

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Cabinet – 19 May 2025

Report Title

Council Plan 2025-2030 and Year Ahead Delivery Plan 2025-26

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

Yes

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Jo Brown, Assistant Chief Executive

Report Author(s)

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Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

In January 2022, the Council adopted a Council Plan for 2022-25, including a suite of performance measures. To enable the Council to work towards the Council Plan outcomes and achieve the commitments, annual Year Ahead Delivery Plans were developed, setting out the key activities to be delivered. The Council Plan came to an end in March 2025.

Informed by public consultation, a new Council Plan has been developed for 2025-30 (see Appendix 1). 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 Council Plan includes a suite of performance measures and targets for monitoring purposes.

To enable the Council to work towards the Plan outcomes, a Year Ahead Delivery Plan (see Appendix 2) has been developed, setting out the key activities to be delivered over the next year (April 2025 – March 2026).

Recommendations

That Cabinet:

1. Recommend to Council that the Council Plan 2025-30 be approved.
2. Agree the Year Ahead Delivery Plan for 2025-26.
3. Note that future progress reports will be presented to Cabinet in January and July 2026.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 – Council Plan 2025-30
Appendix 2 – Year Ahead Delivery Plan 2025-26
Appendix 3 – Council Plan 2025 Consultation Report
Appendix 4 – Equality Analysis
Appendix 5 – Carbon Impact Assessment.

Background Papers

Council Plan 2022-25
Year Ahead Delivery Plan 2024-25
Progress reports to Cabinet.

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

None

Council Approval Required

Yes

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Council Plan 2025-30 and Year Ahead Delivery Plan 2025-26

1. Background

- 1.1 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.
- 1.2 In January 2022, the Council adopted a Council Plan for 2022-25, including a suite of performance measures. To enable the Council to work towards the Council Plan outcomes and achieve the commitments, annual Year Ahead Delivery Plans were developed, setting out the key activities to be delivered. The Plan came to an end in March 2025.
- 1.3 Since the Council Plan was adopted, formal performance reports have been presented in public at Cabinet meetings. Scrutiny has also had the opportunity to consider the reports in line with the Council's normal processes. The final progress update on the Council Plan for 2022-25 will be presented to Cabinet in July 2025.
- 1.4 To ensure a 'golden thread' runs from the Council Plan through to each service, Service Plans have been produced and are reviewed annually, as well as the 'My Year Ahead Delivery Plan' Personal Development Reviews.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 Between September and November 2024, a programme of public consultation and engagement took place to support the development of the new Council Plan. This included online and postal surveys, focus groups (internal and external), and a series of short interactions and engagement at a number of events and locations across the Borough. There were 214 online and postal surveys returned and over 1,950 interactions in total across all methods of engagement. A summary of the consultation and key findings is attached at Appendix 3 and is available on the Council website.
- 2.2 The consultation and engagement included speaking with voluntary and community groups which represent protected characteristic groups, as well as attendance at the Parish Council Network, direct engagement with the public and a session open to all elected members.
- 2.3 Informed by this programme of public and stakeholder engagement, the new Council Plan for 2025-30 'Forging Ahead' sets out the ambition for the Borough, including medium-term priorities and actions, building on and taking forward commitments made by elected members to the Rotherham community. The Council Plan is framed around five outcomes:
 - Places are thriving, safe, and clean
 - An economy that works for everyone
 - Children and young people achieve

- Residents live well
 - One Council that listens and learns.
- 2.4 Three cross-cutting policy drivers run throughout the Council Plan, informing ways of working and helping the Council to achieve better outcomes:
- Expanding opportunities for all
 - Recognising and building on our strengths to make positive change
 - Focussing on prevention.
- 2.5 The Council Plan is a high-level document which sets out the outcomes that the Council will work towards over the next five years. There are five strategic outcomes and seventeen priorities in total. To ensure delivery against these, an annual Year Ahead Delivery Plan has been produced, which includes one hundred and sixteen priority actions, milestones and measures alongside a further twelve social care measures (see Appendix 2). This initial Year Ahead Delivery Plan will run until March 2026 and will be reviewed and updated each year thereafter.
- 2.6 The Council Plan will be monitored through both the delivery of the milestones and activities within the Year Ahead Delivery Plan and a suite of long-term measures of success which are outlined in the Council Plan document.
- 2.7 To ensure that the Council Plan is managed effectively, six-monthly progress reports will be produced for Cabinet and made publicly available. The reports will include progress in relation to the actions in the Year Ahead Delivery Plan, performance data relating to associated performance measures and case studies. The progress reports will have annual updates on the long-term measures of success as the majority of these are published annually. It is proposed that the first Council Plan 2025-30 mid-year progress report, covering the period April 2025 to September 2025, is reported to Cabinet in January 2026.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 The Council Plan 2025-30 has been developed in consultation with Elected Members and officers across all directorates and informed by public consultation.
- 3.2 It is recommended that Cabinet:
- Recommend the Council Plan 2025-30 to Council for approval.
 - Agree the Year Ahead Delivery Plan for 2025-26.
 - Note that future progress reports will be presented to Cabinet in January and July 2026.

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 A programme of public consultation and engagement to support the development of the new Council Plan took place throughout September and November 2024. This included online and postal surveys, focus groups (internal and external), a series of short interactions and engagement at a number of locations across the Borough. There were 214 online and postal surveys returned and over 1,960 interactions in total across all methods of engagement. This is an increase on the 1,300 engagements achieved through the consultation exercise undertaken in 2021 for the previous Council Plan.
- 4.2 The consultation and engagement included speaking with voluntary and community groups which represent protected characteristic groups, as well as attendance at the Parish Council Network, direct engagement with the public and a session open to all elected members.
- 4.3 The consultation is part of an ongoing dialogue between the Council and members of the public and feedback will continue to be sought.
- 4.4 A summary of the consultation and key findings is attached at Appendix 3 and is available on the Council website.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 The Council Plan for 2025-30 and Year Ahead Delivery Plan for 2025-26 are to be adopted by Council in May 2025.
- 5.2 The first six-monthly progress report will be presented to Cabinet in January 2026.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 6.1 The Council Plan is designed to help steer the use of Council finances, balanced against the wider funding backdrop for the Council and the broader context of national local government finance and policy. There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report and the delivery of the Council Plan will be managed within the Council's available budgets.
- 6.2 The Council operates in a constantly changing environment. It will be important to ensure that ambitions and performance targets remain realistic in the context of central government policy, forthcoming legislation, and the financial position of the authority.
- 6.3 Whilst there are no direct procurement implications in this report, the Year Ahead Delivery Plan includes some activities which will require the need to procure goods, services or works to achieve the Council Plan outcomes. All projects will need be procured in line with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or the Procurement Act 2023 (depending on the route to market selected) as well as the Council's own Financial and Procurement Procedure Rules, giving clear consideration and application of social value in

accordance with the Council's Social Value Policy, the real Living Wage and other ethical factors.

- 6.4 The Council Plan progress and performance reports will include information regarding the Council's financial position and, where possible, will be aligned to the financial reporting timelines.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

- 7.1 Whilst there is no specific statutory requirement for the Council to have a Council Plan, being clear about the Council's ambitions gives staff, partners, residents, and central Government a clear understanding of what it seeks to achieve and how it will prioritise its spending decisions.
- 7.2 An effective and embedded Council Plan also plays a key part in the Council forging ahead and achieving its ambition.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

- 8.1 There are no direct Human Resources (HR) implications as a result of this report. HR's role in development of an engaged, diverse, and skilled workforce that feels empowered to embrace new working methods to meet all customer needs is highlighted within the 'One Council that Listens and Learns' theme.
- 8.2 Delivery of the new Council Plan will also be underpinned by the new Workforce Plan.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 9.1 The Council Plan has a core focus on the needs of children and young people and vulnerable adults, and this is embedded throughout all outcomes of the plan, particularly 'children and young people achieve their potential' and 'residents live healthy, safe and independent lives'.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

- 10.1 Three cross cutting policy drivers run throughout the plan. One of these includes 'opportunities are expanded to all' to ensure that the Council creates new opportunities, with help is targeted to those who need it the most, so no one is left behind. All outcomes aim to meet residents' and communities' differentiated needs.
- 10.2 A detailed Equality Analysis is attached (see Appendix 4) and will be reviewed and updated every six-months. This includes detailed consideration of equality issues contained within the Plan.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

- 11.1 The 'one Council that listens and learns' outcome is focused around reducing harmful levels of carbon emissions to limit the impacts on the climate and the

environment. Actions within this outcome encompass plans for the reduction of emissions. The 'places are thriving safe and clean' outcome also includes actions focussed on flood alleviation projects and flood resilience measures for communities in the worst-affected areas.

- 11.2 A Carbon Impact Assessment has been produced (see Appendix 5). The impact assessment will continue to be reviewed and updated every six-months.

12. Implications for Partners

- 12.1 Working with partners across the public, private and voluntary and community sectors will be integral to the delivery of the Council Plan, and partners have been consulted as part of its development. All the outcomes will require multi-agency approaches to some degree and the Council will continue to show effective leadership, operating through a range of strategic partnership bodies.

- 12.2 The Rotherham Plan 2025, the overarching partnership plan for the borough, will be replaced with an updated plan in 2025. The Rotherham Plan will align with and complement the Council Plan, setting out partners' joint ambitions to improve outcomes for local people.

13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 The Corporate Strategic Risk Register will be realigned to the new Council Plan outcomes and the process of updating and identifying strategic risks is already designed to manage risks connected to the plan.
- 13.2 The six-monthly progress reports will flag risks associated to actions at risk of not being delivered or those that have missed the deadline, as well as performance measures which have not progressed in accordance with the target set.
- 13.3 Directorates are also responsible for ensuring that their Risk Registers align to the new Council Plan and any significant risks are addressed.

14. Accountable Officers

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Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp OBE	01/05/25
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	25/04/25
Assistant Director of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phil Horsfield	24/04/25

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