

**Councillor Joanna Baker-Rogers – Cabinet Member for Adult
Social Care and Health**

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Councillor Simon Ball
Elected Member

Via email: simon.ball@rotherham.gov.uk

Dear Cllr Ball

Question at Council Meeting – Wednesday 21st May 2025

Thank you for your supplementary question at the Council meeting on 21st May 2025. I have set out your question and my response below.

Given that Rotherham has some of the worst health inequality outcomes in South Yorkshire, and your board has had years of Labour leadership, why should residents trust this Council to deliver on the new Health and Wellbeing Strategy when past performance has been so poor?

I struggled a little with this question since so many of the policies that you have advocated for over the last decade has left Rotherham residents poorer, and our country more unequal.

Cardiovascular deaths, for example, fell steadily in Rotherham in the first decade of this millennium, then the Tories got in and the latest data we have has shown them higher than they were in 2010.

Suicide rates fell to an all-time low in Rotherham in 2010, but since then have been consistently two or three times higher.

Male life expectancy at birth rose steadily in Rotherham until 2010, but now stands lower than it did when the Conservatives came to office.

I'm proud of the work we're doing locally. The Health and Wellbeing Board over the last five years has had a strong track record of delivering outcomes for the residents of Rotherham, against the previous strategy's four bold aims and there are many examples of where impact has been seen:

For example:

- Agreeing a declaration to become a Breastfeeding Friendly Borough, including enhanced breastfeeding support within the Family Hubs and Start for Life program. Rotherham's breastfeeding rates at 6-8 weeks have improved by more than 5.5 percentage points in the four years since 2020/21
- Since emerging from the pandemic, Rotherham has outperformed the national average in terms of successful completion of alcohol and non-opiate drug treatment.
- RotherHive was launched in 2020 originally as a mental health resource, it has since significantly expanded and now provides a range of verified practical mental health and wellbeing information, support, and advice for adults in Rotherham.
- The 'With Me in Mind' children's mental health support teams trailblazer was implemented, and is now supporting children in 70% of Rotherham's schools.

These will be regularly presented to Health and Wellbeing Board for discussion and challenge and you'd be very welcome to come along and find out more.

Yours sincerely,



Cllr Joanna Baker-Rogers

Rawmarsh West Ward

Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health