

Health Select Commission (HSC) Chair's Briefing: for Overview and Scrutiny Management Board meeting on 10 December 2025

Items covered since the last meeting:

At the HSC meeting on 20 November 2025 the following items were considered:

1) **Draft Adult Social Care Mental Health Strategy 2026-29 (Pre-decision scrutiny)**

Members had the opportunity to scrutinise the draft Strategy. There were detailed discussions which considered the increased incidence of depression in Rotherham, improvements to transition pathways, approach to integration with housing, the voluntary and community sector and health partners, alignment with other Council Strategies, the role of the proposed Mental Health Partnership Board, support for under-represented minority groups, loneliness and isolation including demographic and geographical factors and considerations, male suicide rates and the Strategy's success measures.

The following recommendation was agreed during the meeting:

That the Health Select Commission:

1. Supported the recommendation to Cabinet to approve the publication of the Adult Social Care Mental Health Strategy 2026-2029.

Additional Select Commission actions included:

- Provision a copy of any delivery/action plan including any specific measurable targets or Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), against which progress would be assessed.
- Provision of mid-point update on the delivery of the 2026-2029 Strategy (likely to take place in mid to late 2027).
- Early involvement in consultation/co-production of the replacement Strategy when this iteration approaches conclusion.
- Contact between Rotherham Speak Up and Service in respect of Autism lived experience.
- Provision of detailed data that underpinned the headline loneliness statistics.
- Provision of specific figures in respect of male suicide rates in Rotherham compared with the national average.

2) **Rotherham Place Partners Winter Plan 2025-26**

This item is considered annually by HSC in relation to preparedness for Winter Pressures affecting Rotherham residents' health and wellbeing. Members scrutinised the Place

Partners Plan for 2025-26 and discussions centred on technicality of content and the need to increase accessibility for non subject experts, the expected impact of changes to the GP contract on Winter pressures, expected impact and mitigation for industrial action and sickness, ambulance response and handover targets, the impact of early flu peak, scenario testing and escalation processes, community pathways capacity and enablement services role in reducing discharge delays and dispensing delays.

Members made requests around the content of the presentation of the Place Partners Winter Plan in 2025-26 to improve accessibility and enhance understanding of key considerations, including risks and mitigations, and agreed to share details of research referred to by a HSC member which demonstrated links between mealtime changes and reductions in slips and trips in care settings with the ICB at their request.

Work programme 2025-26 updates:

- **Access to Contraception Review**

Following the final evidence gathering session in October 2025, the working group have formulated a number of draft recommendations and production of the draft report is underway.

- **Draft All Age Carers Strategy 2026-31 Workshop (Joint pre-decision scrutiny with the Improving Lives Select Commission)**

A workshop was held on 28 November 2025 for HSC and ILSC members to scrutinise the draft All Age Carers Strategy 2026-2031. Detailed discussions took place which considered challenges for young carers in relation to absence from education, challenges in the consistent identification of young carers, the long-term disadvantages and for young carers not identified and supported appropriately, inconsistencies in information sharing and carer-centric co-ordination across delivery partners such as health, including mental health, education and social care, systemic barriers and how to address these, financial support including limitations and means testing and development of an underpinning action plan and key performance indicators/success measures.

The following recommendations were made by Members who participated in the workshop:

That they:

1. Supported the recommendation to Cabinet to approve the publication of the All Age Carers Strategy 2026-2031, with the request that the following amendments are made:
 - a) Specific local data, where possible, is added to page 6 of the Strategy.
 - b) Under the 'Identification and Early Intervention' commitment on page 11, include specific reference to improving the partnership approach and associated processes to identifying young carers, given the acknowledged existing shortcomings and challenges in the context of the potential lifelong implications of failing to provide timely and appropriate support.

Additional Select Commission actions included:

- Consideration of the Action Plan associated with the delivery of the All Age Carers Strategy 2026-31 upon development, likely to take place early in the 2026/27 municipal year.

- Mid-point delivery update in relation to the All Age Carers Strategy 2026-31, expected at some point in the 2028/29 municipal year.
- Early involvement in consultation/co-production of the next All Age Carers Strategy when the 2026-31 strategy is refreshed/replaced.

- **SDEC (Same Day Emergency Care) Centre Site Visit**

The Governance Advisor is in the process of arranging a site visit for Health Select Commission Members to the SDEC at The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust (TRFT) ahead of receiving an update of its performance and impact since implementation being presented to the Commission in March 2026. The site visit is expected to take place in late January or February 2026.

Items to be discussed at the next meeting:

At the HSC meeting on 22 January 2026 the following items are due to be considered:

- Rotherham Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report and Strategic Plan 2025-28.
- Adult Social Care CQC Inspection.