

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Cabinet – 17 March 2025

Report Title

Response to Outcomes from the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board relating to the Children’s Commissioner’s Takeover Challenge – Health and Wellbeing

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

No, but it has been included on the Forward Plan

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Ian Spicer, Strategic Director of Adult Care, Housing and Public Health

Nicola Curley, Strategic Director of Children and Young People’s Services

Report Author(s)

Ben Anderson, Director of Public Health, Adult Care, Housing & Public Health.
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Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

The Children’s Commissioner’s Takeover Challenge (CCTOC) is a national initiative, where children and young people take over an organisation or meeting and assume management / leadership roles. As part of the Council’s commitment to the CCTOC, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB) supports Rotherham Youth Cabinet (RYC), in undertaking a focused piece of work on a topic chosen by the young people.

RYC chose 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.

This report provides Cabinet’s response to the findings and recommendations of the Scrutiny Review - OSMB Children’s Commissioner’s Takeover Challenge –Health and Wellbeing

Recommendations

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

List of Appendices Included

- Appendix 1 Cabinet's Response to Scrutiny Review -- OSMB - Children's Takeover Challenge – Health and Wellbeing
- Appendix 2 Initial Equality Screening Assessment Form
- Appendix 3 Equality Analysis Screening
- Appendix 4 Carbon Impact Assessment

Background Papers

[Children's Commissioner's Takeover Challenge Recommendations – Health and Wellbeing. Cabinet 20 January 2025.](#)

Rotherham Youth Cabinet manifesto 2023/24

Minutes of Overview and Scrutiny Management Board, 17 October 2024 – Children's Commissioner's Takeover Challenge – Health and Wellbeing

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – 17 October 2024

Cabinet – 20 January 2025

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Response to Outcomes from the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board relating to the Children's Commissioner's Takeover Challenge – Health and Wellbeing

1. Background

- 1.1 The Children's Commissioner's Takeover Challenge (CCTOC) is a national initiative where children and young people take over an organisation or meeting and assume management / leadership roles.
- 1.2 As part of the Council's commitment to the CCTOC, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB) supports Rotherham Youth Cabinet (RYC) in undertaking a focused piece of work on a topic chosen by the young people.
- 1.3 The OSMB Children's Commissioner's Takeover Challenge held on 17 October 2024, was chaired by Alex G, from the Rotherham Youth Cabinet. Rotherham Youth Cabinet chose 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, following consultation with over 4,000 young people.
- 1.4 The review group consisted of members of Overview and Scrutiny and members of Youth Cabinet.
- 1.5 The recommendations from the sub-group were presented to Cabinet on 14 January 2025, and Cabinet agreed to provide a response.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 The recommendations to Cabinet from the Scrutiny Review - OSMB - Children's Takeover Challenge were:
 - a) 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) 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.
 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) Physical Activity:

7. That the Council sought 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) 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 to 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 give 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

2.2 12 recommendations are accepted and Appendix 1 sets out further detail on how the recommendations have been or will be actioned. Where recommendations are made for schools, the Council is able to accept the recommendation on behalf of maintained schools.

2.3 Recommendation 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, would require significant capital and revenue investment that is beyond the Council's capabilities at present. It would also mean that all the Council's resource was centred in one area and not distributed across the Borough. Therefore, this recommendation is not accepted at this time.

2.4 The Council is committed to having an inclusive universal offer for all young people that includes places to go and things to do in all wards across Rotherham.

2.5 Members of the Children and Young People's Partnership Board have suggested they would like to support the development of a strategy creating and communicating 'youth zones' for young people across the Borough, including dedicated digital spaces in libraries, youth clubs and 'safe spots'.

These requests will be presented to the Rotherham Together Partnership for consideration and allocation to relevant agencies to progress.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 The recommendation is that Cabinet approve the response to the recommendations, as detailed in Appendix 1, and note the report.
- 3.2 12 of the recommendations have been accepted and Appendix 1 sets out further detail on how the recommendations have been or will be actioned. It is recommended that Cabinet do not accept recommendation 5. Actions to improve access to youth zones are included in Appendix 1.
- 3.3 Accepting recommendation 5 places a significant financial risk on the Council.

This option is not recommended.

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 The Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services and the Strategic Director of Adult Social Care, Housing and Health have been consulted with regard to the response to the recommendations.
- 4.2 The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health have been consulted with regarding the report and its recommendations.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 The timetable and accountability are detailed in Appendix 1 Cabinet's Response to Scrutiny Review - OSMB - Children's Takeover Challenge – Health and Wellbeing

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 6.1 There are no direct procurement implications arising from the recommendations detailed in this report.
- 6.2 There are no direct financial implications arising from most of the recommendations detailed in the report, with the exception of 'Recommendation 5' – that consideration be given to the development of a dedicated youth space similar to Barnsley's 'Youth Zone'. The provision of a Youth Zone for young people will require a significant capital investment in the region of £9m. This would typically be shared equally between the Council and contributions from the private or independent sectors.
- 6.3 In addition, once operational, the annual running cost of such Youth Zone is estimated at £1.3m, of which approximately £400k is expected to be contributed by the Council (on a recurrent basis), with the balance funded by local businesses or partner organisations. The above estimated investment (capital and revenue) is prohibitive and not something that is currently affordable for the Council.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

- 7.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the report and the recommendation that cabinet approve the responses to the recommendations as set out at Appendix A. However, there are points to be noted for the purpose of awareness in respect of recommendations 1 and 6.
- 7.2 Recommendation 1 will be implemented by members of RYC undertaking a mystery shop in vape shops. Any test purchase should be carried out in accordance with the Age Restricted Products and Services: A Code of Practice for Regulatory Delivery [updated in 2014], in particular Parts 13 and 14 which address the use of test purchasing by young people for conducting spot checks on compliance.
- 7.3 Recommendation 6 refers to the reduction of potential waiting times for a young person to access EHCP provisions. As set out within Appendix A there is a statutory timeframe of 20 weeks within which an EHCP must be finalised and issued. All Local Authorities must comply with statutory duties imposed under the Children and Families Act 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice which is statutory guidance for Local Authorities and various other organisations.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

- 8.1 There are no direct Human Resources implications.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 9.1 The implications for Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults are set out in the Rotherham Youth Cabinet manifesto 2023/24 and Minutes of Overview and Scrutiny Management Board, 17 October 2024 – Children’s Commissioner’s Takeover Challenge – Health and Wellbeing and the Cabinet Report: Children’s Commissioner’s Takeover Challenge Recommendations – Health and Wellbeing (background papers) and in the attached Cabinet’s Response to Scrutiny Review – OSMB - Children’s Takeover Challenge – Health and Wellbeing (Appendix 1).

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

- 10.1 Members of the review group have due regard to equalities and human rights in developing recommendations.
- 10.2 In relation to equalities, the review group identified the requirement for further Support for young people specifically relating to risks associated with vaping, Mental Health, Physical Health, and Healthy Eating and the requirement for intervention to prevent serious implications for the physical and mental health of children into adulthood. The RYC wanted to support the Government’s ambition to halve childhood obesity rates by 2030 and reduce the health inequalities that persist. The action plan (Appendix 1) addresses these issues.
- 10.3 An equality analysis screening and form are attached as Appendices 2 and 3.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

- 11.1 There are no implications for CO2 emissions and climate change directly arising from this report.
- 11.2 The Carbon Impact Assessment is attached as Appendix 4.

12. Implications for Partners

- 12.1 The implications for partners are described in attached Cabinet's Response to Scrutiny Review -- OSMB - Children's Takeover Challenge – Health and Wellbeing (Appendix 1).

Implementation of any recommendation is at the discretion of the relevant partner organisation. The recommendations contained in this report are offered acknowledging the contributions that have been made by each of the partner organisations.

13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 Failure to provide adequate support, specifically relating to risks associated with vaping, Mental Health, Physical Health, and Healthy Eating would risk serious implications for the physical and mental health of children and young people into adulthood and is detrimental to their achievement of outcomes.
- 13.2 The mitigations are described in attached Cabinet's Response to Scrutiny Review -- OSMB - Children's Takeover Challenge – Health and Wellbeing (Appendix 1).

14. Accountable Officers

Ben Anderson, Director of Public Health, Adult Care, Housing & Public Health
Helen Sweaton, Joint Assistant Director, Commissioning, Performance and Quality. CYPS.

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp OBE	03/03/25
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	17/02/2025
Assistant Director, Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phil Horsfield	19/02/2025

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