

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Improving Lives Select Commission – 17 March 2026

Report Title

Community Recovery Fund – Children's Services

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

No

Executive Director Approving Submission of the Report

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

Report Author(s)

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Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

This report provides an update on the delivery of the Community Recovery Fund projects in Children and Young People's Services over the past 12 months.

Recommendations

That the Improving Lives Select Commission:

- 1) Consider the progress made against the delivery plan for the Community Recovery Fund.

List of Appendices Included

None

Background Papers

None

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

No

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Community Recovery Fund – Children’s Services

1. Background

- 1.1 The public disturbances of August 2024 were a series of violent, anti-immigration riots that took place from late July through early August 2024, with peak activity in the first week of August. This included public disturbance at Manvers, Rotherham, on 4th August 2024. The impact of this was far reaching, affecting those involved personally, professionally, as well as impacting on the local community and wider Rotherham community.
- 1.2 Following the public disorder, the Government announced the formation of a £15 million Community Recovery Fund (CRF). Rotherham was awarded funding from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) Community Recovery Fund programme to deliver a range of community cohesion activities and to support those communities impacted by the public disorder.
- 1.3 As part of this programme, 2 projects were endorsed and delivered through Children’s services. These were Building Bridges and Together for Tomorrow.
- 1.4 Eligible expenditure for the use of this fund included:
 - Immediate action to safeguard life or property.
 - To prevent suffering or severe inconvenience.
 - To reduce the risk of further disorder in the future.
 - To rebuild social trust and promote cohesion between communities.
- 1.5 The programme has been delivered by a range of organisations including direct delivery by Rotherham Council services, direct delivery by the voluntary sector, and a grants budget which will allow for further solutions to be co-created and co-designed with community groups and prioritised as part of an overall coordinated approach.
- 1.6 Children and Young People’s Services were awarded monies to fund two projects, which included:
 1. Together for Tomorrow
 2. Building Bridges Together

2. Key Issues

2.1 Together for Tomorrow

- 2.1.1 This project has been delivered by Rotherham School Improvement Service (RoSIS) in partnership with The Anti-Bullying Company and Forge CPD. It is a multi-faceted educational initiative designed to address the social and emotional impacts of the recent violent disorder in Rotherham.

- 2.1.2 Grounded in the Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education and Religious Education (RE) curriculum, the project has focused on rebuilding trust, enhancing resilience, and promoting cohesion across diverse communities. The project has supported schools to tailor their PSHE/RSE and RE curriculum to reflect the needs of their pupils to equip them with a sound understanding of risk and provide knowledge and skills necessary to make safe and informed decisions.
- 2.1.3 Online content has been built to support training, sharing of resources and best practice via Forge CPD, ensuring sustainability of the project and continuing success. It is expected that students will be equipped with conflict resolution skills and strategies to manage stress and emotional responses.
- 2.1.4 Schools have been encouraged to conduct community events and youth-focused initiatives that bridge cultural divides and build connections. This in turn emphasises the importance of civic engagement, community support, and shared responsibility in maintaining peaceful communities. A borough-wide celebration event and art installation in local schools/communities is being finalised to celebrate the end of the project.
- 2.1.5 To date 43% of schools have engaged with the project. All strands of the project are on track to deliver initial outputs with some more enhanced than others.
- 2.1.6 The Together for Tomorrow ambassadors training was very successful at Skills Street, where over 130 young people learned to recognise bullying, practise conflict resolution, and build empathy.
- 2.1.7 Check-ins with ambassadors have been held in December, January and the next one is planned for April 20th. These have been a great opportunity for ambassadors to connect and share good practice. Maltby Lily Hall ran a whole school 'Kindness Challenge' as well as mini assemblies. Rosehill Junior School have held regular Friday 'Community Day' which includes litter picks and a 'lost & found' school uniform initiative.
- 2.1.8 Safer Internet Day resources have been created and shared for ambassadors to deliver online safety assemblies in their schools. Ambassadors are now rolling out their training in school to their peers.
- 2.2 **Building Bridges Together**
- 2.2.1 The funding enabled recruitment of a small, dedicated team of Outreach and Engagement Workers to develop a set of tools and resources to work with young people in the community via an established network of young people's groups, both local authority and led by the voluntary, community and faith sector (VCFS), plus street-based work where needed.
- 2.2.2 The aim of the project was to deliver targeted engagement activities with young people, particularly those in Rotherham's least diverse communities, aimed at strengthening community cohesion following the disorder.

- 2.2.3 The team has developed and delivered a structured programme of community cohesion engagement with young people across priority areas. Early work focused on establishing the project foundations and resources with initial consultation activities taking place with young people.
- 2.2.4 Delivery has taken place through a combination of outreach sessions, youth-led discussions, and collaborative projects, creating safe spaces for young people to reflect on the events, explore underlying tensions, and build constructive relationships. These activities have supported early intervention by addressing feelings of fear, frustration, and disconnection but have also played a significant role in rebuilding trust, promoting shared understanding, and fostering a sense of belonging within communities.
- 2.2.5 As of 16th February 2026, the project has delivered 15 workshops, engaging 214 young people. Seven events have been attended during this time, including but not exclusive to Maltby Community Festival, Rotherham Show, and Rotherham Christmas Light Switch On, engaging 124 young people. Detached sessions ran in Maltby and Swinton between August and December 2025, where 43 young people were engaged with.
- 2.2.6 118 young people completed workshop feedback, indicating strong positive outcomes across key cohesion, extremism-awareness, and hate-crime indicators. Most participants agreed that people from different backgrounds can live together peacefully (86 agreeing or strongly agreeing), and the majority reported an increased understanding of extremist narratives (78) and greater confidence in responding to extremist views (81).
- 2.2.7 Awareness of hate crime was also significantly strengthened, with 98 young people stating they better understood what hate crime is and 95 feeling more confident about where to seek help or report incidents.
- 2.2.8 Detached and outreach sessions further reinforced these themes: of the 21 young people who provided feedback, 13 felt more aware of extremist narratives, 12 better understood hate crime and available support, and 8 felt more informed about misinformation and disinformation.
- 2.2.9 Overall, the workshops and outreach activity demonstrate clear, measurable impact in improving community cohesion, increasing resilience to extremist influences, and enhancing knowledge of hate crime and reporting pathways among young people.
- 2.2.10 A celebration event is scheduled before the end of the programme, bringing together groups involved in the project to participate in sports, art, and dance activities designed to strengthen community cohesion. This event also forms a key part of the project's legacy work by showcasing the achievements of participating groups, fostering ongoing connections, and reinforcing learning from the workshops.
- 2.2.11 Legacy activity is further supported through group leaders who attended sessions to enable future delivery, the distribution of handouts to extend

awareness on hate crime, misinformation, and support pathways, and the creation of photographic documentation and a case study to evidence impact and capture key learning for sustained future use.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

3.1 Not applicable.

4. Consultation on proposal

4.1 Not applicable.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

5.1 Not applicable.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

6.1 There are no direct financial or procurement implications

7. Legal Advice and Implications

7.1 There are no direct legal implications in this report.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

8.1 There are no direct HR implications.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 There are no direct implications.

11. Implications for CO₂ Emissions and Climate Change

11.1 There are no direct implications.

12. Implications for Partners

12.1 There are no direct implications.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 Not applicable.

Accountable Officer(s)

Kelly White, Service Director Family Help

Niall Devlin, Service Director Education and Inclusion

Approvals obtained on behalf of:

	Name	Date
The Strategic Director with responsibility for this report	Kelly White – Service Director Family Help – on behalf of: Nicola Curley, Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services	27/02/26
Consultation undertaken with the relevant Cabinet Member	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children and Young People - Councillor Cusworth	04/03/26

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