

**THE CABINET**  
**7th July, 2025**

Present:- Councillor Read (in the Chair); Councillors Alam, Baker-Rogers, Beresford, Cusworth, Marshall and Williams.

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

**15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

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

There were 2 questions:

1. Mr Azam stated that negotiations with Dignity regarding their contract for bereavement services had been ongoing for 11 months. He stated that the community did not know what was going on or when the negotiations were going to conclude. He asked for an update on when the negotiations would be concluded and when the community would be updated.

The Leader explained that he did sympathise and empathise with Mr Azam, but the negotiations were still ongoing. He confirmed that even if the Council decided to change the way the service was provided, there would be uncertainty whilst that change was resolved. The Leader explained that, unfortunately, the uncertainty would continue for a while regardless of how the negotiations concluded. Progress and investments had been made and the Council would continue to deliver the best possible service.

The Assistant Director of Legal, Elections and Registration Services confirmed that discussions continued on the matter, and it was progressing. The Council was protecting the needs of all communities and would continue to do so.

In his supplementary question, Mr Azam stated that the Muslim community was running out of burial space. Land that had been earmarked for development was not suitable and plans needed to be produced. He referenced the 35 year plan for Dignity along with the operational plan. However Mr Azam stated that no formal document had been produced by the Council outlining the plan for burial space.

The Assistant Director confirmed that any plans were linked to the negotiations with Dignity. The Council would continue to make sure that a plan was delivered, and this plan would be consulted on with all communities.

2. Mr Ashraf referenced the question he had asked at the Council meeting in 9 April 2025 and the subsequent response from Councillor Donna Sutton in her role as designated elected spokesperson for South Yorkshire Pensions Authority. The response contained a table specifying details on investments with Israeli companies, bonds and armament companies. Mr Ashraf asked for further detailed clarification on which companies and bonds and how much did each get over the past few years. He confirmed that he was happy to email his question to the Leader to ensure there was no misunderstanding.

The Leader reiterated what had been said at the previous Council meeting regarding that information and again confirmed that it was held by the Pensions Authority which was a separate organisations to the Council and members of the Pensions Authority were separate from the Cabinet. However, the Leader said he would be happy to pass the question on to the Pensions Authority if Mr Ashraf sent it through and a response would be provided.

**17. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

**Resolved:**

That the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 9 June 2025 be approved as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

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

The Chair advised that agenda items 13, 17, 18 , 19 and 20 had exempt appendices however the meeting remained open to the press and public throughout.

**19. THE LOCAL OFFER FOR KINSHIP CARERS**

Consideration was given to the report which presented the Kinship Local Offer, attached at Appendix 1 of the report, for approval. The Kinship Local Offer was a guide to all the support available to kinship carers in Rotherham. The report outlined how the offer addressed the Council's statutory obligations to kinship carers and its commitment to keeping families together and providing timely, needs-led support to kinship carers.

In October 2024, the Government issued statutory guidance on 'Kinship Care', which included a definition (now enshrined in the draft Children's Wellbeing and Schools bill before Parliament) of kinship care: 'any situation in which a child is being raised in the care of a friend or family member who is not their parent. The arrangement may be temporary or longer term.' This covered a wide span from informal arrangements and private fostering to Children in Care fostered by family or friends, and

children subject to Court orders providing their family or friends with parental responsibility.

The October 2024 statutory guidance required each local authority to publish a Kinship Local Offer. It also extended the role of the Virtual School Head to champion the attainment, attendance, and progress of children in kinship care, and extended the role of the Virtual School to provide advice and information to kinship carers. Within the Children's Wellbeing and Schools bill, both the expectation of the local offer and the role of the Virtual School Head were included. A senior manager had to be nominated to ensure the kinship local offer met statutory requirements and that it was responsive to the needs of kinship children and their carers.

The statutory guidance set out that the Kinship Local Offer must:

- Set out services available to each kinship arrangement.
- Provide support based on the needs of kinship children rather than legal status.
- Be developed in collaboration with partner agencies.
- Be well-publicised.
- Mitigate against potential barriers to accessing support.

The report confirmed that the Kinship Local Offer attached at Appendix 1 addressed each of these requirements and was expected to address:

- Support groups and training.
- Financial support.
- Help to stay in work.
- Accommodation.
- Education.
- Supporting family time.
- Family group decision making.
- Legal support.
- Therapeutic support.

Kinship carers were consulted on the Kinship Local Offer and the potential reshaping of the service for Special Guardians through an online survey (shared via the Post-SGO Support Team mailing list (183 people) and Facebook group (167 people)) and meeting with kinship carers at an established forum. 14 responses were received from the survey and 6 kinship families participated in the forum. Further details of the consultation undertaken had been included in Appendix 2 – Equality Analysis.

The Offer was also subjected to pre-decision scrutiny at the Improving Lives Select Commission on 17 June 2025. They made the following recommendations:

- That additional information be included into specific sections of the draft Kinship Local Offer, such as further information on trauma and adding hyperlinks to the specific policies referenced in the document.
- A short leaflet be developed to sit alongside the Kinship Local Offer, which would include an overview of the support available and would signpost people to the Kinship Navigators.
- That the language used in the draft Kinship Local Offer is reviewed to ensure it would be accessible to all, including young people.

The Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services confirmed that those recommendations would be taken forward as part of the work on the Offer. It was confirmed that the document was a "live" document and would be continually updated.

Cabinet Members were supportive of the good and comprehensive piece of work.

**Resolved:**

That Cabinet agree and approve the content and publication of the Kinship Local Offer.

**20. SEND SUFFICIENCY ASPIRE PUPIL REFERRAL UNIT**

Consideration was given to the report which provided an update on Children and Young People Services (CYPS) Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Sufficiency planning. The report included an update on the progress made against the Special School Capital Accessibility Funding programme. The report also requested approval of a programme of capital refurbishment works to support sufficiency requirements at Rotherham Aspire Pupil Referral Unit.

In Rotherham (23/24 academic year), 22.1% of pupils had either a statutory plan for Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND), known as an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP), or were receiving SEND support (previously known as school action and school action plus). This compared to an average of 18.4% across all England Authorities. In order that the educational needs of children and young people in the borough with SEND could continue to be met, the Council had a responsibility to create a sufficiency of education provision to meet the needs of all pupils. From 2018 onwards, Cabinet had approved five Phases of SEND Sufficiency, each targeted at addressing incremental rises in SEND cohorts and creating or improving specialist education provision. The five phases of the SEND Sufficiency programme had created 596 additional school places in Rotherham.

As outlined in the background paper, Safety Valve Cabinet annual update report – 24 April 2023, the Rotherham 'Safety Valve' Agreement aimed to:

- Reduce use of independent specialist provision outside of the LA by creating appropriate capacity within Rotherham's high needs system, with a focus on ensuring provision is high quality and value for money.
- Develop local sufficiency arrangements, including for Rotherham's Looked After Children.

The Special school Capital Accessibility Funding Programme had focused on providing funding to improve access to the curriculum across both mainstream and special schools. The special school accessibility capital allocation had been utilised with great success to support the development of off-site or additional provision for specific pupil cohorts who were struggling to access the existing curriculum offer within special schools. Previous successful schemes had included Nexus (Forest View) and Elements Academy (Elevate Provision.) Details were set out in paragraph 2.3 of the report.

As part of medium term SEND Sufficiency planning, demand for additional specialist placements for pupils with Severe Learning Difficulties had been identified. A feasibility had been completed at Kelford School with a subsequent accessibility application being received detailing the capital requirements for 3 modular classrooms. The total cost for the modular build was estimated at £610k (inclusive of contingency and professional fees), with the Academy Trust contributing £60k. The 3 modular classrooms would provide up to 24 additional specialist placements, with these being phased over the next two academic years linked to appropriate place planning for pupils. The first of the additional places would be available from September 2025.

There had been a gradual increase in pupil numbers in Aspire Pupil Referral Unit over a 7 year period (103 average pupils on roll in 2016-17, 151 average pupils on roll 2023-24). Rising numbers of Permanent Exclusions locally, mirroring the national trend, had contributed to this. Shared systems working within locality education partnerships had been successful in slowing the rate of permanent exclusion and supporting reintegration to mainstream where appropriate. This had helped lead to an overall reduction in the rate of Permanent Exclusions over the past academic year.

Initial feasibility concluded that Capital investment was required to address condition, suitability, and access issues across the Rawmarsh, Hutton Park and Catcliffe buildings and a programme of capital works had been detailed following condition works completed across the three sites. If approved work would be phased across the academic year 2024/2025 and Autumn Term 2025/2026. The majority of the condition related works were situated on the Rawmarsh site and related to improvements to the roof alongside specific mechanical and electrical works. Capital works to improve access to the curriculum through the development of outdoor space, 1:1 support rooms and specific items to improve access to the curriculum through the development of the vocational offer had also been identified across the remaining Hutton Park and Catcliffe buildings. The

programme of capital works to support sufficiency requirements across all sites was estimated at a value of £565k.

**Resolved:**

That Cabinet:

1. Note the update on the progress made against the Special School Capital Accessibility Funding programme and approve the programme of capital work at Kelford School.
2. Approve the programme of capital work at Rotherham Aspire Pupil Referral Unit to support sufficiency requirements.

**21. MAY 2025-26 FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT**

Consideration was given to the report which set out the financial position as at the end of May 2025 and forecast for the remainder of the financial year, based on actual costs and income for the first two months of 2025/26. As at May 2025, the Council's financial position for 2025/26 remained positive with a projected underspend of £0.1m. This position was made up of a Directorate overspend of £4.2m, offset by a projected Central Service underspend of £4.3m.

The pressures reported in the Directorates were largely due to demand led pressures, in particular in relation to Children's residential placements. Increased costs were also being felt across the wider Children's social care market, this was leading to market prices increasing at above inflation levels, placing further pressures on the Council's Budget. These pressures were anticipated, and a corporate provision was maintained within Central Services as part of the Budget and Council Tax Report 2025/26.

Early indications also suggested that the Local Government Pay Award would be higher than budgeted, and the Council had no control over the level of pay award agreed. As a result, Central Services had a £4.3m forecast underspend, reflecting the budgetary support from the £5.4m Social Care Contingency set aside as part of the Budget and Council Tax Report 2025/26 and Treasury Management Savings. This contingency and treasury savings were offset by the estimated financial impact of the Local Government Pay Award.

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. The position had also improved following the outturn for 2024/25 because of the re-profiling of the Capital Programme delivery, which pushed back the need to borrow. It was estimated that this approach should see the Council generate savings to support Council wide pressures such as the impact of the pay award. However, it was noted that the Council's Budget

and Council Tax Report 2025/26 approved a requirement for the Treasury Management Strategy to save at least £3m in 2025/26. This was on track, however, economic and market conditions are out of the Council's control.

The report also provided an updated position on the Council's Capital Programme. The Capital Programme 2025/26 had been updated following the 2024/25 outturn and the latest information on project position and delivery plans. The Capital Programme 2025/26 had been reset at £211.024m split between the General Fund (£149.275m) and HRA (£61.749m.) This position would act as the original budget position for 2025/26 and future reports would explain how this budget moved during the year due to project and programme variations, but the value would remain as the original budget.

The 2025/26 programme had decreased overall by £30.969m from the position reported to Cabinet in March 2025. The movement was based on the latest profiles of expenditure against schemes, following the 2024/25 outturn position, factoring in slippage from 2024/25 and new grant funding.

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 underspend of £0.1m.
2. Note the updated position of the Capital Programme.

**22. TREASURY MANAGEMENT OUTTURN 2024-25**

Consideration was given to the report which presented the review of the treasury activity 2024/25 against the Strategy agreed at the start of the year. The report also covered the actual Prudential Indicators for 2024/25 in accordance with the requirements of the Prudential Code. The report met the requirements of both the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management and the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities. The Council was required to comply with both Codes through regulations issued under the Local Government Act 2003.

The Council received an Annual Treasury Strategy Report in advance of the 2024/25 financial year at its meeting on 28 February 2024 and Audit Committee received a mid-year report at its meeting on 26 November 2024, representing a mid-year review of treasury activity during 2024/25. In addition, quarterly updates were received by Audit Committee on 26 September 2024 and 11 March 2025.

The Council had reduced its investment balances in recent years as funds have been used to meet loan maturities rather than refinancing at historically high interest rates. In 2024-25 the Council borrowed an additional £95m from Local Authorities and PWLB (Public Works Loans Board). In addition, the Council repaid £55.2m of principal on a mix of Local Authority, PWLB and LOBO (Lender Option Borrower Option) loans on which the lender exercised its option to increase interest rates to above market rates. The Bank of England Base Rate decreased from 5.25% to 4.50% during 2024/25 as inflation started to fall from the previous highs. As at 31 May 2025 the base rate sat at 4.25%.

Careful management of these factors through the Council's treasury strategy had helped to control the Council's interest costs. Taken together the additional return on investments, reduced borrowing need and further slippage on the Council's Capital Programme had enabled an £8m underspend on the 2024/25 Treasury Management budget that had been used to support the Council's 2024/25 overall outturn position.

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

**Resolved:**

That Cabinet note the Treasury Management Prudential Indicators outturn position as set out in Section 2 and Appendix 1.

**23. FINANCIAL OUTTURN 2024-25**

Consideration was given to the report which outlined the final revenue and capital outturn position for 2024/25. The Council set a balanced budget position for 2024/25 as part of the Budget and Council Tax Report 2024/25 approved at Council 28 February 2024. A Revenue Budget of £326.1m was set for General Fund services and this excluded schools' budgets and Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) contained within that report included a balanced position for 2024/25, and a funding gap of £6.6m for 2025/26. This Budget and MTFS position was based on sound financial assumptions at the time, factoring in budget contingencies for service demand pressures in particular within Social Care and Home to School Transport.

The Council had seen, during 2024/25, significant demand and market pressure challenges in Adult Social Care and pressures above the planned contingencies for Children's Social Care and Home to School Transport. In addition, the Council was still impacted by the inflationary pressures in the economy, which had increased the Council's base costs further.

The December Financial Monitoring Report 2024/25 submitted to Cabinet on 10 February 2025 outlined that the Council anticipated an overspend of £3.1m. This forecast position was also outlined in the Budget and Council Tax 2025/26 report which was submitted to the same Cabinet meeting and also to Council on 5 March 2025. The overspend was proposed to be funded from the Budget and Financial Strategy Reserve. However, the report noted the Council's intention was to further improve that outturn position, if possible, which would see a lower value call on reserves. The actual financial outturn position reflected an overspend of £0.3m for the financial year 2024/25. This was an improvement of £2.8m from the December Financial Monitoring reported to February Cabinet, as a result of service areas delivering further savings ahead of year-end, maximising grant allocations, improvements in income were recognised and the Council generated further savings in Treasury Management. The Council's final overspend position of £0.3m had been funded by use of £0.3m of the Budget and Financial Strategy Reserve as approved within the Budget and Council Tax Report 2025/26.

Following approval of the 2024/25 Budget, the global economic position had improved with inflation easing, reducing from 11.1% in October 2022 at its peak back down to 1.7% in September 2024. Inflation had since started to rise again as the economy had slowed with inflation back at 2.6% in March 2025, highlighting that the economic uncertainty had not yet ended. The Council's base costs had continued to significantly rise across the period of high inflation and needed to continue to be factored into the Budget and MTFS moving forwards. Energy prices, whilst also positively reducing, were still projected to cost the Council around 60% more in 2025/26 than the outturn position for 2022/23, prior to the significant inflationary increase. These financial challenges were being regularly reviewed as part of the Council's ongoing Medium Term Financial Planning.

Although inflation was easing, the Local Government Association (LGA) Pay Award was agreed with a financial impact £3m greater than was assumed within the Budget for 2024/25. However, the majority of this was covered by in-year savings within Treasury Management.

The Council's General Fund minimum balance had remained at £25m as planned and set out within the Council's Reserves Strategy reported in the Budget and Council Tax Report 2024/25 and 2025/26. The reserve was held to protect the Council against unforeseen events and realisation of contingent liabilities.

The Housing Revenue Account had an underspend of £4.4m. As a result of this the HRA was able to transfer to reserves £5.8m, instead of the planned £1.4m, an improvement of £4.4m. This would help the HRA to mitigate the financial challenges presented by increased maintenance requirements over the medium term.

The Capital Programme outturn position showed slippage and underspend of £31.8m against the Budget for 2024/25. Capital expenditure (programme delivery) in the year was in line with previous years at £140.6m (2023/24 outturn was £140.7m).

Councillor Alam wished to place on record his thanks to Judith Badger, Strategic Director of Finance and Customer Services, Rob Mahon, Assistant Director of Financial Services and all officers and members for their hard work on the Council's finances throughout the year.

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 revenue outturn position for 2024/25.
2. Note the budgeted transfer to HRA reserves increased by £4.4m following the revenue and capital outturn positions.
3. Note the carry forward of the combined surplus schools balance of £2.3m in accordance with the Department for Education regulations.
4. Note the reserves position set out in paragraphs 2.52 to 2.57.
5. Note the capital outturn, funding position and programme variations as set out in paragraphs 2.58 to 2.91.
6. Approve the capital budget variations as detailed in section 2.79 to 2.82 of the report.
7. Note the position on CRSTS Revenue Grant as set out in paragraphs 2.92 to 2.94 and delegate the decision to allocate and spend the remaining grant to the Assistant Director Planning Regeneration and Transport in consultation with the Section 151 Officer and the Cabinet Member.

**24. ETHICAL PROCUREMENT POLICY**

Consideration was given to the report which presented the updated Ethical Procurement Policy, attached at Appendix 1 of the report, for approval. The report also asked Cabinet to formalise the support of the UK Steel Charter as the successor to the Sustainable British Steel Charter.

Ethical behaviour was at the core of the Council's procurement activity and the Council expected the suppliers it did business with to share similar values and ethical ethos in the way they delivered their services.

The Ethical Procurement Policy set out the range of measures and policy decisions / commitments that had been taken by the Council over the years to achieve this and drive ethical practice, with the aim to encompass this into one comprehensive policy. The Policy was first approved in January 2020, with at the time, a recommendation for the Policy to be reviewed on a 3-yearly cycle. Following a review in 2024 the Policy was updated via an officer decision taken on 9 February 2024 at which point it was agreed to review the Policy annually and this report summarises the updates following a review of the Policy in 2025.

Paragraph 2.1 of the report detailed the key changes proposed to the Policy. This included changes to the year and amount of expenditure along with procurement legislation changes. Changes were made to paragraph 4 of the Policy as a result of a review of the commitments/decisions taken. These were set out in paragraph 2.1.3 of the report.

In carrying out the review for 2025, a check was undertaken to confirm the Council's name appeared on the relevant websites where external commitments had been made. This exercise identified that the Charter for Sustainable British Steel (committed to in October 2015) had been rebranded and relaunched to the UK Steel Charter, and as a result Rotherham Council were no longer listed as a signatory. The aims and objectives of the new UK Steel Charter were set out in paragraph 2.3 of the report.

The UK Steel Charter was promoted by Make UK who had provided a guidance document that set out nine steps that could be undertaken to support the agenda. These were similar to the steps for consideration as part of the original 2015 motion, which reaffirmed the position that this was not a new consideration, and the original intentions still applied. The Council had continued to act in a manner to support the commitment. This action would now see this support formalised with the Council being listed as a signatory to the successor scheme.

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

**Resolved:**

That Cabinet:

1. Formalise the support of the UK Steel Charter as the successor to the Sustainable British Steel Charter.
2. Approve the updated Ethical Procurement Policy for 2025.

**25. FITZWILLIAM ROAD PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDER**

Consideration was given to the report which outlined the consultation on the Fitzwilliam Road Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) and the responses. The report recommended the renewal of the PSPO currently in place for a further period of 3 years from July 2025. Over half of the respondents to the consultation confirmed that they had confidence in the effectiveness of a future Order, (as set out in question 3 in Appendix 3), whilst providing some challenge around the ability of the Police and Council to enforce the Order. As a result of this feedback, this report also outlined further steps to provide additional assurance and oversight on the application of the tools by both the Police and Council, subject to the renewal of the Order.

The current Fitzwilliam Road PSPO was renewed in June 2022 for a period of three years and had the following conditions attached to it:

1. The consumption of alcohol and/or the possession of an open container containing or purporting to contain alcohol in a public place other than at those places identified.
2. Behaving in such a way or using language that causes, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to another person.
3. Causing noise that is likely to have a detrimental impact on a person(s) quality of life.
4. Each relevant person must ensure that the wheelie bin(s) for their property or waste presented for collection in a manner specified for their property is not situated outside the boundary of their premises other than between 6pm on the day before collection is due, and 9pm on the day of collection unless the wheelie bin is in an identifiable bin storage area or yard for wheelie bins of their property

It was proposed that the above conditions remained in place with a slight amendment to condition one which added clarity to the specific times it would be enforced.

Since the designation of the PSPO on the Fitzwilliam Road, complaints of Anti-Social Behaviour had slowly been on the rise and peaked in 2024 with numerous reports of drinking in the pocket parks and Eldon Road playing field. This showed that the condition regarding drinking alcohol in open spaces in the current PSPO was still relevant to a future PSPO.

Section 4 of the report set out the consultation details. Following the approval of the Officer Decision to proceed with the consultation process, an engagement programme was implemented between 22 April 2025 to 20 May 2025. This was then extended by three further days to allow additional responses. The main method of engagement was through surveys and internet-driven communication, using information published

on the Council's website where users were invited to complete an online survey. Hard copy questionnaires were also made available on request, and hand-delivered to businesses in order to promote wide responses. A completed activity tracker which outlined the steps taken to gather responses was attached at Appendix 4.

In accordance with statutory guidelines detailed under Section 72, Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, the Council had to undertake consultation with the affected parties. As part of this process, the Council consulted directly with local residents and statutory consultees which included the Chief Inspector of Rotherham Neighbourhood Policing. An email of support and comment can be found in Appendix 5. The Council also notified all Ward Councillors and Parish Councils via a written briefing and an offer of meetings/workshops should it be required. The consultation was also discussed in Community Action Partnership (CAP) meetings during the consultation period.

Throughout the consultation the Council received a total of 58 responses from members of the public or businesses. Appendix 3 provided a summary of the responses received via the website and a further six forms were received in paper format. A return of only 16% of respondents felt that the current Order had been effective in reducing Anti-Social Behaviour in the area. However 47% felt that a future Order might assist in the same regard. This showed that both the Council and the Police had a challenge to address the perception of visibility and achieve formal outcomes from the order. This would give further confidence and reassurance to the public around tackling ASB in Eastwood. This was further assessed in the risks and mitigation section of this report.

**Resolved:**

The Cabinet approve the renewal of the Fitzwilliam Road Order (Appendix 1) for a period of three years upon expiry of the current Order in July 2025.

**26. HOUSING DELIVERY PROGRAMME REPORT 2025-26 UPDATE**

Consideration was given to the report which provided the regular six-monthly update to Cabinet, setting out the latest developments and plans for the Council's Housing Delivery Programme ('the Programme'). The report also sought Cabinet approval to ensure the continued delivery of this Programme which recently reached the milestone of the 680th new Council home delivered since 2018. Contained within the report were proposed changes to the programme, which were designed to manage overall costs and secure the delivery of 1,000 new Council homes by Summer 2027.

The report covered the period from 1 December 2024 to 31 May 2025 and in that time a total of 57 new homes had been delivered. In the same period work had continued to progress on the Council's own new-build

programme with construction starting on 14 new Council homes across three sites in West Melton and Swinton, and an application for planning permission submitted for 28 new homes in Wath. A photographic summary of delivery was attached at Appendix 3. Paragraphs 2.5 to 2.8 provided an overview of the number of homes delivered to the end of May 2025 and the proposed future delivery for each workstream of the programme to achieve 1,005 new Council homes by mid-2027.

The need for this continued delivery programme was evidenced by the more than 7,000 households on the Council's housing register. The Council's ability to meet this demand continued to be eroded by the Right to Buy, which had seen 1,095 council homes sold between January 2018 and the end of May 2025.

The delivery of new build homes on council-owned sites remained the area of the programme with the greatest risk and therefore had been subject to the greatest amount of overprogramming. The current programme included a total of circa 218 homes yet to be delivered for this workstream. As part of the Council's ongoing approach to programme and risk management, all projects in this workstream not already in build had been re-assessed in terms of technical deliverability, affordability and ability to contribute to the 1,000 homes target. This had led to the identification of 6 schemes (55 homes) for removal from the programme. There were numerous contributing factors, including escalating costs and unforeseen abnormal costs linked to topography, ground conditions and infrastructure, which made project delivery unviable and unaffordable for the Council. Regulatory changes, such as Building Regulations and the implementation of Bio-Diversity Net Gain, had added further to the cost of development.

An additional 20 Council Build homes were now programmed to deliver post Summer 2027. These had therefore been removed from the 1000 new homes target and forecast as part of the future, post 1000 new homes programme. Work to bring forward these homes would continue and a start on site for the construction would be achieved in the current programme period. The final change to the Council Build workstream was the addition of five homes to be delivered via the conversion of an unused Neighbourhood Centre at Hurley Croft.

At the meeting the Cabinet Member advised of a correction required to the report. Table 3 at paragraph 2.20 and Table 4 at paragraph 2.21 of the report stated that Symonds Avenue was in Rotherham West ward when it was in Rawmarsh West ward.

The Cabinet Member referenced awards that had been won by the housing service and noted that quality of housing that was being provided.

## **Resolved**

That Cabinet:

1. Notes the continued progress made in delivering the Council's Housing Delivery Programme, including the delivery of 57 new homes in the period covered by this report, and the ongoing work to deliver 1,000 new Council homes by Summer 2027.
2. Approves the purchase of homes from any of the schemes identified in Exempt Appendix 2.
3. Approves the programme changes outlined in this report to facilitate the delivery of 1,000 new homes 'on time' (by Summer 2027) and 'on budget' (within the financial resources allocated to the Programme from the Housing Revenue Account). This includes the removal and addition of specific schemes as outlined in Section 2, paragraphs 2.10 to 2.20 of the report.
4. Approves the disposal of the four sites listed in Table 4, subject to Cabinet approval of Recommendation 3 (above), and following the usual Council disposal process. The receipts to be ringfenced to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Housing Delivery Programme.
5. Approves the appropriation of 19 Cranworth Road into the Housing Revenue Account, and its refurbishment for use as a Council home via the Market Acquisitions workstream (see Section 2, paragraph 2.19 and Section 6, paragraph 6.7 of the report).
6. Agrees to continue to receive an update on the housing development programme every six months.

## **27. DENMAN ROAD HOUSING DEVELOPMENT, WATH**

Consideration was given to the report which sought approval to develop the Council-owned Denman Road site in Wath. It was projected that the site would deliver an estimated 18 new Council homes. Denman Road would be delivered as part of the 'Wath Small Sites' development, alongside Bushfield Road and Valley Drive. All three sites had previously been presented to and approved by Cabinet for inclusion as part of the Council's Housing Delivery Programme. Appendix 1 to the report showed the location of the 'Wath Small Sites', with the specific site requiring Cabinet approval coloured red, whilst the other two sites are outlined red.

Denman Road was a Council-owned land asset held in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The site was first approved for development by Cabinet in January 2023 as part of the 'Housing Development Programme Report –2023/24'. The most recent version of the Programme was approved by Cabinet in February 2025.

The site was allocated for residential housing in the Local Plan and had previously housed blocks of flats that were demolished as part of clearances under the Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder. All demolition works were completed by 2009. An indicative capacity layout had been produced for 18 dwellings. This was only an estimate and could reduce or increase, dependant on the final scheme design and planning decision. The site was currently vacant and attracted fly tipping.

Procurement activity for the construction phase was progressing in parallel with the report, alongside the contractor working through designs. A planning application had been submitted on 2 April 2025 to ensure the programme would not be delayed. This would enable timely delivery should the proposals in the report be approved. Subject to Cabinet approval, the aim was to secure planning permission by Autumn 2025. The latest forecast for construction activity was to start on site by Autumn 2025, with completion targeted for the new homes by the end of 2026. The wider Wath Small Sites project was due for final completion by December 2026.

**Resolved:**

That Cabinet:

1. Approve development of the Denman Road site, to build an estimated 18 new Council homes, with the final number subject to planning permission and further design work.
2. Delegate authority to the Interim Assistant Director of Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing, to optimise design of the sites according to strategic need, site constraints, and any requirements resulting from both stakeholder feedback and the planning application process.

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

Consideration was given to the report which detailed the outcomes of the 2024/25 Tenant Satisfaction Measures survey. Overall satisfaction stood at 78.2% (+1.3% from last year). A key area of progress was tenant satisfaction with repairs: overall satisfaction had increased to 78.6% (a 4.5 percentage point rise), and satisfaction with the time taken to complete the most recent repair had improved to 77.6% (up by 5.5 percentage points) compared with 2023/24.

All tenant perception measures were above the national median, with 10 out of 12 falling within or just outside the upper quartile based on 2023/24 data published by the Regulator of Social Housing. However, there remained areas requiring further improvement, particularly in satisfaction with complaints handling, the condition of communal areas, and anti-

social behaviour (ASB) management, where scores had declined slightly from the previous year.

A number of actions had already been taken to address the areas that required improvement, with further improvements planned for 2025/26. Key initiatives included:

- The launch of a tenant-led Learning from Complaints Panel.
- A refreshed ASB policy and improvement plan.
- An additional £135,000 investment in caretaking services.
- Renewed focus on tackling ASB, with eviction proceedings already initiated against two persistent perpetrators in the current financial year (2025/26).
- The ten council-reported TSMs remained strong. Repairs performance was a particular strength, mirroring the positive perception survey results:
  - 96.7% of non-emergency repairs were completed within target timescales (15 percentage points above the national median).
  - 98.6% of emergency repairs were completed within target (3.5 percentage points above the national median).

In addition, the Council achieved full compliance on all health and safety-related measures, including fire, asbestos, lifts, and water safety. Notably, there had been significant progress on the Decent Homes Standard: the proportion of non-decent homes had reduced from 12.0% to 7.2% year-on-year. This improvement was expected to continue following the successful launch of the Stock Condition Survey programme in April 2025.

**Resolved:**

That Cabinet:

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

**29. COUNCIL PLAN 2022-2025 AND YEAR AHEAD DELIVERY PLAN PROGRESS UPDATE 2024-25**

Consideration was given to the report which presented the final progress update on the Council Plan 2022-25, attached at Appendix 1 to the report. This included performance measures for Quarter 4 (January to March 2025) and progress updates on the Year Ahead Delivery Plan actions up to 31 May 2025.

As of 31 May 2025, the activities within the Year Ahead Delivery Plan were rated as follows:

- 77% (77) complete
- 4% (4) are delayed by less than 3 months
- 19% (19) will not be met within 3 months of original target date.

The Leader explained that the activity to “identify suitable site(s) to develop low carbon energy generation plans and complete a feasibility study for the delivery of the sites as part of the Council’s commitment to deliver a renewable energy project” would not be met as there were no council sites considered suitable.

Cabinet Members were then invited to detail the achievements related to their portfolios as summarised below:

Councillor Baker-Rogers looked forward to the ambitions set out in the 2025-26 Year Ahead Delivery Plan, including targets relating to NHS Health Checks and setting a smoking quit date. There was a commitment to improving health provision in the town centre and the Castle View Day Service was due to be completed in March 2026.

Councillor Alam highlighted the investment in CCTV and the commencement of two new three year Public Space Protection Orders. 167 anti-social behaviour community protection notices had been issued. In relation to Human Resources matters, Councillor Alam noted that the work experience offer had been refreshed and improvements had been delivered following the Employee Opinion Survey in 2023. Sickness absence had declined but was still a work in progress.

Councillor Beresford had provided a detailed update as part of the Housing Delivery Programme report earlier on the agenda. She did however note the work ongoing on Selective Licensing and highlighted the extended consultation that was currently taking place.

Councillor Williams noted the implementation of new pedestrian crossings at Cortonwood and Swallownest in early 2025. Construction had begun on the Riverside Gardens and Corporate Street public realms works. Transport infrastructure investment continued, including the Parkway Widening scheme, which had been completed and highways maintenance through the £24m to 2024 Roads Programme.

Councillor Marshall stated that the cultural and community programme continued to thrive. Attendance at events had risen by 13.3% and helped boost customer satisfaction with culture, sport and tourism services to 97%. The Reytons homecoming gig and the Children’s Capital of Culture initiative had been key highlights. Construction had begun on a new water splash facility in Clifton Park and the Destination Management Plan had been published in July 2024. Councillor Marshall highlighted that at least 121 16 to 25 years old had been recruited as paid Trainee Young Producers whilst a further 217 young people had achieved Arts Awards. Green Flag accreditation had been awarded to four parks in Rotherham in

2024. Work had been delayed on the new café facilities at Rother Valley Country Park and Thrybergh Country Park but progress had been made. Progress had also been made on flood alleviation schemes.

Councillor Cusworth noted the launch of the baby packs scheme and the increase in the number of families registered with a Family Hub. Further, 175 support sessions had been delivered to enhance the under 5's offer and £1.586 million worth of food vouchers had been provided to eligible children in the school holidays. The Eric Manns building was to be turned into a new hub for young people with SEND. Councillor Cusworth also detailed the achievements in relation to neighbourhoods and member development.

The report was considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB), who advised that the recommendations be supported. OSMB had requested that the report be shorter and more accessible in future. They had also asked for an appendix that specifically highlighted the activities that were off target. The Leader agreed to take this matters into consideration.

**Resolved:**

That Cabinet:

1. Note the overall position in relation to the Year Ahead Delivery Plan activities.
2. Note the Quarter 4 data for the Council Plan performance measures.
3. Note that the Council has been using a new Council Plan from June 2025 with this being the final report for the 2022-25 Council Plan.

**30. LAND ACQUISITION FOR FLOOD ALLEVIATION SCHEMES**

Consideration was given to the report which sought approval to acquire five parcels of land in third party ownership which were required to deliver the Whiston Brook Flood Alleviation Scheme at Whiston and one parcel of land in third party ownership to deliver the Eels Mire Dike Flood Alleviation Scheme at Laughton Common. The Council, acting as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), had a duty under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 to reduce flood risk to residents of Rotherham. Since 2020 the Council's Flood Alleviation Team had been developing six priority flood alleviation schemes to a "shovel ready" status and delivering the construction of funded schemes.

Whiston Brook was a tributary of the River Rother and flowed through the centre of Whiston. The brook posed a significant flood risk to the village which had been affected by recurring flood events. Most recently, the village was significantly affected by flooding in October 2023. The severity of these floods was worsened by the additional surface water runoff and

the strain on the existing drainage systems within Whiston. The Council was proposing to provide better flood protection to Whiston village. The flood protection was to protect against overflowing riverbanks (fluvial flooding) and overwhelmed drainage systems (pluvial flooding) caused by heavy rainfall. Paragraphs 2.2.1 to 2.2.5 provided details on the land parcels required for the Whiston Brook Flood Alleviation Scheme.

A Flood Alleviation Scheme at Laughton Common, specifically focusing on Eel Mires Dike, was needed to reduce the risk of flooding. Flooding in Laughton Common, which was severely affected in 2019, has caused significant damage and disruption to homes, businesses and infrastructure. The scheme aimed to mitigate this risk by improving flood management measures. Paragraph 2.2.6 of the report provided details on the parcel of land required for this project. There would be additional land acquisitions and leases relating to the Eel Mires Dike Flood Alleviation Scheme, and the Council would bring forward a further report to detail the planned acquisitions for this project. There were over 20 landowners the Council was currently negotiating with at Laughton however there was a need to purchase this critical parcel of land as soon as possible as it was available and could be bought by others which would require the Council to start negotiations with the new landowners and could result in delays and or compulsory purchase orders.

**Resolved:**

That Cabinet:

1. Approve the acquisition of approximately 20.04 acres from land title SYK345249 together with associated costs.
2. Approve the acquisition of approximately 15.12 acres from land title SYK648291 together with associated costs.
3. Approve the acquisition of approximately 0.17 acres from land title SYK229346 together with associated costs.
4. Approve the acquisition of approximately 0.12 acres from land title SYK129461 together with associated costs.
5. Approve the lease of approximately 1.11 acres from land title SYK550557 together with associated costs.
6. Approve the acquisition of approximately 12.02 acres from land title SYK156703.

**31. EFFINGHAM STREET PUBLIC REALM**

Consideration was given to the report which provided Cabinet with an update on the progress of the Council's Town Centre public realm programme and sought approval to allocate additional funding from the

Town Centre Investment Fund (TCIF) to the existing budget and implement public realm improvements on Effingham Street.

In June 2021 Cabinet approved the expansion and phasing of the public realm programme. With College Street, Frederick Street & Bridgegate underway at this point, the remainder of the original proposed programme was labelled as a second phase.

The proposed designs for the Effingham Street public realm work were detailed in Appendix 1. The design was split into two sections:

- Upper Section (Appendix 1a): running from Hastings Clock to the old Boots building.
- Lower Section (Appendix 1b): running from Market Square to the Camelia sculpture.

Works proposed as part of the scheme included:

- Replacement and upgrade of old and tired surface materials.
- Improvements and upgrade to lighting to help improve safety and CCTV functionality.
- Improved layout of market stalls along Effingham Street to provide additional space for traders and space to expand the offer to other street markets including continental food markets.
- Feature lighting to add interest to the Streetscene.
- Upgrading of street furniture.
- Infrastructure works to provide new power supplies for market stalls and events.

The report requested the allocation of additional funding (identified in the exempt Appendix 2) toward the implementation of the Effingham Street improvements and completion of the Town Centre public realm programme as set out in 2019.

**Resolved:**

That Cabinet approve:

1. Reallocation of funding identified in the exempt Appendix 2 from Town Centre Investment Fund (TCIF) to the proposed Effingham Street public realm improvements.
2. The delivery of the Effingham Street public realm improvements project as detailed at Appendix 1 and the budget as detailed at exempt Appendix 2.

## 32. HEALTH HUB DEVELOPMENT

Consideration was given to the report which sought approval to progress a proposal to refurbish 42-46 Effingham Street (the former Boots building) in Rotherham Town Centre for the purpose of developing a Town Centre health facility. The proposal was to develop the building in two phases, with the first phase being to secure the provision of a pharmacy within the facility and to support the pharmacy's required relocation.

The second phase would be to develop the wider building in collaboration with health care service providers to provide a building that was equipped to facilitate the delivery of multiple health services direct to the public. The proposal was to reallocate a portion of funding from the Town Centre Music Venue project, part of the Pathfinder programme, to fund the Phase 1 works and Phase 2 feasibility studies.

42-46 Effingham Street was a large property in a key, prominent Town Centre location, neighbouring the new Rotherham Markets and Central Library. There was a negative visual impact with the building remaining empty without activity that supported and added to a vibrant Town Centre. While the Council had not actively marketed the building, there had been no approaches from the private sector to let or redevelop the building.

Rotherham Town Centre was currently limited in its provision of health care services and the Council had been working in partnership with health service partners to consider how that provision might be increased. This project would see the first step in improving the provision of health services for the Town Centre and surrounding communities. A phased approach to development was proposed with the intention of maximising available funding and the opportunity presented by the estate requirements of partners. The report sought approval to proceed with the implementation of the first phase and development of the feasibility of the later phase(s).

Feasibility works would be undertaken to RIBA Stage 4 following professional advice from the Building Design team and a proposed budget for this was outlined in exempt Appendix 2. This would provide the full suite of feasibility works including initial designs and cost analysis. It was requested that this funding be allocated from the Pathfinder funding. The timeline for the project was set out in section 5 of the report.

Councillor Baker-Rogers was fully supportive of the project as the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care.

The proposals were subjected to pre-decision scrutiny at the Health Select Commission on 26 June 2025. They fully supported the recommendations and asked that the proposals developed upon the conclusion of Phase 2 return to the Health Select Commission for pre-decision scrutiny.

**Resolved:**

That Cabinet:

1. Approve delivery of Phase 1 of the Town Centre Health Hub project within the scope and budget as detailed at Appendix 1 and Exempt Appendix 2.
2. Approve the allocation of funding from the Pathfinder programme to progress to final design and implementation of Phase 1 and feasibility work for Phase 2.
3. Note the intentions for Phase 2 of the Town Centre Health Hub and approve the commencement of negotiations with interested parties for the provision of General Practice or other walk-in health services.
4. Note the intentions for the Town Centre Music Venue project.

**33. MAINLINE STATION AND STRATEGIC ACQUISITION**

Consideration was given to the report which presented the Rotherham Gateway Station Masterplan for endorsement. The Council was working with partners to promote the development of Rotherham Gateway Station. The mainline and tram-train station on Forge Way in the Parkgate area would be a catalyst for growth, improving local, regional, and national rail connectivity for all communities and businesses across the Borough, breaking down barriers, driving investment, attracting businesses, creating employment and supporting the development of high-quality new homes.

Rotherham Council secured £31.6m from the Town Deal programme (now Pathfinder) in June 2021. £10 million from the funding was allocated to pursue land acquisition for the proposed Station at Forge Way and for master planning the wider area of opportunity. The Council appointed Weston Williamson and Partners to prepare a Masterplan for the station in August 2022. London and Continental Railways (LCR) were appointed to assist officers in managing the creation of the Masterplan. The aim of the plan was to design the layout of the Station and tram-train interchange and determine land requirements for the scheme. It would also ensure good connectivity to the Town Centre and neighbouring communities such as Eastwood and take account of future opportunities such as the development of Bassingthorpe Farm.

Further Masterplan development explored how to maximise the benefit of the station investment and deliver a longer-term vision for the immediate site and wider regeneration opportunities. This provided a phase-by-phase approach and a twenty-year timescale for delivery. The completed Masterplan outlined the vision for the development of the station and the surrounding area and broke this down into phases, with a development potential totalling in the region of £134m.

In order to progress the implementation of the Masterplan, there was a requirement to proceed with the negotiation and acquisition of relevant land and property. The report sought approval to progress these negotiations and allocate capital funding. The report also sought a Resolution in Principle to investigate use of powers to acquire by Compulsory Purchase or through use of a Transport and Works Act Order. In the event that it was not possible to acquire any or all of the properties by agreement, and the investigation into the use of Compulsory purchase powers indicated an acceptable likelihood of success, a further report would be submitted to Cabinet seeking formal resolution to acquire the property interests through use of Compulsory Purchase or Transport and Works Act powers. Details regarding land acquisitions were set out in paragraph 2.7 of the report and exempt Appendix 2.

Paragraph 2.8 of the report set out the Station Business Centre – Phase 1 – additional project while paragraph 2.9 outlined the Effingham Street Active Travel Route – Phase 1 – additional project.

To progress the Masterplan, the Council proposed the preparation of a Programme Business Case covering the four Masterplan phases, the land acquisition and the priority projects coming out of the Masterplan. This would be a 'high-level', strategic Business Case that highlighted the priorities to SYMCA, with a view to securing development funding to further progress the projects through the Business Case gateways.

In February 2025, the Rotherham Gateway Station Outline Business Case (OBC) was submitted to SYMCA and the Department for Transport for assurance and approval to release £11.35 million for Full Business Case development, approval of which would lead to the delivery of the station. A decision on the OBC was due in the autumn of 2025.

Cabinet Members and Senior Officers were fully supportive of the proposals and looked forward to the opportunities for the Rotherham borough that would be forthcoming as a result of Rotherham Gateway Station.

**Resolved:**

That Cabinet:

1. Endorse the Rotherham Gateway Station (Mainline and Tram-Train) Masterplan, attached at Appendix 1.
2. Approve undertaking public engagement on the Masterplan in the autumn of 2025.

3. Delegate authority to the Strategic Director for Regeneration and Environment in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transport, Jobs and the Local Economy to prepare and submit a Strategic Programme Business Case for the Masterplan to South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA).
4. Authorise the Assistant Director of Property and Facilities Services to agree the acquisition of properties in exempt Appendix 2 in consultation with the Council's Section 151 Officer, Strategic Director for Regeneration & Environment, Cabinet Member for Transport, Jobs & the Local Economy and the Cabinet Member for Finance and Community Safety.
5. Approves the allocation of the Strategic Acquisitions Fund agreed at the March 2025 Budget Council to progress the acquisition of the sites as outlined in exempt Appendix 2, including potential holding costs that the Council may incur.
6. Grants a Resolution in Principle to investigate the use of powers, under a Compulsory Purchase Order or Transport and Works Act Order.

**34. 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.

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

**Resolved:-**

The next meeting of the Cabinet would be held on 15 September 2025, commencing at 10.00am.