Section 1
Introduction

1. Introduction

This is Rotherham’s third Community Strategy. It sets out the Partnership’s new vision and priorities for the next three years. They are the result of consultation, research, analysis and debate among partners representing Rotherham’s voluntary and community, public and private sectors. Sitting alongside this is a strategic plan that sets out how we will begin to deliver the strategy.

The contents of the strategy do not represent everything that must be done over the next three years to take Rotherham forward and improve life for local people. The strategy is about where partners agree that the Rotherham Partnership can make the greatest difference by bringing its members together to tackle shared challenges. This document will set out broadly where the Rotherham Partnership will concentrate its efforts over the next three years, why and what we hope to achieve by doing so, with a clear focus on the benefits for local people and communities and particularly those most in need.

The Community Strategy is an overarching document for the borough reflecting the shared interests, aspirations and priorities of partners. It is influenced by and should influence the strategic plans of the major local agencies working to improve Rotherham. This strategy sits alongside other high level partnership strategies including the Health and Well Being Strategy, Early Help Strategy and the Local Plan. It is important that we recognise that these documents are working together to address the issues and challenges we face in Rotherham.

At the core of this Strategy are three partnership priorities for the period 2012-15. These are summarised below and will be outlined in more detail later in the document.

1) Help local people and businesses benefit from a growing economy
2) Ensure the best start in life for children and families
3) Support those that are vulnerable within our communities

Before looking more closely at the partnerships priorities, this first section of the document will provide context around Rotherham, the Rotherham Partnership and Community Strategy.

a. The Rotherham Partnership

Rotherham Partnership is Rotherham’s Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) a body which exists in most towns and cities across the country. Since its formation in 2001 it has brought together representatives of local public bodies (such as the police, health service, local colleges and the council) with representatives of voluntary organisations and the business community to agree shared priorities for Rotherham and to work together to ensure progress is made against them. It is led by the Rotherham Partnership Governance Board which consists of representatives of the bodies and sectors named above, alongside local Councillors.

During the last ten years the Rotherham Partnership has gained a strong reputation both within and outside Rotherham as an...
effective, mature and robust partnership. During the period 2008-2011 Rotherham was one of the most successful LSPs in the country in terms of the proportion of its government targets which it met. In order to maintain this record we embarked on a major review of our priorities and practices beginning in 2010. The result has been a leaner structure and more action orientated way of working, a new vision and a focused set of priorities.

The Rotherham Partnership Governance Board will oversee the delivery of the Community Strategy, making sure that it is implemented effectively and all partners play their part. They will do this by monitoring implementation, ensuring organisations contribute to delivery and holding each other to account for progress and performance. The Board has recently renamed the Rotherham Partnership Governance Board and a new Board membership has been agreed ahead of the launch of the strategy.

Further details on delivery arrangements are contained in section three of the document. The delivery plan will be periodically reviewed and a new Board membership has been contained in section three of the document.

The Health and Wellbeing Strategy is an important document that captures intelligence regarding the health needs of people in Rotherham. The Health and Wellbeing Strategy is being launched at the same time as this Community Strategy and covers the same Hespan.

b. Rotherham at a glance

The way in which Rotherham has changed since the previous Community Strategy was refreshed in 2008 has influenced the contents of this new strategy, and our collective understanding of Rotherham’s current and future challenges inform the new priorities.

A brief overview of some of the latest statistics presented below and helps to provide some understanding of Rotherham’s current and future context for the chosen priorities.

• Rotherham has 56,000 children aged 0-17 (over 22% of the population) and 29,000 aged 16-24 (over 11% of the population) and almost one third of people in Rotherham within the 20% most deprived areas in England. This places Rotherham within the 20% most deprived places in the country and our relative position has declined over the last three years after a significant increase over previous years.

• The number of people over 60 now exceeds the number of children at almost 60,000 and 23% of the population. Among the most challenging forms of deprivation are health, workplaces, low educational levels and a lack of qualifications. Whilst Rotherham’s level of deprivation according to the IMD has declined overall it is particularly concentrated in a few neighbourhoods, some of which rank among the most deprived in the country. The gap between these and Rotherham’s more prosperous communities has grown over recent years.

• Educational attainment and qualification levels in Rotherham are below the national average, although life expectancy for both men and women has increased over the last ten years. Life expectancy is 10 years less for men in the most deprived areas than in the least deprived areas. Health has been a major driver of Rotherham’s increasing deprivation over recent years.

• Most types of crime have come down during the last five years. Crime rates in Rotherham are lower than in the least deprived areas. Health and wellbeing outcomes for local people through the implementation of a Health and Wellbeing Strategy. This Board has also has the responsibility of producing the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) which is an important document that captures intelligence regarding the health needs of people in Rotherham. The Health and Wellbeing Strategy is being launched at the same time as this Community Strategy and covers the same Hespan.

• The number of people over 60 now exceeds the number of children at almost 60,000 and 23% of the population.

• According to the national Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) Rotherham is ranked 53rd most deprived out of 326 districts in England. This places Rotherham within the 20% most deprived places in the country and our relative position has declined over the last three years after a significant increase over previous years.

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Community Strategy 2012-15

Section 2

Priorities

Priority 1 Help local people and businesses benefit from a growing economy

a. How do things look now?

Rotherham has gone through a major transition in recent years to recover from the massive job losses in the traditional coal and steel industries suffered during the 1980s. The borough has progressed on many economic and social measures since then, often far faster than nationally or regionally, including levels of job creation and inward investment.

Much of this improvement has been a result of high levels of UK and European public sector funding, which in turn attracted new private sector funding, and investment from the private sector, will characterise the way we work together over the next three years in delivering the strategy.

We will:
- Deploy our resources where they are most needed to help reduce inequalities
- Work collaboratively and through consensus to address our agreed priorities
- Only focus on areas where we can make a difference to local people
- Focus on prevention and early intervention
- Agree common information and data sharing arrangements
- Make sure we work with communities to seek solutions
- Raise local peoples expectations and aspirations
- Celebrate and recognise people who make an outstanding contribution
- Help people to help themselves

The next section of the report provides a brief overview of each of the three priorities, focusing on:

• How do things look now?
• Where do we want to be?
• Why is it important that we focus on this priority?

b. Where do we want to be?

Help local people and businesses benefit from Rotherham's economic growth. Driven by the local Economy Board are felt by communities and families. The focus is to ensure that the benefits of economic growth, driven by the local Economy Board are felt by communities and families. The focus is to ensure that the benefits of economic growth, driven by the local Economy Board are felt by communities and families.

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Section 2

The Rotherham Partnership has also committed to a number of principles that will characterise the way we work together over the next three years in delivering the strategy.

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Creating jobs and getting more people into sustainable employment can have a positive impact for beyond the immediate direct benefit of increasing income and reducing benefit dependency. Having a job can increase people’s self-esteem, confidence and improve their overall health and happiness. These wide-ranging benefits are why the Rotherham Partnership has focused its first ever annual summit on ‘work’.

Reducing the number of people not in work will have knock on benefits for other important partnership priorities and social issues. For instance by alleviating child poverty, reducing crime and anti-social behaviour and helping people to cope with changes to the welfare system.

An example in our region is the emerging Rotherham Enterprising Neighbourhoods (REN) project, harnessing their respective strengths (e.g. Rotherham Chamber working with small businesses, Voluntary Action Rotherham supporting and promoting social enterprise) to provide a more comprehensive service. The REN project focused on giving people the knowledge, skills and confidence needed to start their own business or grow an existing one. This approach of ‘helping people to help themselves’ is at the heart of the partnership’s efforts.

Regarding skills, the aim will be to build on the Work and Skills Board’s efforts by bringing together training providers and employers, therefore helping to ensure that employability and skills programmes are driven by business needs. An example in our region is the emerging enterprise zone, which aims to boost the manufacturing and technology sectors by providing incentives for investment at key sites, including the Advanced Manufacturing Park in Rotherham. Complementing the Rotherham Economy Board, the wider Partnership is well placed to concentrate on local skills and enterprise initiatives.

Local partners have already worked together successfully on initiatives such as the Rotherham Entrepeneursing Neighbourhoods (REN) project, harnessing their respective strengths (e.g. Rotherham Chamber working with small businesses, Voluntary Action Rotherham supporting and promoting social enterprise) to provide a more comprehensive service. The REN project focused on giving people the knowledge, skills and confidence needed to start their own business or grow an existing one. This approach of ‘helping people to help themselves’ is at the heart of the partnership’s efforts.

In 2008, it was estimated that there were 12,745 children living in poverty (22%). In some of Rotherham’s most deprived neighbourhoods the percentage was as high as 60%. Because the birth rate is higher for families living on low incomes, children under the age of four are most likely to be experiencing poverty. More often than not these are the same children at risk of having poor health, being exposed to crime and failing to reach their full potential. We have used our data to demonstrate the variation in outcomes for babies born in Rotherham’s most deprived and least deprived neighbourhoods. If 500 babies are born and their circumstances remain the same during their childhood, then we might expect that:

183 will live in the least deprived areas, and
10 (5%) will grow up in a workless or very low waged household
113 (62%) will gain at least 5 GCSEs A-C (including English and Maths)
13 (7%) will experience low birth weight or still birth
4 (2%) will experience anti-social behaviour

We also measure factors that are specific to giving babies a healthy start. Low birth weight is an important predictor of health, educational outcomes and adult life expectancy of children. Rotherham has a high rate of low birth weight compared to the national average. Nationally one third of births with low weight are associated with poor health, being exposed to crime and failing to reach their full potential. We have used our data to demonstrate the variation in outcomes for babies born in Rotherham’s most deprived and least deprived neighbourhoods. If 500 babies are born and their circumstances remain the same during their childhood, then we might expect that:

317 will live in the most deprived areas.
Compared to 178 (56%)
Compared to 75 (24%)
Compared to 33 (10%), and
Compared to 38 (12%)

In Rotherham, which we want to sustain. However, there are still many families who do not access this support or engage with relevant agencies to make positive changes. There is a sense of frustration from professionals that they are unable to evidence the impact of our collective efforts. We need more comprehensive information that we can use to make decisions and target services. We need to understand where we are working in partnership effectively and where we could do more to improve efficiency and reach the families who need our support most. Where partnership is working well, we want to celebrate this and spread the good practice across the borough.

If our children have the skills they need to communicate, use language and literacy will form part of the foundation they can build upon for the rest of their lives. Successful learning and achievement have implications for future employment, incomes, health and well-being, and mental and physical health and therefore communication, language and literacy will form part of our approach to supporting 0-3s and their families. It is an area in which we have seen significant improvements over recent years in Rotherham, which we want to sustain. 

a. How do things look now?

b. Where do we want to be?
Community Strategy

We must keep our existing momentum going and, at the same time, do more to understand it so that we can continue to improve what we deliver. If we get the support that we deliver to our most vulnerable 0-3 year olds right we believe this will unlock their potential to be successful in education and work and live healthy and happy lives.

c. Why is it important that we focus on this priority?

There is a strong body of evidence to show that the wellbeing of a child from the moment of conception until its third birthday has lifelong effects on many aspects of health and well-being from obesity, heart disease and mental health, to educational achievement and economic status.

The research tells us that:

- By the age of three, a baby’s brain is 80% formed and he or her experiences before then shape the way the brain has grown and developed.
- The estimated prime window for emotional development is up to 18 months, by which time the foundation of emotional development is up to 18 months, by which time the foundation of emotional development is up to 18 months, by which time the foundation of emotional development is up to 18 months, by which time the foundation of emotional development is up to 18 months, by which time the foundation of emotional development is up to 18 months, by which time the foundation of emotional development is up to 18 months, by which time the foundation of emotional development is up to 18 months, by which time the foundation of emotional development is up to 18 months.

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Priorities:

a. How do things look now?

Depression in Rotherham is higher than average and increasing. According to the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) in 2007 Rotherham ranked 88th most deprived district in England, by 2010 we had moved to 53rd (with a lower ranking indicating higher deprivation). Rotherham remains within the 20% most deprived districts nationally and several parts of the borough appear within the 10% most deprived in the country. The key drivers for depression in Rotherham are:

- Education and skills
- Health and disability
- Employment

Health is a particularly strong determinant of depression in most of these areas, represented by a life expectancy gap of between the least and most deprived parts of the borough of almost 10 years for men and 6 years for women.

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Changes to the welfare benefit system are expected to have a significant impact on Rotherham residents and communities during the life of this document. The main fear is that these changes will lead to increased financial stress, affect low income households generally. Lone parents will also be affected and the overall benefit cap to be introduced from April 2013, will put pressure on those households that are vulnerable. These changes will disproportionately affect the most vulnerable individuals in Rotherham and those who already have significant bearing on this priority during the next three years. Its effect is likely to be compounded by price inflation and the pressure placed on public sector finances by the government austerity programme. It is estimated that the loss to Rotherham’s economy resulting from reduced benefit payments may be upwards of £28 million by March 2015. The impact will be felt most severely in our 11 most deprived neighbourhoods, which collectively contain almost 30% of the borough benefit claimants.

Loneliness and isolation in old age has been identified by partners as an important issue to address under this priority. It is a growing problem nation-wide with around 10% of people over 65 reporting feeling lonely all or most of the time. This equates to 4,000 older Rotherham residents feeling lonely every day. It is also estimated that nearly 17,000 older people in Rotherham suffer loneliness at some point in their lives. As our population gradually grows older so does the challenge of combating loneliness and isolation, which can exacerbate existing vulnerabilities. Combating it can help older people to live independent, fulfilling and healthy lives.

c. Why do we want to be?

This priority concentrates on both people and places; recognising that their interdependence means that we need to retain a dual focus on both. As noted earlier some of our most vulnerable neighbourhoods have suffered relative decline since the global recession in 2008 according to deprivation data. In response partners have committed to targeting and coordinating their resources (such as services, staff, budgets and buildings) on a partnership basis to the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods in the borough and ultimately prevent their decline by first stabilising and then supporting them to close the gap already opening up in terms of health, education, employment and a host of other measures that reflect the quality of life experienced in the neighbourhood.

In direct response to this aspiration, partners will prioritise these neighbourhoods where they can and work together at a strategic level and on the ground to maximise the impact of resources invested into the neighbourhoods. The approach will be tailored to the needs and circumstances of the people and communities. The overarching aims of this work are to change the character of the areas, improve the opportunities available to residents and raise the quality of life by producing a living standard consistent with the rest of the borough.

As noted these areas are expected to be disproportionally hit by changes to the welfare benefit system and this will make
Section 3  
**Delivery**

### a. Strategic plan

The strategic plan focuses partnership efforts around our three priorities. The plan provides a broad overview of what we want to achieve against the three priorities and what we plan to do to address them during the initial phase of implementation. As our collective understanding of the priorities deepens and we learn more about what needs to happen our focus will also evolve. As task and finish groups are commissioned by the Partnership to take forward specific pieces of work, they will also be expected to develop their own plans and these will provide a greater level of detail.

Since the completion of our partnership review, we have introduced a more streamlined structure comprising a smaller Partnership Governance Board and a number of time limited task and finish groups.

This model is designed to support a partnership that is more agile, responsive and able to take decisions more quickly. As noted earlier, by implementing learning from the past year, further adjustments to the Partnership’s governance and operating model are being implemented to coincide with the launch of this strategy and underpin its delivery.

This year the Partnership agreed to adopt a new strategic planning and delivery cycle which will begin in September 2012 and is designed to support the Community Strategy implementation. Each annual cycle will begin with a summit that brings Board members together to consider emerging challenges and opportunities. This will influence the direction the Partnership takes in addressing its priorities over the following twelve months.

### b. Governance and progress monitoring

**PARTNERSHIP BOARD**

Progress against the three Community Strategy priorities will be monitored by both the Partnership Board and Chief Executive Officers Group. The Board meet less frequently and will provide high level oversight of progress, ensuring that partners are on track and commitment is maintained. They will also agree the aims of individual task and finish groups and hold them to account, where this responsibility is not formally discharged to the Chief Executive Officers Group.

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### c. Why is it important that we focus on this priority?

At a time when the economy has been in decline both nationally and locally, it is important that we pay particular attention to those that are most vulnerable in our society. We know that some local people and communities are struggling due to rising unemployment, underemployment, higher costs (such as food, fuel and utilities) and cuts to public sector services and national benefit payments. Although local agencies have prioritised protecting frontline services to the most vulnerable, we realise that it is a difficult time for many and vulnerabilities are inevitably heightened. The focus will be on our collective efforts to do the best we can for our most vulnerable neighbourhoods and citizens, through recognition that this is best achieved by working together.
be asked to act as ‘un-blockers’, dismantling barriers or identifying resources to facilitate progress. The group will also work on an ongoing basis to align their services, staff and other resources to support delivery of the priorities and remain alert to emerging challenges and opportunities that may influence the delivery of the strategy.

**TASK AND FINISH GROUPS**

Time limited task and finish groups supporting the priorities will be expected to determine their own measures of success negotiated and agreed with the Partnership. These will form the basis of progress reports delivered to the Chief Executive Officers Group and Board. Members of the Board or Chief Executive Officers Group will wherever possible, be identified as ‘sponsors’ or ‘champions’ to support task and finish groups.

d. **Partnership Team**

The Rotherham Partnership is supported by a Partnership Manager and small team. This team provides the secretariat function for the Board and Chief Executive Officers Group. Members of the Board or Chief Executive Officers Group will wherever possible, be identified as ‘sponsors’ or ‘champions’ to support task and finish groups.

- Lead and participate in a range of partnership based projects
- Facilitate task and finish activity
- Disseminate information across the Partnership
- Broker joint work between partners in support of the Community Strategy priorities.

A new ‘Partnership Steering Group’ consisting of representatives of partner agencies has also recently been established to support the team in fulfilling these roles.

d. **Our partners**

The following partnership bodies are represented on the Partnership Governance Board and the Chief Executive Officers Group. All partners have signed up to the three priorities which are at the heart of this document and have committed to work together to deliver the strategic plan featured on the following page.

- Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council
- South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue
- NHS Rotherham
- Rotherham Hospital Foundation Trust
- Rotherham, Doncaster and South Humber NHS Foundation Trust (RDASH)
- Voluntary Action Rotherham
- Rotherham Further Education colleges
- Rotherham and Barnsley Chamber of Commerce

The partnership team can be contacted on the following telephone number: 01709 822793

Rotherham Partnership, Riverside House, Main Street, Rotherham, S60 1AE

Further information about the Partnership, including a downloadable version of this Strategy can be found using: www.rotherham.gov.uk search “Rotherham Partnership”
Our vision is that: Everyone in Rotherham will have the opportunity to fulfil their potential

We will achieve this by:

- Providing the right environment and opportunities to prepare young people for work by offering support and advice, apprenticeships, work experience and job opportunities
- Supporting those that are seeking work to ensure they have the right attitude, communication skills and confidence to secure work and guide them into achieving the right skills and qualifications
- Benefiting from the work that has begun on developing an “Apprenticeship Hub” for the city region, due to launch in 2013/14
- Supporting the most vulnerable in our community
- Implementing an Early and Foundation Years Development Demonstrator project (one of 8 nationally) to support the delivery of integrated early childhood services which improve outcomes for children & families
- Benefiting from the Rotherham offer to inward investment; developing strategies for the sustainable improvement to our town centre
- Supporting the Family Nurse Partnership initiative which works intensively with young first time mums under 20
- Putting in place a targeted approach in eleven of our most disadvantaged neighbourhoods to support improvement
- Preparing a partnership action plan to mitigate the impact that people will suffer due to the welfare benefit reform programme
- Implementing a three year Families for Change initiative to support over seven hundred families
- Producing a targeted campaign to address the issues of loneliness and isolation in our elderly community

What we want to achieve is:

- Local people will be supported to start up a business and the right conditions will exist to enable these businesses to succeed and grow
- Rotherham’s young people are supported to find work by having the appropriate knowledge and skills
- Families across the borough, particularly those that are disengaged from the labour market are supported to deal with its impact and consequences
- Less older people in Rotherham suffering from loneliness and isolation

Help local people and businesses benefit from a growing economy

Ensure the best start in life for children and families

Support the most vulnerable in our community

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<td>• Those that are disengaged from the labour market are supported to improve their skills, aspirations and work readiness</td>
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<td>• A continued, sustainable improvement in Rotherham’s town centre to generate opportunities for new and existing businesses and ensure the offer attracts further investment into the local economy</td>
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<th>Ensure the best start in life for children and families</th>
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<td>• To address the needs of a child’s early years development ensuring children are ready to realise their potential when they start school, with a focus on the critical pre-birth to 3 year old period</td>
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<td>• A comprehensive and flexible early help offer to support families who have emerging vulnerabilities and prevent their situation from deteriorating</td>
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<td>• Holistic, locally based and family focused services that are tailored to individual community needs</td>
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<td>• Partnership based engagement with communities that helps to build resilient communities that support a future less dependent upon public services</td>
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<td>• A dispersed model of leadership that identifies, works with and supports community ‘champions and advocates’ to facilitate action and organise activities</td>
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<td>• A collaborative effort that ensures those hit hardest by the recession and sustained economic downturn are informed and supported to deal with its impact and consequences</td>
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*Updated 2012-15*
### Partnership Strategies & Plans

- Rotherham Economic Plan
- Early Help Strategy
- Health & Wellbeing Strategy
- Rotherham Volunteering Strategy
- Family Recovery Plan
- Families for Change Plan

### Accountability and governance

- Economy Board
- Work and Skills Board
- Town Centre Partnership Group and Rotherham Voice
- Think Family Steering Group
- Health and Well Being Board
- Safer Rotherham Partnership
- Strategic Housing Partnership

### Partnership principles

Through partnership working we will aim to:

- Deploy our resources where they are most needed to help reduce inequalities
- Work collaboratively and through consensus to address our agreed priorities
- Focus on areas where we can make a difference to local people
- Focus on prevention and early intervention
- Agree common information and data sharing arrangements
- Make sure we work with communities to seek solutions
- Celebrate and recognise people who make an outstanding contribution
- Raise local peoples expectations and aspirations
- Help people to help themselves

### Cross cutting

We will celebrate success and achievement through:

- Rotherham Ambassador Programme
- Community Achievement Awards
- Athena Award

One Town One Community

The three Community Strategy priorities will be underpinned by "One Town One Community": a comprehensive and highly visible initiative, which aims to foster shared values and a shared sense of identity across Rotherham, bringing people together to build better lives for everyone and better communities where people get on well together.