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24th April 2026

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Dear T

Council Meeting – Wednesday 22nd April 2026

Thank you for your question to Council on Wednesday 22nd April 2026. I have set out your question and my response below.

What action, if any, did you take as Leader of RMBC in response to this statement in Section 6 of the RMBC Briefing Note re D2 Evidenced dishonesty dated 16.12.20

“The council has never explained how the decision was reached to not distribute the publication *Voices Of Despair, Voices Of Hope.*”

I was assured that the reasons behind the decision had been explained.

The Council has explained on several occasions to one of the co-authors of “Voices of Despair, Voices of Hope” who was also the author of the document you refer to in your question, how the decision was taken to not distribute the publication. There have been numerous Freedom of Information requests (that are in the public domain) which cover this subject.

The decision not to distribute ‘*Voices Of Despair, Voices Of Hope.*’ was made following a review by Council officers. They also received supporting information from an external expert to aid their decision making. Senior officers then recommended to government-appointed Commissioners who were responsible for the Council at that time that the publication should not be distributed. Following this decision one of the co-authors of the publication was informed of the decision and how this decision was reached.

Yours sincerely



**Councillor Chris Read
Leader of Rotherham Council**