

**Councillor Saghir Alam – Cabinet Member for Finance and
Community Safety**

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Ref	Direct Line:	Please Ask For
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21st September 2026

Councillor Michael Bennett-Sylvester
Elected Member

Via email: michael.sylvester@rotherham.gov.uk

Dear Cllr Bennett-Sylvester

Council Meeting – 9th September 2026

Thank you for your question raised at the Council meeting on Wednesday 9th September. I have set out your question and my response below.

Thank you for your written response to my question on bailiff usage at last full council. Can you please clarify were the 476 cases of vulnerability mentioned identified by enforcement agents or Rotherham Council officers?

In your supplementary, you asked why Enforcement Agents were identifying cases of vulnerability and why this had not been picked up earlier. He also asked the Council to review its approach and look at places like Manchester, Preston and Newcastle who operated different models for vulnerable residents.

The original question raised related specifically to cases referred to enforcement agents and how many of these referrals had resulted in visits. Cases are escalated to enforcement agents where the customer fails to engage with the Council following the obtaining of a liability order against them.

Vulnerable customers are identified by council officers at all stages of the recovery process. These are dealt with in accordance with the Council's Corporate Debt Policy which makes clear that the Council will support vulnerable people and businesses.

Where vulnerability is identified, officers in the team will take this into account when dealing with the customer, this could include, for example: -

- ensuring all appropriate discounts and reductions, including local council tax support, are in place,
- highlighting, potential, unclaimed state benefits that may be appropriate
- highlighting the financial support available through the crisis and resilience fund,
- signposting to independent debt advice,

- withdrawing court action and/or cancelling costs
- suspending case escalation for a limited period
- agreeing affordable payment arrangements
- escalating any safeguarding issues to the adult safeguarding team

These cases are dealt with on an individual basis and the appropriate actions taken to record any agreed outcomes. However, there is no single record we can interrogate that allows us to identify the specific cases.

The ability to identify vulnerable customers is a Cabinet Office requirement under a pilot data sharing project with His Majesty's Revenues and Customs which Rotherham, alongside Manchester City Council, are leading on nationally. This goes live in October 2026, therefore, a mechanism for how we can record, and report, any identified cases of vulnerability is currently being explored.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Yours sincerely



Cllr Saghir Alam OBE
Boston Castle Ward
Cabinet Member for Finance and Community Safety