

## PART A - Initial Equality Screening Assessment

As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality and diversity.

A **screening** process can help judge relevance and provide a record of both the process and decision. Screening should be a short, sharp exercise that determines relevance for all new and revised strategies, policies, services and functions.

Completed at the earliest opportunity it will help to determine:

- the relevance of proposals and decisions to equality and diversity
- whether or not equality and diversity is being/has already been considered, and
- whether or not it is necessary to carry out an Equality Analysis (Part B).

Further information is available in the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance – see page 9.

### 1. Title

**Title:** Neighbourhood Leadership Strategy

**Directorate:** Policy, Strategy and Engagement

**Service area:** Neighbourhoods

**Lead person:** Martin Hughes

**Contact:**  
[martin.hughes@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:martin.hughes@rotherham.gov.uk)

Is this a:

**Strategy / Policy**
     
  **Service / Function**
     
  **Other**

**If other, please specify**

### 2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening

the new Neighbourhood Leadership Strategy. This replaces the previous Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy which expired in 2025.

The new strategy runs for six years to include the 2032 local elections and is intended to be flexible, supporting agility amongst members and officers.

It deals specifically with the role of ward councillors as neighbourhood leaders, building on the strong foundations which have been delivered over the last seven years. The strategy sets out new aspirations for ward councillors to play an enhanced role in bringing residents closer to council services, enabling more

responsive and locally impactful delivery. This aligns with local, regional and national policy ambition to create stronger neighbourhood working.

A complementary strategy (the new Thriving Neighbourhood Strategy) will be presented to cabinet in December 2026. This will deal with broader issues of neighbourhood working, including how we work with external partners, developing direct strategies and plans which impact upon residents.

### 3. Relevance to equality and diversity

All the Council's strategies/policies, services/functions affect service users, employees or the wider community – borough wide or more local. These will also have a greater/lesser relevance to equality and diversity.

The following questions will help you to identify how relevant your proposals are.

When considering these questions think about age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, civil partnerships and marriage, pregnancy and maternity and other socio-economic groups e.g. parents, single parents and guardians, carers, looked after children, unemployed and people on low incomes, ex-offenders, victims of domestic violence, homeless people etc.

Questions	Yes	No
Could the proposal have implications regarding the accessibility of services to the whole or wider community?	X	
Could the proposal affect service users?	X	
Has there been or is there likely to be an impact on an individual or group with protected characteristics?		X
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns regarding the proposal?		X
Could the proposal affect how the Council's services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom?		X
Could the proposal affect the Council's workforce or employment practices?		X

If you have answered no to all the questions above, please explain the reason

If you have answered **no** to **all** the questions above please complete **sections 5 and 6**.

If you have answered **yes** to any of the above please complete **section 4**.

#### 4. Considering the impact on equality and diversity

If you have not already done so, the impact on equality and diversity should be considered within your proposals before decisions are made.

Considering equality and diversity will help to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and take active steps to create a discrimination free society by meeting a group or individual's needs and encouraging participation.

Please provide specific details for all three areas below using the prompts for guidance and complete an Equality Analysis (Part B).

##### **How have you considered equality and diversity?**

The strategy is an evolution from the previous Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy (2018-2025), providing an opportunity to revisit previous equality assessments and ensuring alignment with the new Inclusion Strategy.

The strategy has been designed specifically to deliver against the Inclusion Strategy themes of Working Together and Responsive Services, supporting councillors to play an enhanced role in the coproduction of services and ensuring that services are available and adaptive to a broader cohort of residents and communities.

##### **Key findings**

The Equality Screening Assessment produced in support of the precursor to this strategy (The Thriving Neighbourhood Strategy Refresh, November 2022) identified that "*Whilst there were some processes in place to involve and engage with communities with protected characteristics (through ward planning, specific issue-based conversations and support local community organisations) it was neither consistent, recorded or measured.*"

In reviewing the activities supporting equalities in relation to the production of this strategy, it is noted that significant progress has been made in and driving greater consistency and depth in the approach. The delivery of the 2018-2025 Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy and the ongoing commitment embedded in this strategy (2026-2031) are embodied through the following activities.

**Ward Priorities and Plans** – Each ward and councillor is supported within ward profiles which provide demographic and local service data to inform ward priorities. This includes consideration of issues of diversity and inclusion, including groups with protected characteristics, ensuring that they are considered and have an active role their neighbourhoods and decision making.

**Ward Budgets** - Each councillor is provided with specific devolved budgets to support their activities. Neighbourhood Coordinators support members, to ensure that equality is given full consideration of diversity is included in the allocation of ward budgets.

**Ongoing Engagement** – Neighbourhood Coordinators work closely with local VCS to ensure there are ongoing mechanisms for communities with protected characteristics to have conversations with councillors and service providers to inform the delivery of

accessible and responsive services that meet diverse needs.

**Actions**

As work commences on the Thriving Neighbourhood Strategy, there will be further engagement (with residents and partners) which will provide additional opportunities to assess equalities performance. This will ensure that further mitigations are considered and can inform the implementation of the Neighbourhood Leadership Strategy.

Given that this is part of a suite of strategies and that the Thriving Neighbourhood Strategy, will have a more direct focus on the needs of residents and specific communities, it is suggested that a single Equalities Assessment (Part B) is completed to accompany the Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy in December 2026.

Within the strategy Action Area 4 commits ‘Ongoing Support and Leadership Development’. It is proposed that this will include on going support for all members to increased their understanding and practice in terms of diverse. This will be a critical component of a role as ‘Respectful Representatives’ as a critical part of them being Neighbourhood Leaders.

Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	1 <sup>st</sup> September 2026
Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	11 <sup>th</sup> November 2026
Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title):	Martin Hughes Head of Neighbourhoods

**5. Governance, ownership and approval**

Please state here who has approved the actions and outcomes of the screening:

Name	Job title	Date
Chris Paddock	Interim Director Policy Strategy and Engagement	4 <sup>th</sup> June 2026

**6. Publishing**

This screening document will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given.

If this screening relates to a **Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision** a copy of the completed document should be attached as an appendix and published alongside the relevant report.

A copy of **all** screenings should also be sent to [equality@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:equality@rotherham.gov.uk) For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file and also published on the Council’s Equality and Diversity Internet page.

<b>Date screening completed</b>	04/06/26
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<b>Report title and date</b>	Neighbourhood Leadership Strategy  4 <sup>th</sup> June 2026
<b>If relates to a Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision – report date and date sent for publication</b>	Scheduled Report date – 6 <sup>th</sup> July 2026  Scheduled date for publication – 22 <sup>nd</sup> June 2026
<b>Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement</b> <a href="mailto:equality@rotherham.gov.uk">equality@rotherham.gov.uk</a>	4 <sup>th</sup> June 2026