoing support from their keyworker who will be a touch point throughout their journey.
- Support and interventions identified for participants will then be drawn from a suite of activity. Which will feature preparation for employment activity designed to engage target participants and provide employability and holistic support designed to address personal and circumstantial barriers. This will include 1:1 keyworker support, group activity and specialist interventions.

Activity will include:

For adults aged 18+:

- Individual assessments undertaken in non-threatening environments

- Tailored support for communities/individuals with specific barriers (e.g. qualification recognition/ESOL for non-UK nationals).
- Flexible support packages based on individual assessment and co-designed with participants to address specific barriers.
- Confidence-building.
- Barrier-busting wraparound support (e.g. debt/benefits advice, therapy, interview support, childcare, transport, ESOL).
- Volunteering placements.
- Funded training for those ineligible for Adult Education Budget (AEB).
- For some participants, direct progression into employment.
- Post-programme support.

Strand 2 will feature activity designed to help residents access the labour market, to include employer-focused recruitment support and sector-specific training targeted at industries with high numbers of vacancies. The strand will extend support provided to those who are now ready to access work opportunities, while providing an entry-point for more 'job-ready' economically inactive and socially excluded unemployed individuals who are seeking targeted support to gain employment.

Support will focus on equipping candidates with the entry-level skills, employability, knowledge, key competencies, qualifications, licences and/or work experience required to move into employment. Activity will include:

- Employer designed training programmes in vacancy-rich industries, with high levels of demand for staff at entry-level (e.g. construction, retrofitting, care, early years education, logistics, manufacturing, hospitality, business administration) delivered by specialist providers.
- Employability and industry familiarisation – individual and/or tutor-led group activity to prepare jobseekers for roles employers are looking to recruit to. E.g. employer expectations (e.g. attitude, time-keeping, reliability), role specific and transferrable skills, health & safety.
- Funded access to tickets and licences (e.g. Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) Card, Fork-Lift Truck licence) – making provision for sector specific training where AEB cannot be accessed.
- Work experience placements – short placements with employers who are hiring, to cement participants' understanding of job roles and give employers the confidence that the individual is reliable and committed.
- Employer engagement, including individualised job brokerage – to include advocacy with employers, matching candidates to suitable roles, circulation of available vacancies and, where required, interview support (e.g. reasonable adjustments).

Apprenticeship brokerage for all ages

- Industry visits and work taster sessions, to promote employer / workplace familiarisation, instil confidence and generate interest in vacancies.
- In respect of individuals who have become 'job-ready' and wish to pursue self-employment, signposting to business start-up provision, if appropriate.

- Seamless transition from Strand 1 'Ambition' preparation for employment activity, managed by keyworkers, contract managers and support staff at the point participants are ready.

Based on proposed funding and staffing structure for UKSPF the following outputs will be delivered in 2025-26:

Outputs	Apr 25/Mar 26 (12 month cont.)
Number of participants	360
Number of economically inactive people engaging with keyworker support services	160
Number of socially excluded people accessing support	360
Number of people supported to access basic skills (Explore)	40
Number of people receiving support to gain employment	96
Number of people in employment, including self-employment, following support	65
Number of people in education/training	25

## Impact on Service Provision / Residents / Customers

### 1. Economically Inactive Residents

*Economically inactive residents – those who are out-of-work and not claiming job-seeking benefits.*

Increasing labour market participation is a key strategic objective for the region, particularly in light of increased economic inactivity, in part due to people leaving the labour market due to ill health. Mainstream employment support is not accessible to them on account of the fact they are not engaging (by choice or by exclusion) with Jobcentre Plus.

### 2. Socially Excluded Unemployed Residents

*Unemployed residents who, by virtue of personal or circumstantial barriers to the labour market (which may be multiple and/or complex), require additional support which cannot be accessed through mainstream provision.*

Socially excluded unemployed individuals with multiple and/or complex barriers are over-exposed to a cycle of unsuccessful mainstream support engagements, loss of confidence, discouragement, low aspiration and long-term unemployment. This may precede disengagement from active job seeking and/or sanctioning, and ultimately economic inactivity. By providing additional support to the most disadvantaged jobseekers – explicitly on a needs basis, so as not to duplicate

provision the service intends to provide additional support and capacity for the welfare-to-work system, ensuring jobseekers who are furthest away from the labour market do not inadvertently find themselves without support simply because they are claiming jobseeker benefits.

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

Regeneration & Environment - Advance Team – referral will continue to be made to Advance for residents already in employment.

Public health – the service will continue to deliver support to residents with dependencies to drugs and alcohol etc. via referrals to and from the Rotherham Drugs and Alcohol Service and Individual Placement Support Team.

CYPS – Support for 16-18 year olds. The project will continue to link with the Youth provision which is delivered by CYPS.

Housing – the project will continue to take referrals from Housing services to support tenants and residents at risk of homelessness irrespective of tenure where there is potential to increasing earnings or ensure they remain in employment.

The funding bid does not seek funding for employment services that sit outside of the core Employment solutions team i.e. Individual Placement Support, Advance, Youth Provision or Supported employment provision.

### **Impact on staffing**

There are currently 17 staff (15.45 fte) across the existing UKSPF programme. Of these 13 are employed on permanent contracts and 4 on temporary contracts until end of March 2025. It is the intention going forward that all existing staffing provision would be maintained with a slight change to what have been interim management arrangements. Currently 1 x Band I Team Leader has been paid an honorarium at Band K to manage the Employment Solutions service. Going forward it is proposed to make this arrangement permanent. The investment bid reflects this change to management arrangements.

The investment bid also includes 15% contribution to the costs of Head of Head of Housing Income and Support Services who is responsible for delivery of the Employment Solutions service.

The investment bid does not include any costs for overheads such as office costs, IT or back office support such as finance, procurement or legal etc. If grant funding was secured these costs would be eligible expenditure.

<b>Timeframe for delivery</b>	
Please use the sections below to identify the key delivery milestones	
Step 1: Project continuation	April 2025
Step 2: First participants recruited to Programme	April 2025
Step 3: Programme evaluation	April 2026

Revenue Investment Plan	
<b>Road Marking</b>	
<b>Directorate:</b>	Regeneration & Environment
<b>Service Area:</b>	Community Safety and Street Scene - Highways
<b>Director Responsible for Delivery:</b>	Sam Barstow
<b>Cabinet Portfolio Holder:</b>	Councillor Taylor
<b>Head of Finance</b>	Chloe Parker
<b>Unique Reference</b>	INV3

Financial Impact	
<b>2025/26 Perm</b>	£100k
<b>2026/27 Perm</b>	£100k

Details of Proposal (what will be achieved)
<p>This proposal is for an additional investment of £100k to improve road markings on the classified road network and in estates.</p> <p>Many of the road markings throughout the Borough are becoming extremely worn and the current budget of £70k is insufficient to address the significant backlog and only allows for reactive action to address the areas of most significant concern. This proposal recognises that tired and worn road markings can have an impact on the sense of pride within communities and general feelings in relation to the wider environment. Worn road markings are also likely reduce the effectiveness of those markings.</p> <p>This proposed additional investment will allow the service to become proactive in identifying and addressing these issues through creation of an annual programme of road markings to be refreshed, which will be published and communicated to Councillors and the public.</p>

Impact on Service Provision / Residents / Customers
<p>Refresh of road markings has been shown to 'lift' areas with a positive impact on the highway and general street scene. Clearly visible road markings are more effective in assisting managing traffic flows and the safe use of the highway generally. This proposal would also likely have a positive effect on residents and customers' views in relation to investment in their local area.</p>

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

There may be minor impact on the assessment and design team as there may be a need to assess current lining and surfacing in areas where refreshing of the asset is planned.

### Impact on staffing

Minor impact on staffing as a programme of work will need detailing and planning for delivery.

### Timeframe for delivery

Please use the sections below to identify the key delivery milestones

<b>Step 1:</b> Develop, agree and publish a forward plan for the 2025/26 financial year	April 2025
<b>Step 2:</b> Quarter of spend achieved / quarter of programme delivered + 2 major junctions re-lined / surfaced	June 2025
<b>Step 2:</b> Half of spend / delivery + 1 further junction re-lined / surfaced	September 2025
<b>Step 3:</b> Three quarters of spend / delivery + 1 further junction re-lined / surfaced. Ensure forecast to full year delivery and full year spend is delivered.	December 2025

Revenue Investment Plan	
<b>Street Cleansing and Fly Tipping Improvements</b>	
<b>Directorate:</b>	Regeneration & Environment
<b>Service Area:</b>	Community Safety and Street Scene
<b>Director Responsible for Delivery:</b>	Sam Barstow
<b>Cabinet Portfolio Holder:</b>	Cllr Alam
<b>Head of Finance</b>	Chloe Parker
<b>Unique Reference</b>	INV4

Financial Impact	
<b>2025/26 Perm</b>	£307k
<b>2026/27 Perm</b>	£307k

Details of Proposal (what will be achieved)
<p>This proposal continues to invest in driving environmental improvements and builds upon the recent investments in CCTV and ICT. This proposal will increase frontline resources and provide management capacity to make best of the improved data and intelligence provided by the recent investments in CCTV and ICT to enable a more co-ordinated and targeted approach.</p> <p>The frontline capacity is in addition to recent investments in high footfall areas and will enable a focus on key local priorities such as litter clearance and verge maintenance on road sides away from local centres. This increased frontline resource will have a remit to provide increased capacity on roads away from local centres and undertake activity such as street cleansing, ground maintenance, litter clearance, verge maintenance and where possible road sign cleaning.</p> <p>Management use of data and tasking will mean that the increased frontline resources can be directed to address issues of concern and that through the more effective and co-ordinated use of data and CCTV surveillance increased activity can be focused on prevention, deterrent and prosecution. It will also enable greater engagement with key partners, ward members and local communities.</p> <p>In relation to the management and coordination of the service, this proposal seeks to introduce two additional Band J positions who will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyse data for hotspot areas for grounds and streets in each zone deploying resources, developing proactive proposals for prevention and deterrent and working with enforcement services on prosecutions.</li> </ul>

- Use the improvements in CCTV and ICT to determine cycles of activity so that reactive and regular activity can take place.

Alongside the above, this proposal seeks to increase front line resources by introducing a further roadside cleansing and maintenance team. This will double the existing resource and enable:

- Increase cleansing on 326 sites that require traffic management.
- Proactively pick up fly tipping in locations away from local centres and log to support investigation and prosecution.
- Potential to also complete cleansing and grubbing of central reservation walk over areas across the Borough.
- This team would consist of 1 Band D, 3 x Band C.
- Where required, 2 would perform traffic management duties and 2 would perform cleansing operations on roads that require traffic management, on other verges all would complete cleansing duties.
- The team would require 2 vehicles, as if a road closure is in place 1 vehicle would be at one end and the other. Also, the amount potential litter/fly tipping collected could be large and only using 1 vehicle with a crew cab would limit time on sites due to tip visits.

Finance impact for Roadside Cleansing and Maintenance:

£ 123,112 (Approx) Roadside cleansing team (4 operatives)

£ 32k (Approx) Vehicle Hire costs x 2

£ 46,533 (30%) for management, administration, uniforms, equipment and tipping associated costs.

Finance impact for additional management capacity:

£ 105,078 (Approx) 2 x Band J posts

### Impact on Service Provision / Residents / Customers

Outputs referenced below will be subject to specific service targets, which are to be established and agreed.

- Completion of 326 areas (460km) of litter picks in traffic management areas (Scheduled).
- Completion of additional litter picks on traffic management sites identified via data (Scheduled).
- Gateway cleansing scheduled developed and delivered.
- Ad-hoc cleansing operations particularly in more rural areas.
- Proactive fly tipping jobs in rural areas, logged and complete.
- Improved Environment.
- Improvements in member engagement, casework and MP responses.
- Reductions in members caseworks.
- Reduction in MPs enquires.

- Reduction in littering.
- Very visible in rural areas and on key gateway areas.

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

This proposal will impact on Community Safety as the data gathered can be used by CPU colleagues to increase covert/overt CCTV operations/ signage or patrols and the ability to take forward prosecutions.

Positive impact on Neighbourhoods as extra cleansing operations will help meet the area agree ward priorities.

**Impact on staffing**

This proposal seeks additional staffing which will allow for existing staff to maintain focus on existing key performance indicators and will enable the service to deliver a cleaner and greener environment.

**Timeframe for delivery**

Please use the sections below to identify the key delivery milestones

<b>Step 1: Commence Recruitment</b>	<b>7/03/2025</b>
<b>Step 2: Conclude Recruitment</b>	<b>30/04/2025</b>
<b>Step 3: Potential start date (assuming 1 month notice),</b>	<b>31/05/2025</b>
<b>Step 4: Training and onboarding,</b>	<b>01/06/25- 01/07/2025</b>
<b>Step 5: Full implementation, 01/07/2025</b>	<b>01/07/2025</b>

Revenue Investment Plan	
<b>Cost of Living Support</b>	
<b>Directorate:</b>	Assistant Chief Executive
<b>Service Area:</b>	PPI and Neighbourhoods
<b>Director Responsible for Delivery:</b>	Jo Brown
<b>Cabinet Portfolio Holder:</b>	Cllr Sheppard
<b>Head of Finance</b>	Natalia Govorukhina
<b>Unique Reference</b>	INV5

Financial Impact	
<b>2025/26 Perm</b>	£188k
<b>2026/27 Perm</b>	£188k

Details of Proposal (what will be achieved)
<p><b><u>Increasing the School Uniform Voucher Scheme</u></b></p> <p>The Council is currently providing financial support to families struggling with the cost of school uniforms. This support is given in the form of vouchers, via schools.</p> <p>The scheme is targeted at pupils who are entitled to benefits-eligible Free School Meals (including those who have been auto-enrolled) and who are in in the key years of transition. Eligible year groups are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• children moving from foundation to reception (FS2),</li> <li>• children moving from an Infant to a separate Junior school (year 2 to year 3),</li> <li>• children moving from primary to secondary school (year 6 to year 7).</li> </ul> <p>Currently budgeted for at £65k to the Council per annum for the last three years, this provides a £35 voucher to pupils who meet the above eligibility criteria.</p> <p>Within the current budget, this enables vouchers to be provided to around 1,850 pupils each year.</p> <p>Based on information available online of how similar schemes are operating, it is proposed to increase the value of the vouchers, particularly given the impact of inflation and the cost of living increases on residents.</p>

The Council currently provides funding to individual schools who subsequently provide vouchers to pupils. As part of this proposal schools would be required to ensure that the vouchers given can be used in multiple outlets.

***Costs: £65k additional budget, to double the value of the current voucher to £70***

### **Pension Credit Advisor Extension**

The Council is currently temporarily funding the provision of additional advice services through Citizens Advice Rotherham and District (CARD) and Age UK, to support residents in completing applications to receive Pension Credits. Due to run until the end of March 2025 (6 month funding), this is currently providing:

- Via CARD: two additional drop-in sessions per week at a cost of £15,000.
- Via AGE UK: up to 40 hours per week of additional advisor time within the team at a cost of £13,536 per quarter.

The most recent monitoring data from CARD shows that since this additional provision was introduced, the organisation has dealt with 86 issues relating to pension credit. This has included 41 eligibility checks and the completion of 21 applications so far. To put this into context, in 2023 CARD saw 19 pension credit issues in total which included 11 eligibility checks and 3 pension credit applications.

On this basis it is therefore proposed to extend the availability of this additional support to enable full-year support in 2025/26. Consideration may also be given to if as time progresses elements of this capacity could be used to support other benefit take-up beyond Pension Credit, in consultation with VCS partners.

The proposal is to fund £55k to enable Age UK to provide additional advisor time across the full year and £38k to CARD to enable a full-time advisor resource (or equivalent) for the year.

***Cost: £93k subject to negotiations***

### **Food Works – Developing a Rotherham Offer**

**£30k Investment required, match funded (in kind) by Food Works.**

Food Works are an established and successful VCS organisation, delivering across 8 locations in Sheffield. Their model involves upcycling quality surplus and locally grown ingredients into delicious food and drink, made available on a pay what you feel basis. They also collect and share surplus food, develop hyperlocal food production and empower people with skills, knowledge and support.

Over the last couple of years conversations have been taking place between Food Works, RMBC Public Health and Voluntary Action Rotherham (VAR) to explore an expansion of their Sheffield offer into Rotherham. Funding has remained a barrier and this investment will provide the opportunity for the Council (in partnership with VAR), to progress with developing Food Works' presence in Rotherham, with a view to establishing a cafe that will provide affordable food to those in need alongside learning opportunities around cooking, nutrition and budgeting thus creating a base to further develop activity around the topic of food and inclusivity.

This proposal would complement our existing crisis food model and would also contribute to the objectives of the Rotherham Food Network, the Humanitarian & Communities Group (focused on tackling Cost of Living) and has the potential to link in with employment programs such as Pathways to Work.

### Impact on Service Provision / Residents / Customers

The proposals set out are designed to support vulnerable residents when they need it the most. The range of options set out have been designed to support a range of different circumstances and different protected characteristics.

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

No impacts identified

### Impact on staffing

No additional Council staffing, nor any impacts.

### Timeframe for delivery

Please use the sections below to identify the key delivery milestones

<b>Step 1:</b> School uniform vouchers to be in place to support those transitioning for the next school year in September 2025 (note that for primary school, data is received from schools in September and paid in October).	From April 2025 onwards
<b>Step 2:</b> For CARD and Age UK, funding to be in place by April 1 <sup>st</sup> to enable continuation of provision.	From April 2025 onwards
<b>Step 3:</b> For the Food Works funding, work to be undertaken during the financial year, to enable a suitable model for Rotherham to be implemented in year and working towards a sustainable Food Waste Cafe.	By March 2026

<b>Revenue Investment Plan</b>	
<b>Customer Services – Call Handlers</b>	
<b>Directorate:</b>	Finance & Customer Services
<b>Service Area:</b>	Customer Information & Digital Services
<b>Director Responsible for Delivery:</b>	Judith Badger
<b>Cabinet Portfolio Holder:</b>	Leader
<b>Head of Finance</b>	Natalia Govorukhina
<b>Unique Reference</b>	INV6

<b>Financial Impact</b>	
<b>2025/26 Perm</b>	£62k
<b>2026/27 Perm</b>	£62k

<b>Details of Proposal (what will be achieved)</b>
<p>The Customer Services Contact Centre receives around 300k enquiries each year providing Rotherham residents with support by telephone 24 hours a day, every day of the year.</p> <p>The number of people choosing to self-serve online continues to grow. Over time this is likely to reduce the number of people calling with simple/transactional enquiries. This does, however, also mean that the calls the Contact Centre are routinely dealing with are increasingly those of a more complex/emotive nature which take more time to deal with.</p> <p>In 2023/24 the Council Plan target of 6 mins average wait time per quarter was achieved. The target for 2024/25 is an average wait time of 4 mins; with a longer-term aim to reduce this even further.</p> <p>This proposal seeks additional revenue investment to increase the number of call handlers by 2 FTE, which will help further reduce call waiting times and improve customer experience.</p>

<b>Impact on Service Provision / Residents / Customers</b>
<p>Impact will be positive.</p> <p>The Council is committed to providing a high-quality customer service that is modern, efficient and easy for customers to access.</p>

This investment will increase call handler capacity over peak periods of call demand, which will reduce the amount of time customers are waiting and provide a better experience.

The Contact Centre currently uses around 777 hours of staff time per week devoted to call handling. During these hours staff handle around 5735 calls per week, which is approximately 298,220 per year.

On average a call handler answers approximately 7 calls per hour. This is dependent on the types of calls they take and how complex they are. The two extra call handlers would be expected to process around 24,864 calls per year between them. This will have a positive impact on the reduction of call wait times. It is difficult to equate this improvement to an exact reduction in call wait times as they already vary considerably, dependent upon the service type and time of day. There is also lots of seasonal call handling such as during bad weather. However, it will be possible to see the positive impact these resources will have on call wait times through the quarterly reported statistics.

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

Impact will be positive.

Customer Services act as the first point of contact for a wide range of services including Housing, Streetpride, and Waste Management.

Being able to respond to customer enquiries swiftly presents a positive image both for the Council and for the departments Customer Services represent.

### Impact on staffing

The investment will be used to fund an additional 2 FTE Band D Customer Service call handlers.

### Timeframe for delivery

Please use the sections below to identify the key delivery milestones

<b>Step 1:</b> Commence Recruitment Process	6 March 2025
<b>Step 2:</b> Staff in post (based on regular turnover and recruitment cycle)	1 April 2025
<b>Step 3:</b>	