



1 July 2025

RUGBY BOROUGH COUNCIL

A meeting of Rugby Borough Council will be held in the Council Chamber at the Town Hall, Rugby at 7.00pm on Wednesday 9 July 2025.

Members of the public may also view the meeting via the livestream available on the Council's website.

Dan Green
Acting Chief Executive

A G E N D A

PART 1 – PUBLIC BUSINESS

1. Apologies for absence.

2. Minutes.

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 23 April 2025 and the annual meeting held on 15 May 2025.

3. Declaration of Interests.

To receive declarations of -

(a) non-pecuniary interests as defined by the Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors;

(b) pecuniary interests as defined by the Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors; and

(c) notice under Section 106 Local Government Finance Act 1992 - non-payment of Community Charge or Council Tax.

4. To receive the Mayor's Announcements.

5. Appointment of Deputy Mayor 2025/26.
6. Questions pursuant to Standing Order 10.
7. To receive the reports of Cabinet and Committees which have met since the last meeting of the Council and to pass such resolutions and to make such orders thereon as may be necessary:

(a) Cabinet – 24 June 2025

(1) South West Rugby Design Code SPD – adoption – Growth, Investment, Digital and Communications Portfolio.

(2) Communication and Engagement Strategy - Growth, Investment, Digital and Communications Portfolio.

(3) Asylum Seeker Support from Warwickshire County Council – Communities, Homes, Regulation and Safety Portfolio.

(4) Capital Programme – Roof Replacement - Communities, Homes, Regulation and Safety Portfolio.

(5) Communications Plan and Collections Rescheduling for Food Waste 2026 – Operations and Traded Services Portfolio.

8. To receive and consider the reports of officers.
 - (a) Appointment of interim Monitoring Officer – report of the Acting Chief Executive.
 - (b) Annual report of urgent decisions – report of the Acting Chief Executive.
 - (c) Town Centre Business Rates support scheme – report of the Chief Officer – Finance and Performance.
9. Notices of Motion pursuant to Standing Order 11 – in accordance with the Council's Constitution, there are no motions on notice to be considered.
10. Motion to Exclude the Public under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

To consider the following resolution:

“under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds they involve the likely disclosure of information defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Act.”

PART 2 – EXEMPT INFORMATION

1. To receive the private reports of Cabinet and Committees which have met since the last meeting of the Council and to pass such resolutions and to make such orders thereon as may be necessary:

(a) Cabinet – 24 June 2025

(1) Write Offs – Finance, Performance, Legal and Governance Portfolio.

2. To receive and consider the private reports of officers.
 - (a) Urgent Decision under Delegated Powers – Works Services Unit - Yard configuration – report of the Acting Chief Executive.

QUESTIONS AT COUNCIL

A Councillor may ask a question at the meeting by giving notice in writing of the question to the Chief Executive no later than midday on Thursday 3 July 2025. The rules relating to Questions are set out in Part 3a of the Council's Constitution.

REPORT OF CABINET

24 June 2025

PRESENT:

Councillors Moran (Chair), C Edwards, Livesey, Mistry, O'Rourke and Robinson.

Councillors Howling, McKenzie, Poole and Roodhouse were also in attendance.

1. SOUTH WEST RUGBY DESIGN CODE SPD - ADOPTION

Cabinet considered a report concerning the proposed adoption of the South West Rugby Design Code supplementary planning document (SPD). The report is available here:

[Cabinet report 24 June 225 - South West Rugby Design Code SPD](#)

Recommendation of Cabinet

Cabinet decided to recommend to Council that –

- (1) the South West Rugby Design Code SPD (attached as appendix 1) be adopted; and
- (2) delegated authority be given to the Chief Officer for Growth and Investment to make minor amendments as necessary following adoption and prior to it being published.

Recommended that – the recommendation of Cabinet be approved.

2. COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Cabinet considered a report concerning a proposed Communications and Engagement Strategy for the Council. The report is available here:

[Cabinet 24 June 2025 - Communication and Engagement Strategy](#)

Recommendation of Cabinet

Cabinet decided to recommend to Council that –

- (1) the Communications and Engagement Strategy, as at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved; and
- (2) delegated authority be granted to the Chief Officer – Digital and Communications to implement the strategy as appropriate and make minor changes to the strategy.

Recommended that – the recommendation of Cabinet be approved.

3. ASYLUM SEEKER SUPPORT FROM WARWICKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Cabinet considered a report concerning proposals for utilising two allocations of funding that have been awarded to the Council, in respect of the provision of support for asylum seekers living in the borough. The report is available here:

[Cabinet 24 June 2025 - Asylum Seeker Support from Warwickshire County Council](#)

Recommendation of Cabinet

Cabinet decided to recommend to Council that –

- (1) a supplementary General Fund revenue budget of £319,650 be established to enable the transfer of funding to Warwickshire County Council (WCC);
- (2) the transfer of this funding to WCC be conditional on their:
 - i) providing transparent and regular reporting, to the Chief Officer for Communities and Homes, setting out how the funds have been utilised and demonstrating the value of outcomes achieved, and
 - ii) returning any unutilised funds to the Council.
- (3) the remaining funding be held as a reserve to support any financial pressures arising from increased homelessness within the cohort during 2025/26;
- (4) delegated authority be given to the Chief Officer for Communities and Homes to utilise the remaining funding, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Communities and Homes, Regulation and Safety; and
- (5) any unutilised funding as at 31 March 2026 be returned to balances.

Recommended that – the recommendation of Cabinet be approved.

5. CAPITAL PROGRAMME – ROOF REPLACEMENT

Cabinet considered a report concerning approval for funding to launch a capital programme for the replacement of roofs to Housing Revenue Account properties. The report is available here:

[Cabinet 24 June 2025 - Capital Programme-Roof replacement](#)

Recommendation of Cabinet

Cabinet decided to recommend to Council that –

- (1) a supplementary budget of £500,000 from Housing Revenue Account Capital reserves be established for phased roof replacement during 2025/26; and
- (2) provision be made at budget setting for 2026/27 onwards for a rolling capital programme of roof replacements.

Recommended that – the recommendation of Cabinet be approved.

6. COMMUNICATIONS PLAN AND COLLECTIONS RESCHEDULING FOR FOOD WASTE 2026

Cabinet considered a report concerning a proposed communications plan, together with funding for resources, to support the introduction of a new weekly food waste collection service. The report is available here:

[Cabinet 24 June 2025 - Communications Plan and Collections Rescheduling for Food Waste 2026](#)

Recommendation of Cabinet

Cabinet decided to recommend to Council that –

- (1) the establishment of posts for a Community Engagement Officer and temporary recruitment of Contact Centre staff, as detailed within section 5 be approved;
- (2) a General Fund supplementary revenue budget of £0.086m for 2025/26 for the Communications Plan, as detailed within section 5, to be financed from DEFRA grant, be approved;
- (3) a General Fund supplementary revenue budget of £0.016m for 2026/27 for the Communications Plan, as detailed within section 5, be considered as part of the budget setting process for 2026/27;
- (4) a General Fund supplementary revenue budget of £0.032m for 2025/26 for salaries for a Community Engagement Officer post and temporary recruitment of Contact Centre staff, as detailed within section 5, to be financed from DEFRA grant, be approved; and
- (5) a General Fund supplementary revenue budget of £0.051m for 2026/27 for salaries for a Community Engagement Officer post and temporary recruitment of Contact Centre staff, as detailed within section 5, be considered as part of the budget setting process for 2026/27.

Recommended that – the recommendation of Cabinet be approved.

**COUNCILLOR M MORAN
CHAIR**

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Report Title:	Appointment of interim Monitoring Officer
Name of Committee:	Council
Date of Meeting:	9 July 2025
Report Director:	Acting Chief Executive
Portfolio:	Finance and Performance, Legal and Governance
Ward Relevance:	All
Prior Consultation:	N/A
Contact Officer:	Dan Green, Acting Chief Executive
Public or Private:	Public
Report Subject to Call-In:	No
Report En-Bloc:	No
Forward Plan:	No
Corporate Priorities:	<p>This report relates to the following priority(ies):</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A Healthier Rugby – To support people to live healthier, longer, and more independent lives.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A Thriving Rugby – To deliver a thriving economy which brings Borough-wide investment and regenerates Rugby Town Centre.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A Greener Rugby – To protect the environment and ensure the Borough adapts to climate change.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A Fairer Rugby – To reduce inequalities and improve housing across the Borough.</p> <p>Corporate Strategy 2025-2035</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> This report does not specifically relate to any Council priorities but is required to ensure proper functioning and management of the authority.</p>
Summary:	<p>The current interim Monitoring Officer is due to leave the authority to pursue a new role within local government.</p> <p>The Council is obliged to appoint a Monitoring Officer under section 5 Local Government and Housing Act 1989. The Council within its constitution has set that the Chief Officer – Legal and Governance undertakes the role of the</p>

Monitoring Officer and gives a variety of delegated functions to this role. It is not a legal requirement for this to be a synonymous appointment; for the purposes of the interim period it is proposed that the delegated functions within the constitution of the Chief Officer – Legal and Governance are undertaken by the Monitoring Officer.

It is recommended that Jeanette McGarry be appointed to the role on an interim basis until John Murphy joins the Council in the permanent role of Chief Officer for Legal and Governance.

Financial Implications:

The costs of the appointment will be met from existing budgets.

Risk Management/Health and Safety Implications:

The appointment of an interim allows the continuity of legal functions until the permanent Chief Officer for Legal and Governance joins the Council.

Environmental Implications:

None from this report.

Legal Implications:

The implications are detailed in the report.

Equality and Diversity:

There are no impacts on protected characteristics from the decision within this report.

Options:

The Council has a duty to appoint a Monitoring Officer. If this recommendation is not accepted an alternative appointment will be needed.

Recommendation:

Jeanette McGarry be appointed as the Council's interim Monitoring Officer and to hold the constitutionally delegated functions of the Chief Officer – Legal and Governance with effect from 2 July 2025.

Reasons for Recommendation:

To ensure the proper functioning of the Council.

Council - 9 July 2025

Appointment of Interim Monitoring Officer

Public Report of the Acting Chief Executive

Recommendation

Jeanette McGarry be appointed as the Council's interim Monitoring Officer and to hold the constitutionally delegated functions of the Chief Officer – Legal and Governance with effect from 2 July 2025.

Background:

The Council has a statutory duty to appoint a Monitoring Officer to fulfil the duties of section 5 Local Government and Housing Act 1989, in addition the Council constitution ties this to the role of Chief Officer – Legal and Governance.

The current interim Monitoring Officer is leaving the Council to take a new post in local government, and accordingly the Council has a duty to make appropriate arrangements.

Jeanette McGarry, an experienced Monitoring Officer, will be joining the Council on 2 July 2025 on an interim basis. It is recommended that Jeanette McGarry be appointed to the role on an interim basis until John Murphy joins the Council in the permanent role of Chief Officer for Legal and Governance in September. A report will be brought to Council in September to confirm his appointment to the role of Monitoring Officer.

The constitutional role of the Monitoring Officer and associated details are set out in Article 12 Part 1B of the constitution.

Name of Meeting: Council

Date of Meeting: 9 July 2025

Subject Matter: Appointment of interim Monitoring Officer

Originating Department: Chief Executive Office

DO ANY BACKGROUND PAPERS APPLY ☐ YES ☒ NO

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Doc No	Title of Document and Hyperlink

The background papers relating to reports on planning applications and which are open to public inspection under Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972, consist of the planning applications, referred to in the reports, and all written responses to consultations made by the Local Planning Authority, in connection with those applications.

☐ Exempt information is contained in the following documents:

Doc No	Relevant Paragraph of Schedule 12A

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Report Title:	Annual Report of Urgent Decisions
Name of Committee:	Council
Date of Meeting:	9 July 2025
Report Director:	Acting Chief Executive
Portfolio:	Finance and Performance, Legal and Governance
Ward Relevance:	All
Prior Consultation:	N/A
Contact Officer:	Linn Ashmore, Democratic Services Officer, linn.ashmore@rugby.gov.uk
Public or Private:	Public
Report Subject to Call-In:	No
Report En-Bloc:	No
Forward Plan:	Yes
Corporate Priorities:	<p>This report relates to the following priority(ies):</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A Healthier Rugby – To support people to live healthier, longer, and more independent lives.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A Thriving Rugby – To deliver a thriving economy which brings Borough-wide investment and regenerates Rugby Town Centre.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A Greener Rugby – To protect the environment and ensure the Borough adapts to climate change.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A Fairer Rugby – To reduce inequalities and improve housing across the Borough.</p> <p>Corporate Strategy 2025-2035</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> This report does not specifically relate to any Council priorities but supports the Council's governance arrangements.</p>
Summary:	Under the Council's Constitution, there is a requirement that decisions taken as a matter of urgency shall be monitored annually, and a report submitted to the Council with proposals for review if necessary.
Financial Implications:	There are no direct financial implications arising from the report.

Risk Management/Health and Safety Implications:	There are no risk management/health and safety implications arising from this report.
Environmental Implications:	There are no environmental implications arising from this report.
Legal Implications:	There are no legal implications arising from this report.
Equality and Diversity:	There are no equality and diversity implications arising from this report.
Options:	N/A
Recommendation:	The summary of urgent decisions taken during 2024-2025, attached at Appendix 1 to the report, be noted.
Reasons for Recommendation:	To comply with the Council's Constitution.

Council - 9 July 2025

Annual Report of Urgent Decisions

Public Report of the Acting Chief Executive

Recommendation

The summary of urgent decisions taken during 2024-2025, attached at Appendix 1 to the report, be noted.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Under the Council's Constitution, there is a requirement that decisions taken as a matter of urgency must be reported to the next available meeting of the Council together with the reasons for urgency, and the operation of the provisions relating to call-in and urgency shall be monitored annually, and a report submitted to the Council with proposals for review if necessary. To comply with the Constitution, the decisions listed in the table at Appendix 1 were all reported to Council meetings during 2024/25.

2. Urgent decisions taken in 2024/25

- 2.1 A table of the urgent decisions taken during the 2024-2025 municipal year is attached at Appendix 1.

Name of Meeting: Council

Date of Meeting: 9 July 2025

Subject Matter: Urgent Decisions - Annual Report

Originating Department: Legal and Governance

DO ANY BACKGROUND PAPERS APPLY ☐ YES ☒ NO

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Doc No	Title of Document and Hyperlink

The background papers relating to reports on planning applications and which are open to public inspection under Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972, consist of the planning applications, referred to in the reports, and all written responses to consultations made by the Local Planning Authority, in connection with those applications.

☐ Exempt information is contained in the following documents:

Doc No	Relevant Paragraph of Schedule 12A

URGENT DECISIONS 2024/25

REPORT TITLE/DECISION SUMMARY	CONSULTEES	SERVICE AREA/OFFICER NAME	REASON FOR URGENCY	DATE DECISION AGREED	DATE OF CABINET/ COUNCIL MEETING
<p>Temporary Transport Manager</p> <p>Adding a temporary transport manager post to the establishment within Operations and Traded Services.</p>	<p>Leader of the Council, Main Opposition Group Leader, Opposition Group Leader, Chair of Scrutiny Committee, Portfolio Holder for Operations and Traded Services, Liberal Democrat Spokesperson for Operations and Traded Services.</p>	<p>Operations and Traded Services Claire Preston – Chief Officer for Operations and Traded Services</p>	<p>To ensure compliance with the legal requirements of managing a fleet of vehicles. Also to ensure safety and mitigate the risks concerned with the transport operations managed by the Council.</p>	16/08/2024	25/09/2024
<p>Workshop Digitalisation Software</p> <p>The purchase of vehicle maintenance software system and suitable hardware devices for the Grounds Maintenance</p>	<p>Leader of the Council, Main Opposition Group Leader, Portfolio Holder for Operations and Traded Services, Chair of Scrutiny Committee.</p>	<p>Operations and Traded Services Claire Owen – Chief Officer for Operations and Traded Services</p>	<p>Following a recent audit, the department was given a short deadline to procure a digitalization software that reduces the risks of a paper-based system.</p>	30/09/2024	16/10/2024

REPORT TITLE/DECISION SUMMARY	CONSULTEES	SERVICE AREA/OFFICER NAME	REASON FOR URGENCY	DATE DECISION AGREED	DATE OF CABINET/ COUNCIL MEETING
team and the Vehicle Maintenance Workshop based at the Waste Services Depot.					
Temporary Appointment to Princethorpe Parish Council Councillor Gillias, as Parish Champion, be appointed to act as a member of Princethorpe Parish Council until co-option of additional qualifying person parishioners can take place to render the Parish Council quorate.	Leader of the Council, Portfolio Holder for Legal and Governance, Main Opposition Group Leader, Opposition Group Leader, Chair of Scrutiny Committee.	Legal and Governance Aftab Razzaq – Chief Officer for Legal and Governance.	To ensure that the Parish Council is able to continue to function and remains quorate.	08/10/2024	20/11/2024

REPORT TITLE/DECISION SUMMARY	CONSULTEES	SERVICE AREA/OFFICER NAME	REASON FOR URGENCY	DATE DECISION AGREED	DATE OF CABINET/ COUNCIL MEETING
<p>Tanser Court – Replacement Boiler and Roof Repair</p> <p>That the Tanser Court boilers be replaced and the roof be repaired.</p>	<p>Leader of the Council, Portfolio Holder for Communities and Homes, Main Opposition Group Leader, Opposition Group Leader, Chair of Scrutiny Committee.</p>	<p>Communities and Homes</p> <p>Michelle Dickson – Chief Officer for Communities and Homes</p>	<p>To ensure that the Council carries out its duties as a landlord, and to ensure that the building continues to meet the regulatory standards for social housing and the legitimate expectations of the residents in terms of the quality of their homes.</p>	31/10/2024	20/11/2024
<p>Purchase of Land at Bronte Close</p> <p>That the Council be authorised to bid at auction to purchase the land at Bronte Close and Currie Close.</p>	<p>Leader of the Council, Portfolio Holder for Partnerships and Wellbeing, Main Opposition Group Leader, Opposition Group Leader.</p>	<p>Partnerships and Wellbeing.</p> <p>David Collins – Property Manager</p>	<p>To meet the deadline for the auction of the two parcels of land, being 13 February 2025.</p>	17/02/2025	04/03/2025

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Report Title:	Town Centre Business Rates Support Scheme 2025/26
Name of Committee:	Council
Date of Meeting:	9 July 2025
Report Director:	Chief Officer - Finance and Performance
Portfolio:	Finance and Performance, Legal and Governance
Ward Relevance:	None
Prior Consultation:	Town Centre Working Group
Contact Officer:	Richard Moore, Revenues Manager richard.moore@rugby.gov.uk
Public or Private:	Public
Report Subject to Call-In:	No
Report En-Bloc:	No
Forward Plan:	No
Corporate Priorities:	<p>This report relates to the following priority(ies):</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A Healthier Rugby – To support people to live healthier, longer, and more independent lives.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A Thriving Rugby – To deliver a thriving economy which brings Borough-wide investment and regenerates Rugby Town Centre.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A Greener Rugby – To protect the environment and ensure the Borough adapts to climate change.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A Fairer Rugby – To reduce inequalities and improve housing across the Borough.</p> <p>Corporate Strategy 2025-2035</p>
Summary:	<p>This report recommends implementing a 50% subsidy for the reduction in the retail, hospitality and leisure business rates relief for independent town centre businesses during the 2025/2026 financial year. This will be tapered based on the length of time that the business has traded in the town centre. This measure targets businesses with a rateable value below £51,000.</p>

Financial Implications:	Based on the proposed subsidy criteria the cost of the scheme would be £103,000 and recommended to be funded from the Town Centre Reserve.
Risk Management/Health and Safety Implications:	There are no risk management implications arising from this report.
Environmental Implications:	There are no environmental implications arising from this report and no Climate Change Impact Assessment is required.
Legal Implications:	<p>The relevant powers for this report are contained within the following legislation:</p> <p>Section 151 Local Government Act 1972 Section 31 Local Government Finance Act 1988 (Non Domestic Rate)</p> <p>It is considered that the proposal to be in accordance with the Council's procedures and lawful.</p>
Equality and Diversity:	An Equality Impact Assessment on this policy is attached at Appendix 1.
Options:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adopt the proposed scheme for 2025/26 to help independent small business in the town centre with the increase in business rates. 2. Do not adopt the scheme and let retailers meet the increased cost.
Recommendation:	The Council implements a 2025/26 subsidy for independent town centre business which is the equivalent of 50% of the reduction in retail, hospitality and leisure business rates relief reduction to the value of £103,000.
Reasons for Recommendation:	This is a scheme that will support the regeneration of the Town Centre with the aim of sustaining trade during a period of transition.

Council - 9 July 2025

Town Centre Business Rates Support Scheme 2025/26

Public Report of the Chief Officer - Finance and Performance

Recommendation

The Council implements a 2025/26 subsidy for independent town centre business which is the equivalent of 50% of the reduction in retail, hospitality and leisure business rates relief reduction to the value of £103,000.

1. Background

- 1.1. Since 2020 the government has offered rate relief on eligible businesses in the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors. (RHL)
- 1.2. From April 1st 2025, the RHL relief reduced from 75% to 40%. It is important to note that business rates have not increased for businesses in these sectors, they've had additional support from government since 2020, that is now being tapered out.
- 1.3. Across the Borough of Rugby, 325 businesses have been eligible for the additional relief from business rates. 135 of those are in the Town Centre area. This number includes national and regional chains are which will not be eligible for the scheme proposed in this report.
- 1.4. The context for this support is the Council is taking a strong, proactive response to solving long term strategic issues in the Town Centre by exploring large scale transformational projects such as purchasing assets and remodelling large sections of the public realm.
- 1.5. The support has been focused on Town Centre operators, those who are independent, offering a contribution of 50% reduction in the RHL relief shortfall for town centre businesses during the 2025/2026 financial year. This support will be tapered with businesses trading since 2020/21, receiving full relief, reducing by 20% year on year after this point.
- 1.6. Those eligible for the support will receive a credit on the business rates account. In the event that the business has paid the rates bill for the year in full, the credit will be added to the 2026/27 bill, unless the business contacts the Revenues and Benefits team specifically for a refund.

2. Criteria for Support

- 2.1. A maximum 50% of the amount of RHL relief lost will be credited to the business rate bill for businesses eligible for the relief that operates in the Town

Centre and have a rateable value of £51,000 or less. This will be tapered based on the amount of time the business has traded in the town centre.

- **2020/21 – maximum credit**
- **2021/22 – 80% credit**
- **2022/23 – 60% credit**
- **2023/24 - 40% credit**
- **2024/25 – 20% credit**
- **2025/26 – 0% credit**

- 2.2. The Council will use its discretion to identify all eligible Town Centre businesses with the focus being on independent rather than national chains.
- 2.3. National and regional chains with more than five outlets will not be eligible for support.
- 2.4. Businesses receiving the support will not be eligible for any further support on business rates from any other council scheme in the 2025/26 financial year.
- 2.5. Businesses will have to sign and return a letter acknowledging the value of the support and agreeing to let their details be used by the Council for the purposes of marketing and communication around public funded business support schemes and engagement.
- 2.6. The funding will be conditional that the business remains in the town centre for the full year.
- 2.7. Failure to meet the requirements of the scheme will result in the credit being withdrawn and the full rates bill for the year will be due.

3. Priorities and Constraints

- 3.1. If the scheme is adopted, there are priorities and constraints that should be taken into consideration, as per the following:-
- 3.2. Support will only be available for those Businesses that operate in the Town Centre and are subject to RHL relief – defined as the BID boundary plus extending to the parade of shops opposite the Lawrence Sheriff school.
- 3.3. Town Centre businesses are arguably in a more challenging position than other businesses in the same sectors across the Borough. They face additional challenges such as:
 - Higher business rates liability due to their location.
 - Increased costs and additional liabilities due to their location.
 - Higher levels of competition with businesses of a similar nature

- Town Centre businesses are seen to be less accessible for ad hoc purchases compared with other businesses in the same sectors.
- 3.4. The process of delivering and administering the support needs to be as simple as possible, both for the businesses and for the Council. Therefore, businesses will automatically have their account credited, they will not have to apply. However, they will be written to informing them of the support. This is to ensure that the process is as simple as possible for the Council but also that the support goes towards the cost of business rates and not unnecessary administration.
 - 3.5. Creating a scheme such as this is subject to professional judgement, and ultimately this is open to question and challenge, even if the Council has defined its policy. Therefore, it is proposed that businesses with a rateable value of £51,000 and below are eligible for funding. Support will not be given for any business that are national or regional chains.
 - 3.6. The benefit will only be provided if the business remains in the town centre boundary for the year (year of Billing). If during the year the business relocates outside of the agreed boundary, the credit will be removed from the business account.
 - 3.7. A revaluation of rateable values is anticipated in 2026/27 though the details of the scheme are not yet known. Consequently, it is proposed that the Council only commits to any scheme for one year but will keep this under review.

4. Grant or Subsidy?

- 4.1. Advice on the scheme identifies that this support is effectively a *subsidy* as the support is being provided to subsidise costs of business rates.
- 4.2. It would be hard to define this as a *grant* as ultimately the Council is strictly limiting the purpose of the support, would credit their NNDR account and is not asking for any specific output or outcome in return for the grant.
- 4.3. The Council could decide to offer a grant instead. However, it would need to offer this money as a generic support that the business could use for its own purpose which it would have to stipulate. This would involve businesses making an application. Even with a minimal process the Council this would be add a delay and administration costs.

5. Risks

There are the following risks:

- 5.1. The scheme is deliberately exclusive for strategic reasons above but there is the risk that businesses outside of the Town Centre might challenge this and seek similar support given the general economic conditions. There is a strong argument to explain why Town Centre businesses need the support over others, but this needs to be sensitively and effectively explained. If the support is extended to all businesses affected by the changes, then the maximum amount of financial support required rises by an *additional* £122,000.

- 5.2. RHL businesses have already had an advantage over other businesses in the last few years but they may ask for support. A robust explanation should be in place for why RHL businesses are supported over others.
- 5.3. Other district councils have been contacted for comparison and none of them have plans to provide any similar support. Rugby may be taken as a national exception, either positively raising its profile or putting additional pressure on the risks already outlined.
- 5.4. The risk facing the Council is that applying this scheme in 2025/26 may lead to businesses expecting further support beyond 2025/26. This could be financially challenging given the existing resource implications for the General Fund.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1. The following tables show the costs of intervention this financial year, subject to different criteria.

- 6.2. Grant to affected business with proposed criteria implemented.

Business criteria	Estimated number of businesses impacted	Cost to Council £000s
Business traded since 2020/21	55	75
Business traded since 2021/22	5	5
Business traded since 2022/23	15	13
Business traded since 2023/24	16	7
Business traded since 2024/25	16	3
Total	107	103

Name of Meeting: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 9 July 2025

Subject Matter: Town Centre Business Rates Support Scheme 2025/26

Originating Department: Finance and Performance

DO ANY BACKGROUND PAPERS APPLY ☐ YES ☐ NO

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Doc No	Title of Document and Hyperlink

The background papers relating to reports on planning applications and which are open to public inspection under Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972, consist of the planning applications, referred to in the reports, and all written responses to consultations made by the Local Planning Authority, in connection with those applications.

☐ Exempt information is contained in the following documents:

Doc No	Relevant Paragraph of Schedule 12A

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EqIA)

Context

1. The Public Sector Equality Duty as set out under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires Rugby Borough Council when making decisions to have due regard to the following:
 - eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and other conduct prohibited by the Act,
 - advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not,
 - fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.
2. The characteristics protected by the Equality Act are:
 - age
 - disability
 - gender reassignment
 - marriage/civil partnership
 - pregnancy/maternity
 - race
 - religion/belief
 - sex/gender
 - sexual orientation
3. In addition to the above-protected characteristics, you should consider the crosscutting elements of the proposed policy, such as impact on social inequalities and impact on carers who look after older people or people with disabilities as part of this assessment.
4. The Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) document is a tool that enables RBC to test and analyse the nature and impact of what it is currently doing or is planning to do in the future. It can be used flexibly for reviewing existing arrangements but in particular should enable identification where further consultation, engagement and data is required.
5. The questions will enable you to record your findings.
6. Where the EqIA relates to a continuing project, it must be reviewed and updated at each stage of the decision.
7. Once completed and signed off the EqIA will be published [online](#).
8. An EqIA must accompany all **Key Decisions** and **Cabinet Reports**.
9. For further information, refer to the EqIA guidance for staff.
10. For advice and support, contact:

Rebecca Ewers
Corporate Equality & Diversity Officer
rebecca.ewers@rugby.gov.uk
01788 533509

Equality Impact Assessment

Service Area	Revenues And Benefits/Finance and performance
Policy/Service being assessed	Town Centre Business Rates Support Scheme 2025/26
Is this a new or existing policy/service? If existing policy/service, please state date of last assessment	This is a new policy for 2025/26 only
EqlA Review Team – List of members	Richard Moore
Date of this assessment	27 June 2025
Signature of responsible officer (to be signed after the EqlA has been completed)	Jon Illingworth

A copy of the completed and signed Equality Impact Assessment report, including relevant data and information to be forwarded to the Corporate Equality & Diversity Officer.

Details of Strategy/ Service/ Policy to be analysed

<u>Stage 1 – Policy to be analysed</u>	
(1) Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the Strategy/Service/Policy (or decision)?	This policy is a 50% subsidy for the reduction in the retail, hospitality and leisure business rates relief for independent town centre businesses during the 2025/2026 financial year. This will be tapered based on the length of time that the business has traded in the town centre. This measure targets businesses with a rateable value below £51,000.
(2) How does it fit with Rugby Borough Council's Corporate priorities and your service area priorities?	The policy relates to the “thriving rugby priority” and supports the town centre economy in the town
(3) What are the expected outcomes you are hoping to achieve?	The Council taking a strong, proactive response to solving long term strategic issues in the Town Centre by exploring large scale transformational projects such as purchasing assets and remodelling large sections of the public realm. This policy is to support those independent town centre businesses most impacted by the reduction in RHL relief.
(4) Does or will the policy or decision affect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customers • Employees • Wider community or groups 	Directly impacts independent town centre businesses who have seen a reduction in RHL relief.
(5) Will the policy or decision involve substantial changes in resources?	There will be a one-off credit on the business rates account of the eligible businesses
<u>Stage 2 – Evidence about user population and consultation</u>	As a minimum you must consider what is known about the population likely to be affected which will support your understanding of the impact of the policy, e.g. service uptake/usage, customer satisfaction surveys, staffing data, performance data, research information (national, regional and local data sources).

Appendix 1

<p>(1) What does the data tell you about the groups this policy or decision impacts?</p> <p>Possible data sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • national statistics/census data • local statistics • evaluations • analysis of complaints • user feedback • outcomes from consultation/community voice • Council published information, service data • District and Ward Profile – Warwickshire Observatory • Office of National Statistics • Fingertips health profiles • Indices of Multiple Deprivation • RBC Annual Workforce Equality Report 	<p>Officers have liaised with Rugby Business Group (c100 members) and officers have analysed the information from the valuation list.</p> <p>The analysis undertaken by officers has identified that around 110 businesses will be positively impacted by the scheme. The tapering of the scheme is based on the length of time the business has been trading in the town centre. The subsidy reduces by 20% a year with the traders from 2020/21 getting the full amount and those trading from 2025/26 getting nothing as part of this scheme.</p>
<p>(2a) Have you consulted or involved those groups that are likely to be affected by the strategy/ service/policy you want to implement?</p> <p>If yes, please state which groups were involved in the consultation and what were their views and how have their views influenced the policy/decision?</p>	<p>Officers have liaised with Rugby Business Group (c100 members) and officers have analysed the information from the valuation list.</p>

(2b) If you have not consulted or engaged with communities that are likely to be affected by the policy/decision, give details about when you intend to carry out consultation or provide reasons for why you feel this is not necessary.	Not required		
<u>Stage 3 – Analysis of impact</u>			
<p>(1) <u>Protected Characteristics</u> From your data and consultations is there any positive, adverse or negative impact identified for any particular group, which could amount to discrimination?</p> <p>If yes, identify the groups and how they are affected.</p>	Protected Characteristic	Nature of Impact Positive, Neutral, Adverse (explain why)	Extent of impact Low, medium, high
	Age	Neutral – aimed at businesses not individuals	
	Disability	Neutral – aimed at businesses not individuals	
	Sex	Neutral – aimed at businesses not individuals	
	Gender reassignment	Neutral – aimed at businesses not individuals	
	Marriage/civil partnership	Neutral – aimed at businesses not individuals	
	Pregnancy/maternity	Neutral – aimed at businesses not individuals	
	Race	Neutral – aimed at businesses not individuals	
	Religion/belief	Neutral – aimed at businesses not individuals	
	Sexual Orientation	Neutral – aimed at businesses not individuals	

Appendix 1

(2) <u>Cross cutting themes</u> (a) Are your proposals likely to impact on social inequalities e.g. child poverty, geographically disadvantaged communities? If yes, please explain how?	Description of impact	Nature of impact Positive, Neutral, Adverse (explain why)	Extent of impact Low, medium, high
	Socio-economic e.g.: child poverty, income level, education level, working hours/occupation, family/social support, access to good nutrition	Positive – support for traders in a time of increased cost	
	Environmental e.g.: housing status, transport links, geography, access to services, air quality, noise pollution	Positive – supporting local independent trading in the town centre	
(3) Using the information gathered in stages 2 and 3, please describe how the policy/strategy/service will: a. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other unlawful conduct prohibited by the act. b. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share and people who do not share a relevant protected characteristic. c. Foster good relations between people who share and people who do not share a relevant protected characteristic.	The scheme is based on the national records as to when the business began trading in the town centre.		
(4) Are there any obvious barriers to accessing the service? If yes, how can they be overcome?	Only those businesses that meet the criteria will receive the subsidy – but this will be credited automatically to the account of the business.		

Appendix 1

<p>(5) What Equality Monitoring Data will be collected to analyse impact? How will the Equality Monitoring Data collected be used?</p> <p>If no Equality Monitoring Data is being collected, why not?</p> <p>For support with this section, please refer to the Equality Monitoring Guidance.</p>	<p>No data will be recorded – however officers will review the activity in the town centre. Those businesses that move out of the area will have the credit withdrawn.</p>
<p>(6) Complete this section if any adverse impacts were identified in 3.1.</p> <p>Outline any actions that will be taken to remove or mitigate the adverse impacts identified in 3.1 to ensure that no discrimination is taking place. If removing or mitigating the impact is not possible, you may in certain circumstances, justify the discrimination. If that is the case, please give evidence for why justifying is possible in this case.</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>

<p><u>Stage 4 – Action Planning, Review and Monitoring</u></p>	
<p>(1) Data analysis What does feedback from Equality Monitoring Data gathered tell you about impact on groups? Were there any unforeseen impacts (positive or negative)?</p> <p>The feedback/data should be used to inform your Action Plan in (2)</p>	<p>This Equality Impact Assessment will be reviewed by Jon Illingworth, Chief Officer for Finance and Performance</p>

<p>If No Further Action is required then go to – Review and Monitoring</p> <p>(2) Action Planning – Specify any changes or improvements that can be made to the service or policy to mitigate or eradicate negative or adverse impact on specific groups, including resource implications.</p>	<p>EqlA Action Plan</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Action</th> <th>Lead Officer</th> <th>Date for completion</th> <th>Resource requirements</th> <th>Comments</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> </tbody> </table>					Action	Lead Officer	Date for completion	Resource requirements	Comments																				
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<p>(3) Review and Monitoring</p> <p>State how and when you will monitor policy and Action Plan. Will you make any changes to the Equality Data that you are collecting or how you are collecting/using the data?</p>																														

Please annotate your policy with the following statement:

‘An Equality Impact Assessment on this policy was undertaken on (date of assessment) and will be reviewed on (insert review date).’