IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION
Tuesday 20 October 2026

Present:- Councillor McKiernan (in the Chair); Councillors Adair, Beck, Bennett-Sylvester, C. Carter, Castledine-Dack, Garnett, Jackson, Jones, Rashid and Thorp.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Duncan, Lelliott, Taylor and Tinsley.

The following Cabinet Members, officers and partners were also in attendance:-

Councillor John Williams - Cabinet Member for Transport, Jobs and the Local Economy
Polly Hamilton – Service Director for Culture, Sport and Tourism
Rachel Stothard – Sport and Physical Activity Manager
Lucy Hudson – Head of Service, Transportation & Highways Design
Kristianne Thorogood – Governance Advisor
Barbel Gale – Governance Manager

The webcast of the Council Meeting can be viewed at:-
https://rotherham.public-i.tv/core/portal/home

20. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 1 SEPTEMBER 2026

Resolved:- That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 1 September 2026 be approved as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

21. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Bennett-Sylvester declared an interest in Minute No. 24 (Update on Playing Pitch Strategy Part 2) on the grounds that their employment involved work with the Yorkshire Sport Foundation, which had involvement in the provision of sports facilities discussed within the presentation.

22. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

The Chair advised that there were no members of the public or representatives of media organisations present at the meeting and there were no questions in respect of matters on the agenda.

23. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Chair advised that there were no items of business on the agenda that would require the exclusion of the press or public from the meeting.

24. UPDATE ON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY PART 2

At the Chair's invitation, Polly Hamilton, Service Director for Culture, Sport and Tourism (Service Director), introduced the presentation on the Playing Pitch Strategy Part 2 -Action Plan.

The Service Director explained to Members that Cabinet had adopted Part 1 of the Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) in April 2026, which had provided a comprehensive assessment of the current and future needs for outdoor sports provision across the borough. The Action Plan represented Part 2 of the PPS and built upon this evidence base by setting out how the Council intended to respond to the challenges and opportunities that had been identified in Part 1.

The Service Director commented that playing pitches and sports facilities delivered benefits that extended beyond sport and physical activity. They contributed to improvements in physical and mental wellbeing, addressed inequalities, created opportunities for children and young people, strengthened communities, and supported wider Council objectives relating to place-making, regeneration and community pride.

Members were informed that participation levels in a number of sports continued to increase, particularly amongst women and girls. Whilst this growth was welcomed, it was acknowledged that increasing demand had placed additional pressure on sports facilities across the borough, including those owned and managed by the Council, independent organisations, and voluntary and community sector partners.

The findings of Part 1 of the PPS had identified areas where increased capacity, investment and partnership working were required to meet both current and future demand. The Action Plan therefore set out a series of priority projects, highlighted opportunities to secure external funding, and established arrangements for collaborative working with key partners.

The Service Director emphasised that the Action Plan was not solely concerned with the development of facilities but also provided a strategic roadmap to protect existing provision, maximise the use of available assets, and support continued growth in participation. Members were advised that this approach would help ensure that future investment was targeted towards areas where it could deliver the greatest impact for residents.

The PPS represented a long-term plan to improve sports and recreational provision across the borough, designed to address identified challenges whilst capitalising on significant opportunities for future development.

Rachel Stothard, Sport and Physical Activity Manager (SPA Manager), delivered the presentation and highlighted the following key points to Members:-

Part 2 of the PPS was focused on delivery and implementation and the Action Plan set out how the Council and its partners intended to respond to the issues identified and work collectively to improve sporting facilities. The Action Plan was described as a practical roadmap that would guide investment decisions, funding applications and partnership activity over the next five years and beyond.

The findings of the Playing Pitch Strategy were outlined. Significant pressures had been identified across several sports, with youth football demand exceeding available capacity in many locations and some sites experiencing substantial levels of overplay. Cricket and rugby facilities were reported to be under increasing pressure. The PPS had identified a borough-wide shortfall of between 9 to 13.5 full-size 3G football pitches. Additional concerns included ageing ancillary facilities, poor quality changing accommodation and limited community access to some school-based facilities.

Members were advised that future pressures were expected to increase as a result of population growth, rising participation levels and growing demand from women and girls. It was emphasised that without investment, existing provision would become increasingly stretched.

The Action Plan was presented as a shared, partnership-led programme rather than a Council-only initiative. Members were advised that the Council's role would be to provide leadership, strategic direction and coordination, whilst delivery would depend upon partners contributing expertise, investment, facilities, land and local knowledge.

The importance of the adopted PPS and Action Plan in attracting external funding was highlighted. Members were informed that many funding organisations required an up-to-date evidence base before considering applications and that the existence of the PPS strengthened the Council's opportunities to secure investment from sporting governing bodies.

Particular attention was drawn to the continued growth of participation in women's and girls' sport. However, Members were advised that with this growth came additional demand for training and match facilities. The Action Plan therefore sought to ensure sufficient pitch capacity, appropriate changing facilities, safe environments and access to evening training opportunities in order to support and sustain participation growth in sport for women and girls.

Members heard that the Action Plan was structured around five key delivery themes:

- Addressing football overplay and capacity pressures at priority sites;
- Delivering a borough-wide 3G pitch portfolio programme to tackle shortages in artificial pitch provision;
- Responding to cricket growth and capacity issues at key club sites;

- Unlocking additional capacity through community use agreements with schools and academies; and
- Improving ancillary facilities, including changing rooms, toilets and pavilions.

It was noted that these priorities had been selected to target investment where it could deliver the greatest benefit in terms of participation and capacity.

Herringthorpe Playing Fields was identified as one of the most significant strategic opportunities within the borough. The site already functioned as an important sporting destination and had the potential to become a strategic hub capable of meeting current and future demand. The Action Plan proposed the development of a masterplan for the site, including consideration of its role within the proposed borough-wide 3G pitch network. Investment at Herringthorpe was expected to increase playing capacity, improve facilities, support multiple sports and attract external funding opportunities. Opportunities to strengthen links with the existing athletics provision at the site were also highlighted.

It was reported that not all improvements would require major capital investment. The PPS had identified significant spare capacity within school and academy facilities that remained unavailable for community use due to the absence of community use agreements. Members were informed that the Council would work alongside educational partners and the Yorkshire Sport Foundation to explore opportunities to remove barriers and provide wider community access. This was described as one of the quickest and most cost-effective means of increasing provision across the borough.

Many of the projects contained within the Action Plan would be dependent upon securing external funding rather than direct Council capital investment. The Council's primary role would be to provide leadership, coordination, strategic oversight and officer support, while funding opportunities would be pursued through organisations such as Sport England, the Football Foundation, Section 106 developer contributions and other external funding streams. Members were assured that any schemes requiring investment would be subject to separate business cases and governance processes before decisions were taken.

The risks associated with not implementing the Action Plan were outlined to Members. Overplayed pitches would continue to deteriorate, facility quality would decline and increasing participation demand would become progressively more difficult to accommodate. In addition, the borough could miss out on significant external funding opportunities. All of this would have the impact of reducing opportunities for Rotherham residents to participate in sport and physical activity.

In conclusion, the SPA Manager commented that the PPS Action Plan provided a clear and evidence-led framework for delivery. The programme

established priority projects, promoted a partnership-led approach, strengthened the borough's ability to attract external funding and focused resources on areas of greatest need. The overarching aim was to ensure that the borough had the facilities, capacity and partnerships required to support sport and physical activity into the future.

The Chair thanked officers for the presentation and invited questions from Members.

Councillor Thorp enquired how the Playing Pitch Strategy would interact with Planning and the Council's Local Plan to ensure that playing pitches were protected from future housing development. Concern was expressed that some sites had previously been the subject of planning applications for residential use and that increasing housing requirements could place further pressure on sites earmarked for sporting facilities.

The Service Director assured Members that teams across Planning, Green Spaces, and Sport and Leisure worked closely together via regular meetings to monitor projects and ensure a coordinated approach. It was noted that the PPS had been prepared in consultation with Planning officers and took into consideration growth projections up to 2040, which were aligned with the Local Plan. Members were advised that a range of measures were in place to support the protection of playing pitch sites.

The SPA Manager explained that the adopted PPS provided the Council with a significant mechanism for safeguarding such sites from inappropriate development. It was explained that Sport England was routinely consulted on planning applications affecting playing pitches and, where proposals could result in the loss of pitches, Sport England would typically object on the basis that the adopted PPS identified a need to protect and enhance playing pitch provision.

Councillor Jones referred to a historic development proposal within their ward which had been intended to deliver a range of community facilities and amenities. Councillor Jones explained that significant opposition from local residents had resulted in numerous additional surveys, assessments and consultations being requested. The cumulative effect of these requirements had delayed the project to such an extent that it became financially unviable to deliver.

Councillor Jones sought assurance that, as the Council progressed the PPS and considered future investment in new sites and facilities, appropriate measures would be in place to prevent similar circumstances. In particular, Councillor Jones expressed concern that prolonged consultation processes, objections or legal challenges could result in substantial expenditure for the Council with the risk that projects may not be delivered.

The SPA Manager advised that, whilst they could not comment directly on issues with previous schemes, they considered that the Council was now

in a significantly stronger position. Current approaches placed greater emphasis on meaningful engagement with residents at an earlier stage, enabling concerns to be identified and addressed more effectively throughout the development process.

The SPA Manager further advised that as a lot of the funding being discussed for future projects was likely to come from external funding bodies, these bodies typically undertook rigorous due diligence to ensure that proposed developments were deliverable and capable of progressing successfully.

The Chair asked whether there were any geographical areas within the borough where access to facilities remained limited, and enquired how would the Action Plan address those inequalities?

The SPA Manager commented that there were currently inequalities in access to sports facilities across the Borough. It was noted that some northern areas had limited facilities, while some southern areas faced issues relating to access. Members were advised that work was ongoing to assess these inequalities and prioritise interventions that would deliver the greatest benefits and outcomes.

The Service Director further commented that the primary function of the PPS was to address inequalities in demand and access to provision. The PPS represented a long-term framework that would guide decision-making, support discussions with Planning colleagues and other partners, and would improve access to facilities over time.

Councillor Jackson asked whether a single point of contact would be in place for individual sports to provide expert knowledge and connections within each sport. The Service Director confirmed that current resourcing did not allow for dedicated officers for each sport. The Head of Sport, Leisure & Strategic Partnerships and the SPA Manager would act as the Council points of contact for all sports and worked closely with sporting governing bodies.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Jackson sought clarification regarding the support available to clubs seeking longer-term leases to access external funding.

The SPA Manager explained to Members that Community Asset Transfers and longer-term leases could enable clubs to access external funding opportunities. It was reported that there were already some clubs within the borough that provided strong examples of these type of arrangements, but that it could be a long process. Recent changes in officer responsibilities across some services had led to discussions regarding strengthening processes and procedures for future proposals. This would ensure transparency and equal treatment for all organisations.

Members were informed that national funding bodies, including the Rugby

Football Union and the Football Foundation, were particularly supportive of the sporting hub model. It was explained that funders favoured clubs and organisations with multiple teams and established governance arrangements, as this provided confidence in management and organisational structures.

The Chair sought clarification regarding the typical lease arrangements available where land was owned by the Council and a sports club wished to rent a pitch, including whether leases were generally offered on a short-term rolling basis or for longer fixed periods.

The SPA Manager explained that lease arrangements varied depending on the nature of the Community Asset Transfer and the requirements of the organisation involved. It was reported that sporting bodies such as the Football Foundation, generally required a minimum lease term of 21 years to enable clubs to access funding. In practice, lease agreements often extended to terms of between 23 to 25 years due to the time required to complete the necessary documentation. Members were advised that some agreements could extend to 99 or 100 years. Whilst shorter arrangements, including annual rolling leases, were possible, these were generally viewed as less beneficial as they limited access to external funding.

In a further question, the Chair asked how investment decisions under the PPS would ensure equitable access to facilities across all communities in the borough. Following on from a recommendation from IPSC from the meeting in March, where the PPS Part 1 had first been considered, the Chair asked what progress had already been made to secure Community Use Agreements.

The SPA Manager commented that work on this area had not yet commenced. It was reported that support was being sought from another organisation to assist with this substantial piece of work, particularly in relation to developing relationships with schools and academies.

Councillor Bennett-Sylvester expressed concern around previous experiences with multi-academy trusts and PFI arrangements which had limited the affordability and consistency of access to community facilities. Councillor Bennett-Sylvester asked what the Council’s vision was for future community access.

The SPA Manager acknowledged these challenges and explained to Members that the first stage in improving community use would be increased engagement with schools and academies to understand existing barriers and start up conversations around future use. The aspiration would be for wider community access but as the situation at each school and academy would be different, this would be a complex task.

The Service Director further added that with regard to multi-academy trust

schools, who were often under PFI contracts, work needed to continue to help them understand that community use agreements existed primarily to facilitate access to better serve the community, rather than a means of income generation.

Councillor Jones also shared past difficulties experienced with PFI schools not providing promised community access due to issues with providing caretaking services at certain times. The SPA Manager explained that funders were aware of these issues and had begun to make funding dependent on certain stipulations being included in community use agreements. It was explained that sporting bodies also had sufficient officer capacity to check that what was being promised in community use agreements was actually being delivered. In future, any issues uncovered would be reported to the SPA Manager.

Councillor Beck referred to two examples of successful community development of facilities within their ward in Kiveton Park, which had led to a number of impactful community initiatives and projects. Councillor Beck asked what could be done to promote confidence and awareness within communities across the borough that community-run initiatives could be successful.

The Service Director agreed that the model operating in Kiveton Park was an example of good practice, and that any similar examples of successful community sport and leisure initiatives should be positively promoted to provide confidence and encouragement to other communities seeking to develop similar facilities.

The SPA Manager explained that a key element of the work being done with Sport England was to engage directly with communities and connect local people with available facilities and opportunities. The importance of adopting a whole-system, partnership approach was highlighted, as responsibility for improving participation and outcomes extended beyond the Council and would require collaboration between individuals, community organisations, schools, academies and other partners.

The Chair referred to recent consideration of the Sport England Place Expansion Grant by the Health Select Commission, and enquired how that interacted with the PPS, and whether Service was working with Public Health colleagues on delivery.

The Service Director confirmed that the initiative was being delivered as a joint project, with close collaborative working between the Sport & Leisure team and the Public Health team.

It was explained that the PPS and the Sport England Place Expansion Grant were closely related and complementary programmes, although they served different primary purposes. The PPS was focused principally on capital improvements to increase access to sporting opportunities. In contrast, the Sport England Place Expansion Grant was primarily focused

on encouraging greater levels of physical activity amongst residents, recognising that participation in physical activity extended beyond formal sporting activities.

Members were advised that the Sport England funding was predominantly revenue-based, with only a limited capital element. The Sport England funding was intended to generate demand for participation in physical activity, and the PPS was designed to meet this demand.

The Service Director explained that due to the strong links that existed between the two programmes, governance arrangements had been established to facilitate effective joint working. It was further reported that overarching governance was provided through the Moving Rotherham Board, which reported to the Cultural Partnership Board and the Health & Wellbeing Board, both of which linked into the wider Rotherham Together Partnership.

Councillor Garnett sought clarification regarding how success under the PPS would be measured and what key performance indicators (KPIs) would be reported to Members. Councillor Garnett also asked how frequently levels of participation would be reviewed to assess whether the Action Plan was delivering the anticipated outcomes

Members were advised that a number of KPIs were being developed to support the implementation and monitoring of the PPS. These included measures relating to the number of pitches brought back into use or newly developed, the level of external funding secured, the number of new teams established, and, importantly, the number of new participants engaging in physical activity as a direct result of the provision of new pitches.

It was noted that the overall evaluation framework for the PPS remained in development. However, Members were informed that the ongoing work being delivered through the Sport England Place Expansion Grant programme was supported by a formal evaluation plan.

The Service Director explained that reporting on progress would be undertaken through the Moving Rotherham Board, as set out earlier. There was no planned programme for regular reporting on progress to Members, but the Service Director confirmed that outcomes would be reviewed in roughly 12 months' time, as the first year of the PPS came to a close.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Garnett asked about contingency arrangements should external funding not materialise.

The SPA Manager explained that the PPS had been developed with national governing bodies, who had assisted in identifying where the needs were. The recommendations put forward as part of the PPS were underpinned by an awareness from the outset of the level of investment

required and the funding opportunities available to support delivery. As a result, it was not anticipated that there would be any problems with funding.

Councillor Thorp highlighted challenges previously experienced by a cricket club within their ward in securing Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding and queried whether the PPS would ensure that funding that had directly come from housing development could be used to support future similar bids.

The SPA Manager advised that for future development, the PPS provided a robust evidence base which would enable the Council to request housing developer contributions (such as section 106 monies) to support the provision, enhancement and expansion of sporting facilities. It was explained that the existence of the PPS strengthened the Council's ability to justify requests for developer funding and subsequently direct investment towards local sports clubs and organisations.

The Chair commented that the Governance Advisor would make contact with colleagues in Planning to provide clarification on whether CIL monies could be used towards sporting facilities.

Councillor Jackson questioned whether benchmarking had been undertaken against other neighbouring local authorities that had been successful in securing sports-related external funding. Councillor Jackson also questioned whether the Council had the necessary skills in-house to put forward funding bids.

The SPA Manager confirmed that Sport England had recognised the historic lack of investment in Rotherham following changes to its sport and physical activity funding model approximately ten years ago. Sport England had changed its approach to Local Delivery Pilots, through which some neighbouring authorities had secured funding, whereas Rotherham had not benefited from the programme.

Due to the areas of significant deprivation within the borough, Members were informed that, in some instances, national governing bodies had approached the Council directly to discuss potential investment opportunities, rather than the Council having to proactively seek funding from those organisations.

The SPA Manager also explained that there was a range of additional external funding sources available where the Council could provide support to local clubs and organisations to enable them to access these funding opportunities themselves. The SPA Manager expressed confidence in the Council's track record of securing funding. For example, reference was made to the significant levels of external investment that had been attracted by the Sports & Leisure Team via wider initiatives such as the Children's Capital of Culture programme.

In response to the question regarding benchmarking and engagement with other local authorities, the SPA Manager confirmed that regular liaison took place with counterparts across South and West Yorkshire. The Council participated in a network facilitated through the Yorkshire Sport Foundation, with quarterly meetings held to share good practice.

The Chair asked whether a minimum delivery plan existed should external funding opportunities not arise. The Service Director advised that no such minimum delivery plan existed because the PPS had been developed collaboratively with funding organisations who wanted to be involved in supporting delivery and had indicated that they had the funding available to facilitate this.

Councillor Bennett-Sylvester sought reassurance that informal play opportunities on more informal pieces of community land would remain an important consideration under the PPS.

The SPA Manager agreed that informal play and sporting activity were important in encouraging wider participation and developing a love of sport in residents. Whilst the PPS was largely focused on team sports, the SPA Manager assured Members that work was being done with certain organisations, such as the Lawn Tennis Association, to identify how to get people engaged in sport when physical facilities are lacking.

The Service Director emphasised to Members the importance of their convening role. It was noted that Members were often best placed to understand local needs within their wards, identify community groups and organisations, and bring together partners and resources from a range of areas to address local issues.

It was further noted that Ward Budgets provided a useful mechanism to enable local initiatives to be developed and delivered. The Service Director expressed appreciation for Members' work and contributions to date on this.

Councillor Jackson asked whether the PPS would cover instances where smaller pieces of land weren't fit for a formal pitch but could have potential use for a set of nets or mini Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA).

The SPA Manager explained that a list of unused sites had been compiled and that site visits had been undertaken to assess the reasons why these sites were no longer in active use. It was explained that a number of locations faced practical constraints that prevented them from being brought back into use as sports pitches, with a lack of suitable parking provision cited as a common issue.

Members were told that consideration was being given to what improvements or additional facilities were required to enable some unused sites to be returned to active use. It was emphasised, however, that any future provision would seek to maintain a like-for-like approach,

for example, with existing grass pitch provision being replaced with equivalent facilities to meet the original sporting purpose. The SPA Manager explained that there were future plans to consider an assessment of a wider range of sports and recreational facilities across the borough.

Councillor Jones asked how recently announced plans for the redevelopment of the former Millmoor site aligned with the PPS and queried whether they could lead to the developer competing with the Council for funding from sporting bodies.

The SPA Manager confirmed that the Council had been engaging with the developers of the Millmoor site, who had reviewed the PPS and considered the identified strategic needs across the borough. It was reported that the proposals under consideration at Millmoor had the potential to address some of those identified needs. Discussions were at an early stage, but the parties involved were working collaboratively to ensure that any facilities delivered would meet the needs of the borough.

With regard to funding, the SPA Manager explained that funding bodies applied stringent criteria regarding projects they would support and the manner in which facilities would operate. It was reported that it was not yet clear whether the proposed facility at Millmoor would be managed as a community asset or as a commercial operation. Members were advised that, should the facility operate for community benefit and provide community access hours, it would be eligible to access national funding streams intended to support community participation. Conversely, if the facility were to operate on a purely commercial basis, it was likely that such funding opportunities would not be available, as national funders generally did not support commercial enterprises.

The Service Director assured Members that based on current information, there appeared to be sufficient funding opportunities available to Rotherham to support both the PPS and the Millmoor development.

The Chair thanked Officers for the presentation and Members for their contributions.

Resolved:-

1) That the contents of the presentation on the Playing Pitch Strategy Part 2 be noted;

2) That a progress report on the delivery and impact of the Playing Pitch Strategy be provided at a mid-way point in the Strategy, timing to be agreed with Officers; and

3) That Elected Members be kept updated on developments being undertaken within their wards under the Playing Pitch Strategy, in order that they can support via raising awareness in their local

communities of enhanced facilities.

Councillor Bennett-Sylvester declared an interest in Minute No. 24 (Update on Playing Pitch Strategy Part 2) on the grounds that their employment involved work with the Yorkshire Sport Foundation, which had involvement in the provision of sports facilities discussed within the presentation.

25. LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOOD AND ROAD SAFETY SCHEME (LNRS) PROGRAMME - LESSONS LEARNED REVIEW

At the Chair's invitation, Councillor Williams, Cabinet Member for Transport, Jobs and the Local Economy (Cabinet Member) introduced the item. The Cabinet Member emphasised to Members that road safety was a significant priority for the Council. The LNRS programme had provided an innovative and engaging approach to addressing local road safety concerns, particularly through collaboration with Members and local communities. The programme had enabled the delivery of smaller schemes that might not otherwise have met the criteria for national or regional funding streams.

Members were informed that the report on the lessons learned provided an open and honest assessment of the programme's delivery, recognising both the successful outcomes achieved and the challenges encountered during implementation. The programme had delivered a broad range of highway, road safety and neighbourhood improvement schemes across the borough, contributing to safer roads, improved accessibility and enhanced local communities. It was reported that many of the schemes had been positively received by residents, local communities and Members.

The Cabinet Member acknowledged that concerns had been raised by Members through scrutiny processes and Council meetings regarding issues experienced with some projects. Members were advised that the review had identified several key areas for improvement, including the need for stronger project scoping at the outset, more realistic timescales for consultation and engagement activities, strengthened governance arrangements, and improved coordination of resources and delivery processes within the service.

It was further reported that the service had not only identified lessons learned but had already begun implementing improvements. These actions included the introduction of revised business management processes, enhanced programme monitoring arrangements, improved resource planning, and the establishment of a Minor Works Board to provide greater oversight, governance and accountability for programme delivery.

The Cabinet Member advised Members that the learning generated through the LNRS programme would inform wider transport and road

safety initiatives undertaken by the Council. In support of this priority, it was reported that funding had been secured to extend the Minor Works programme beyond the end of the previous financial year. The Council had invested £160,000 in the development of Ward Road Safety Plans over a two-year programme, with plans being produced for every ward to identify local road safety priorities. Funding had also been committed to develop designs for five pedestrian crossing schemes and improvements at Treeton Lane crossroads, ensuring that fully developed schemes would be ready for implementation when funding became available.

Lucy Hudson, the Head of Service, Transportation & Highways Design (Head of Service), took Members through the report in more detail. The Head of Service explained to Members that, as a relatively new officer within the Council, they had decided to look back to the origins and development of the LNRS programme in order to fully understand the challenges identified within the report.

The LNRS programme had been first identified within the 2022 Capital Programme, following the delivery of Local Safety Schemes in 2021-22. It was reported that the LNRS approach had been developed to place greater emphasis on addressing local community road network concerns, enabling residents to identify road safety issues within their neighbourhoods and providing a mechanism through which relatively simple schemes could be implemented to improve road safety. Members heard that the programme represented a shift away from a largely technical approach towards a more community-focused investment model.

Members were advised that funding had been profiled across the period 2022 to 2026. The prioritisation process had taken account of the volume of correspondence received regarding local concerns, levels of deprivation (using indices of multiple deprivation) and potential carbon savings through increased active travel and road traffic collision data. It was further noted that a separate funding stream had been established for Minor Works, focusing on measures such as dropped kerbs and Traffic Regulation Orders, to address parking and accessibility issues.

The Head of Service took Members through the key lessons learned identified by officers within the report, including:

- The importance of clearly defining the scope of schemes and maintaining a strong understanding of the problems which the schemes aimed to solve from the outset. Members were advised that greater emphasis was now being placed on detailed project planning and development, which would provide greater assurance to Members and Cabinet Members regarding delivery.

- The amount of time required for stakeholder engagement and consultation had been underestimated during the initial phases of the LNRS programme. Officers now appreciated that obtaining

community feedback and engagement was a lengthy process and the Head of Service confirmed that more realistic timescales would be applied to future schemes.

- Several of the schemes delivered within Tranche 1 of the programme had undergone numerous design revisions, largely due to an initial lack of clarity regarding the problems being addressed. In contrast, Tranche 2 of the schemes had benefited from a much clearer understanding of the intended outcomes from the outset. The Head of Service commented that there had been a noticeable improvement in the team's approach, supported by the introduction of more formalised documentation and stronger record-keeping processes, which had enhanced governance arrangements.

- Programme monitoring and reporting arrangements had also been strengthened. The Head of Service explained that the Minor Works Board was an internal group which met fortnightly to review progress across schemes. Members were further advised that the Transport Capital Board reported directly to the Service Director on the progress of wider transportation and Highways schemes, who in turn regularly briefed Cabinet Members and the Leader of the Council. This provided a clear governance and reporting route to ensure that schemes were progressing.

- External design expertise had been commissioned for Tranche 2 of the LNRS schemes. This had strengthened design capability and provided greater clarity regarding specifications, materials and delivery requirements before schemes were transferred to the in-house Highways delivery team for implementation.

- The Head of Service reported that efforts had also been made to improve collaboration between the Transportation and Highways teams. Communication channels had been strengthened and improved working relationships were contributing to more effective programme delivery.

- Wider business management improvements had been introduced across the Regeneration & Environment directorate. These included enhanced scoping documents and clearer recording of project objectives and activities. This had resulted in greater clarity regarding each stage of delivery, with better understanding of delivery requirements and resource implications, including officer time commitments for specific tasks. The Head of Service commented that these changes represented a significant improvement in programme management and had provided greater assurance that projects were being properly planned, monitored and recorded.

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member and Head of Service for their introduction and invited questions from Members.

The Chair opened the questions by asking the Head of Service what their view on the LNRS programme had been when they arrived at the Council, as an “outsider looking in”.

In response, the Head of Service commented that it was evident that some tangible improvements had been delivered as a result of Tranche 1 of the LNRS programme. A scheme implemented on Racecourse Road was cited as an example of a successful intervention. Residents had subsequently approached Members requesting similar measures, including road humps and other traffic-calming features, within their own communities.

It was further noted by the Head of Service that, since the 2022 Cabinet report and the introduction of the Transport Capital Programme, the service had become more responsive to community needs. For example, wooden bollards had been installed to address local parking concerns on grass verges. Such measures had not originally formed part of the LNRS programme, but the service had responded and adapted its priorities to deliver interventions that reflected the concerns of local communities.

The Head Service commented that the changes introduced in relation to programme delivery, including the introduction of additional layers of governance arrangements, had presented challenges for officers and project teams. However, the Head of Service reflected that these arrangements had ultimately strengthened project delivery as this more structured approach had helped to maintain focus on the overall objectives and intended benefits throughout the delivery process.

In a supplementary question, the Chair enquired whether the use of external designers had caused some of the delay to delivery times or whether it had been necessary to increase capacity.

In response, the Head of Service confirmed that the engagement of external designers had introduced some additional rigour to the design process. The ability to clearly set out design specifications to an external body had made it easier for the Council to challenge on the deliverables received. It was reported that the information returned by the external designers had been swiftly passed on to the Highway Service to support progression into the delivery phase.

It was further acknowledged that the additional external resource had increased capacity within the service, allowing officers to focus attention on LNRS projects whilst also supporting other areas of work. The Head of Service felt that overall, the use of external designers had been of significant benefit to the Council.

Councillor Jones expressed concern regarding the delivery of Tranche 1 of the LNRS programme and the significant inconsistencies that had been experienced in both the delivery of schemes across the borough and the

advice provided by officers in relation to them.

Councillor Jones provided examples of problematic schemes within their ward, two of which were desired by residents but had ultimately not been delivered due to technical difficulties and increasing expenditure, and one scheme which had proceeded contrary to local advice and expectations.

Councillor Jones welcomed the report's acknowledgement of issues relating to inconsistency and the introduction of external designers, but sought reassurance regarding improvements to consistency, accountability, and governance moving forward.

Councillor Jones further commented that in future schemes, provision of more accurate information and greater consideration of local knowledge and feedback from Members and residents, would avoid situations where residents felt that funding could have been put to better use.

In response, the Head of Service expressed disappointment in the reported inconsistency in delivery and advice and commented that these concerns had been taken very seriously at a management level. Members were assured that work was already well underway to address these concerns, with a clear commitment to improving processes, governance, and project delivery arrangements in schemes going forward.

The Head of Service advised that, as part of the Ward Safety Plans programme, initial work had been allocated across different areas of the service to make more effective use of specialist expertise. For example, greater involvement from the Transport Planning team had been introduced to support the planning elements of projects, enabling other teams to focus on delivery. This approach was intended to ensure that projects were designed and developed in a more structured manner and would be substantially prepared and ready for implementation.

The Chair further reinforced Councillor Jones' point regarding projects that had ended up significantly over budget, and asked what work was being done to ensure that more realistic costings were provided to Members at the start of a project.

The Head of Service acknowledged that obtaining accurate cost estimates at an early stage of project development had historically been a challenge across the service. The Head of Service advised that work had recently been undertaken with the Highways team to establish a more robust approach to early project costing. This would support effective budget planning, which was particularly important for ward-funded schemes.

The Head of Service confirmed that the Highways team had also recognised the need for improvement in this area and had recruited a dedicated officer to focus on project costing and estimation in greater detail. The service was working closely with this officer to strengthen

existing processes and improve the accuracy of cost projections. Whilst progress in this area had commenced, it was acknowledged that fully embedding this new approach would take some time.

Regarding the Minor Works Board. Councillor Jackson commented that the arrangements sounded encouraging but expressed concern about how the process would operate in practice. Based on previous experience, Councillor Jackson felt that there had been occasions where Minor Works schemes appeared to have been largely agreed and progressed before Members had been consulted and ward-level concerns and priorities considered.

The Head of Service explained that, prior to their appointment, a substantial piece of work had been undertaken to prioritise the Minor Works programme. It was noted that the service received an exceptionally high volume of requests for works, from a wide range of sources including the Council, residents and MPs. As a result, a prioritisation matrix had been developed which assessed and scored proposed schemes against a range of criteria, with the resulting scores determining the order in which schemes would be progressed. This approach was intended to provide an objective, evidence-based method of prioritisation, but the Head of Service acknowledged that with this, some of the more subjective consultation with Members and residents on specific issues may have been lost.

The Head of Service assured Members that the service would look to improve the way information on the prioritisation process was communicated to Members in future, and thanked Members for this feedback, which would be taken back to the wider team.

Councillor Thorp expressed significant concerns regarding the delivery and effectiveness of Tranche 1 road safety and transport schemes within their ward, which in their view, had failed to deliver meaningful road safety improvements for local residents.

Councillor Thorp felt that there had been a clear disconnect between the original road safety concerns raised by Members and residents and the schemes that had subsequently been developed, with proposals changing significantly during the design process. Councillor Thorp felt that this had resulted in schemes being brought forward that had not previously been consulted upon or supported, leading to public opposition and a considerable waste of officer time and financial resources.

Councillor Thorp also expressed concerns around the effectiveness of the Minor Works programme, commenting that requests for local road safety improvements had frequently been met with responses citing insufficient funding or available capacity, which had left legitimate road safety issues unresolved.

In conclusion, Councillor Thorp welcomed the reflection undertaken by the

service and expressed the hope that the development of future schemes would be informed by the lessons learned and would lead to a more transparent and responsive approach.

The Head of Service assured Members that significant work had already been done within the service to identify where improvements were required. The improved processes around governance arrangements, project scoping, and the clear definition of problems and objectives at the outset of schemes had been implemented and officers were actively working as a team to strengthen future delivery arrangements.

The Head of Service reiterated the importance of keeping a clear focus on the primary objective and the intended outcome when developing road safety schemes through the design and delivery process. This would ensure that future road safety schemes were appropriately targeted and effective. It was reported that this would also help to prevent unnecessary expansion of project scope, commonly referred to as "scope creep", whereby additional ideas and objectives could be introduced and divert attention from the original purpose of the scheme.

In response to comments regarding the level of funding available for Minor Works, the Head of Service acknowledged that available funding had reduced significantly in recent years. However, Members were informed that a capital funding bid had been submitted to increase the level of investment available in future years. It was hoped that, should this additional funding be secured, the Council would be able to deliver a greater number of improvements for local communities.

Councillor Bennett-Sylvester commented that their previous experiences of the Minor Works process had also been that decisions often appeared to be predetermined, with an expectation that alternative budgets should be considered, despite existing financial pressures on ward budgets.

Drawing on their recent experience of Tranche 2 schemes currently being delivered within their ward, Councillor Bennett-Sylvester reported that levels of engagement had been positive and highlighted the effectiveness of the consultation process. Particular praise was given to the support provided by the Neighbourhood Coordinator, whose work in gathering evidence and facilitating comparisons had contributed significantly to the development of the schemes.

However, Councillor Bennett-Sylvester went on to raise concerns regarding a distinct lack of communication following the consultation phase. Councillor Bennett-Sylvester acknowledged that this may have been as the scheme reached the design stage but requested that efforts be made by officers to keep Members informed of progress throughout the lifecycle of scheme, as this would enable Members to manage the expectations of their local communities.

The Head of Service accepted that improvements could be made to the

way that progress on schemes was communicated throughout their development. It was explained that, following initial engagement with Members, significant work often continued behind the scenes which was often less visible, but essential to project delivery.

The Head of Service recognised that the absence of regular updates during these stages could lead to a perception that little progress was being made. To address this, the Head of Service suggested that a simplified overview of the scheme development process, including indicative timescales for each stage, could be developed to be shared with Members. This would provide greater transparency and enable Members to demonstrate to residents that schemes were continuing to progress through the necessary stages towards delivery.

Councillor Carter reiterated the importance of effective communication with Members and noted that obtaining updates on schemes had proved challenging in the past. The Member sought a commitment that officers would regularly attend Community Action Partnership (CAP) meetings to provide regular progress updates on relevant schemes.

The Head of Service explained that they could not commit that an officer from the Transportation team would be available to attend every CAP meeting but would endeavour to facilitate more frequent attendance at CAP meetings by officers when schemes were being delivered.

Councillor Jackson supported Councillor Carter's suggestion regarding attendance at CAP meetings. Councillor Jackson also asked whether any additional investment had been made in the service to ensure sufficient capacity and resilience for the delivery of Tranche 2 of the LNRS programme.

The Head of Service acknowledged that additional demands had been placed on the service as a result of the improved processes and systems that had been established. As mentioned previously, some additional capacity had been provided via use of external designers. Members were assured that full consideration was being given to the availability and capacity of resources within the service moving forward. It was explained that future improvements were most likely to be achieved either through the more effective use of existing resources or through securing additional funding to expand service capacity.

The Chair asked for clarification on a point of detail relating to paragraph 10.1 of the report, which stated that “the needs of all *road users*” had been considered. The Chair asked for confirmation that the term “road users” included pedestrians, whose safety was of paramount importance.

The Head of Service confirmed that the generic term used did cover pedestrians, and anyone else who actively used the road. It was explained that current campaigns and initiatives on improving road safety for pedestrians was focused on trying to change driver behaviours and

improve the awareness of drivers, rather than pedestrians.

Councillor Thorp shared the view that recent transport schemes and interventions had appeared to focus disproportionately on vehicle movement and traffic management, rather than the safety and needs of pedestrians. Councillor Thorp argued that greater emphasis should be placed on preventative measures to improve pedestrian safety, particularly in areas used by children and around schools.

In response, the Cabinet Member assured Members that pedestrian safety was at the heart of all road safety schemes delivered by the Council. The Cabinet Member highlighted the significant investment that had been made during the year to progress the design of five further pedestrian crossings and to secure funding for the delivery of the first two crossings within the prioritisation programme. Reference was also made to the ongoing road safety programme, which reflected both the importance placed on road safety by Members and the high volume of requests received by the service. It was noted that more than 1,400 individual service requests relating to road safety had been received across the borough in a single year.

The Cabinet Member thanked Members for the valuable feedback on the LNRS programme and commented that the programme had been developed to enable the Council to address community-level road safety concerns and respond to issues raised by residents and ward Members, particularly at locations and hotspots that may not have met the criteria for national funding programmes. The Council’s commitment to making the operational changes outlined in the report was further evidence of its commitment to pedestrian safety going forward.

The Head of Service reiterated that pedestrian safety remained a fundamental priority for the service. It was explained that the emphasis on objective safety measures was intended to improve outcomes for pedestrians by encouraging safer driver behaviour and greater awareness on the road. Officers further advised that the Council's investment in pedestrian infrastructure and road safety initiatives complemented this approach, creating a dual focus on both protecting pedestrians directly and reducing risks through improved driver conduct.

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member, the Head of Service and Members for their contributions.

Resolved:-

1) That the findings of the Local Neighbourhood and Road Safety Scheme (LNRS) Programme lessons learned review and the key challenges and successes identified during the delivery of the programme be noted;

2) That the actions undertaken by the service to address the lessons

identified, including improvements to project governance, programme management, resource planning and stakeholder engagement be acknowledged;

3) That IPSC confirms its support for the continued application of strengthened governance, business management, project planning and delivery arrangements, alongside embedding lessons learned and continuous improvement to maximise value for money in future capital investment and infrastructure programmes;

4) That IPSC requests that the service looks to set up enhanced regular methods of communication with Members to provide updates on schemes within their wards, including attendance at CAP meetings and liaison with Neighbourhood Coordinators;

5) That IPSC receives a further update on Tranche 2 schemes, setting out how the revised governance arrangements have been embedded, including the Minor Works Board, and have improved the planning and delivery of LNRS schemes; and

6) That IPSC requests that post-implementation evaluations are routinely undertaken on completed schemes to assess whether the intended road safety outcomes have been achieved and that the findings are reported back to IPSC in any future updates.

26. IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION - WORK PROGRAMME 2026 - 2027

The Chair introduced the work programme and highlighted to the following matters:

- The recommendations from the IPSC School Road Safety Review had been endorsed by the OSMB and would proceed to be considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 16 November 2026.

- Some minor amendments had been made to the IPSC Work Programme since publication of the IPSC Agenda, due to the availability of the relevant Cabinet Members.

- Members were reminded that a visit to the RiDO Business Centre at Century Business Park 2 in Manvers had been arranged for 25 November 2026; and

- A pre-decision workshop for Members on the new Cultural Strategy for the borough had been arranged for the afternoon of 15 December 2026 and an invite would be sent out to Members.

Resolved:-

1) That the update on the IPSC Work Programme be received and

noted; and

2) That the Governance Advisor be authorised to make any required amendments to the Work Programme in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair and report any such changes back to the Commission for endorsement.

27. URGENT BUSINESS

The Chair advised that there were no urgent items of business requiring the Commission's consideration.