



21 June 2024

CABINET – 1 JULY 2024

A meeting of Cabinet will be held at 6.00pm on Monday 1 July 2024 in the Council Chamber at the Town Hall, Rugby.

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

Mannie Ketley
Chief Executive

A G E N D A PART 1 – PUBLIC BUSINESS

1. Minutes.

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2024.

2. Apologies.

To receive apologies for absence from the meeting.

3. Declarations of Interest.

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.

Note: Councillors are reminded that they should declare the existence and nature of their interests at the commencement of the meeting (or as soon as the interest becomes apparent). If that interest is a prejudicial interest, the Councillor must withdraw from the room unless one of the exceptions applies.

Membership of Warwickshire County Council or any Parish Council is classed as a non-pecuniary interest under the Code of Conduct. A Councillor does not need to declare this interest unless the Councillor chooses to speak on a matter relating to their membership. If the Councillor does not wish to speak on the matter, the Councillor may still vote on the matter without making a declaration.

4. Question Time.

Notice of questions from the public should be delivered in writing or by e-mail to the Chief Executive at least three clear working days prior to the meeting (no later than Tuesday 25 June 2024).

Growth and Investment, Digital and Communications Portfolio

5. Natural Capital Investment Strategy.

6. Customer Services Centre Direct Debit Digitisation Programme.

Partnerships and Wellbeing Portfolio

Nothing to report to this meeting.

Finance, Performance, Legal and Governance Portfolio

7. Finance and Performance Monitoring 2023/24 – Year End.

8. Appointment of Working Groups 2024/25 – key working groups.

Communities, Homes, Regulation and Safety Portfolio

9. Renaming of Biart Place.

10. Bereavement Services Cemetery and Crematorium Regulations Review.

11. Parking improvements – new ticket machines, RingGo extension and trials.

Operations and Traded Services Portfolio

12. Grounds Maintenance Manager (report to follow).

Organisational change Portfolio

Nothing to report to this meeting.

The following item contains reports which are to be considered en bloc subject to any Portfolio Holder requesting discussion of an individual report

13. Councillors' Allowances 2023/24.

PART 2 – EXEMPT INFORMATION

There is no business involving exempt information to be considered.

Any additional papers for this meeting can be accessed via the website.

The Reports of Officers are attached.

Membership of Cabinet:

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

CALL-IN PROCEDURES

Publication of the decisions made at this meeting will normally be within three working days of the decision. Each decision will come into force at the expiry of five working days after its publication. This does not apply to decisions made to take immediate effect. Call-in procedures are set out in detail in Standing Order 15 of Part 3c of the Constitution.

If you have any general queries with regard to this agenda please contact Claire Waleczek, Democratic and Support Services Manager (01788 533524 or e-mail claire.waleczek@rugby.gov.uk). Any specific queries concerning reports should be directed to the listed contact officer.

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Report Title: Natural Capital Investment Strategy

Name of Committee: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 1 July 2024

Report Director: Chief Officer Growth and Investment

Portfolio: Growth and Investment

Ward Relevance: All

Prior Consultation: Climate Emergency Working Group

Contact Officer: Nicola Smith Chief Officer Growth and Investment
Nicola.smith@rugby.gov.uk

Public or Private: Public

Report Subject to Call-In: No

Report En-Bloc: No

Forward Plan: Yes

Corporate Priorities: This report relates to the following priority(ies):
 Rugby is an environmentally sustainable place, where we work together to reduce and mitigate the effects of climate change. (C)
 Rugby has a diverse and resilient economy that benefits and enables opportunities for all residents. (E)
 Residents live healthy, independent lives, with the most vulnerable protected. (HC)
 Rugby Borough Council is a responsible, effective and efficient organisation. (O)
[Corporate Strategy 2021-2024](#)
 This report does not specifically relate to any Council priorities but

Summary:

This report seeks approval to adopt the jointly commissioned Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Natural Capital Investment Strategy (NCIS) as the basis for utilising natural capital funding across the sub-region.

Financial Implications:

The development of the NCIS was funded by Warwickshire County Council. It is estimated that a further £75,000 will be required to complete the Natural Capital Investment Implementation Plan (NCIIP) and it is proposed that, subject to legal confirmation, the development of the NCIIP should be funded from the existing Section 106 offsetting funds held by Warwickshire County Council. Therefore, it is not expected that additional funding will be required from Rugby Borough Council to prepare the NCIIP. However in the event that there are legal impediments for using existing Section 106 funds in the way proposed, the eight participating authorities may be asked to consider funding the NCIIP for up to £10,000 each.

Risk Management/ Implications: A full risk analysis will be developed as part of the NCIIP to be scrutinised by the, to be appointed Board, before any formal adoption of the NCIIP as required by each partner local authority.

For all ecosystem services markets a mitigation hierarchy will be developed in the NCIIP (similar to the existing BNG hierarchy in figure 2) which will influence and determine what mitigation will be required and where it should be carried out.

Legal Implications:

Taking a sub-regional approach to the Investment Strategy and Implementation Plan will make it easier to align the strategy and delivery with the Environment Act 2021 and emerging Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS). This will also reflect and enhance the overlap between the Warwickshire LNRS. It will also provide a platform for the effective delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain.

Equality and Diversity:

To ensure that all residents are impacted by the source of the funding benefit from the investment, a sequential mitigation hierarchy similar to that used for Biodiversity Net Gain will be applied to decide where the compensation is to be sited.

Climate Implications

The NCIS and NCIIP will provide long-term, sustainable funding and income sources to support the delivery of Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull's Green Infrastructure Strategy and the Local Nature Recovery Strategy as well as local strategies.

Options

Option 1

Adopt the Natural Capital Investment Strategy

Option 2

Do not adopt the Natural Capital Investment Strategy. This option would however leave the Council without a strategic approach to investing in natural capital, meaning that investments are made in an ad hoc way, thereby leaving the Borough vulnerable to missed opportunities, slow delivery and reduced benefits, or would require a local strategy to be developed which could still deliver a positive approach, but would fail to deliver to the multiple benefits set out in this report.

Recommendation: IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL THAT:

1. subject to the other partners doing likewise, the Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Local Authorities Natural Capital Investment Strategy as set out in Appendix 1 be adopted;
2. the proposals to develop the Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Local Authorities Natural Capital Investment Implementation Plan are agreed and a further report is brought back to Council for approval on completion of that work; and
3. subject to recommendations 1 and 2 being agreed, the Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Natural Capital Investment Board and Natural Capital Investment Management Group are established to enable the delivery of the Strategy

Reasons for Recommendation:

The Natural Capital Investment Strategy and Natural Capital Investment Implementation Plan will provide long-term, sustainable funding and income sources to support the delivery of Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull's Green Infrastructure Strategy and the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (in preparation), as well as delivering the aims of the Council's Corporate Strategy and Climate Strategy.

Cabinet - 1 July 2024

Natural Capital Investment Strategy

Public Report of the Chief Officer for Growth and Investment

Recommendation

IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL THAT:

- (1) subject to the other partners doing likewise, the Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Local Authorities Natural Capital Investment Strategy as set out in Appendix 1 be adopted;
- (2) the proposals to develop the Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Local Authorities Natural Capital Investment Implementation Plan are agreed and a further report is brought back to Council for approval on completion of that work; and
- (3) subject to recommendations 1 and 2 being agreed, the Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Natural Capital Investment Board and Natural Capital Investment Management Group are established to enable the delivery of the Strategy.

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report seeks approval to adopt the jointly commissioned Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Natural Capital Investment Strategy (NCIS) as the basis for utilising natural capital funding across the sub-region. The Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Local Authorities Natural Capital Investment Strategy (NCIS), see Appendix 1, has been developed and is now ready to be adopted by all eight local authorities in Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull.
- 1.2 Once adopted, the next stage in the process will be to agree to the development of the Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Local Authorities Natural Capital Investment Implementation Plan (NCIIP).
- 1.3 In addition, the report proposes that the governance arrangements are put in place to oversee the delivery of the strategy, including developing an Implementation Plan to address the elements set out in Appendix 2.
- 1.4 To manage the NCIS and NCIIP, the Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Natural Capital Investment Board and Natural Capital Investment Management Group would be established.

- 1.5 The NCIS was presented to Climate Emergency Working Group on 12th March. Members of the Working Group were supportive of adopting the Strategy.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Those who live, work, visit or do business in Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull draw varied benefits and value from the rich and diverse natural environment of the region. Investing in our natural capital will help us to recognise and improve the value of the natural environment, the benefits it provides us and embed this within the approach we take to addressing a range of local priorities. This will enable us to develop income and funding streams, allowing us to invest in the protection, enhancement and recovery of our natural capital assets in Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull. This work will be fundamental to reversing nature's decline and securing the continued provision of services and benefits provided by nature and the environment.
- 2.2 The NCIS provides a mechanism for delivering some element of the Biodiversity Action. It provides the potential to use resources to bring the greatest benefits to biodiversity across the sub-region. Within Rugby it provides the opportunity to identify and fund investment in a range of natural assets to bring about benefits for biodiversity, flooding and carbon sequestration.
- 2.3 Officers have worked in partnership with Warwickshire County Council, Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, Coventry City Council and the other Districts and Boroughs in Warwickshire to produce the Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Local Authorities Natural Capital Investment Strategy, see Appendix 1. This is a top-level local authority strategy which specifically manages how the sub-region Local Authorities will utilise the nature-based compensation monies, and other income streams, generated through the planning system (for example Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)) or other voluntary environmental markets.
- 2.4 The NCIS gives a strategic direction for the local authorities to achieve and implement investment in Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull's natural capital assets. It lays the foundations for a detailed Natural Capital Investment Implementation Plan (NCIIP) that will describe what actions are required, how they will be carried out, who will be involved and how funding will be distributed, monitored and reported. The proposed elements to be addressed in the NCIIP are set out in Appendix 2.
- 2.5 The overall strategic aim of the NCIS is: *“Local authorities in Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull will use the income raised from environmental markets and nature-based compensation schemes to enhance nature and the environment, benefit its people and help tackle climate change. They will do this through an agreed, region-wide strategy and Natural Capital Investment Implementation Plan.”*

3. BENEFITS OF A SUB REGIONAL APPROACH TO NICS

3.1 Taking a sub-regional approach to natural capital investment has many advantages:

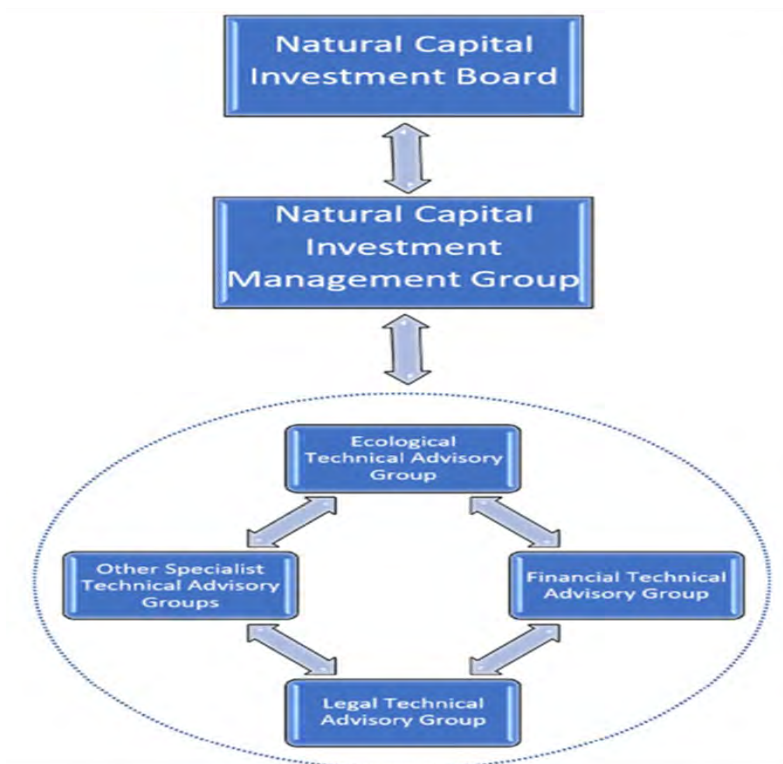
- **Together we are stronger than the sum of our parts:** By working together with a common approach, we can pool our resources and expertise in a cost-effective and efficient manner to create a more comprehensive and effective strategy for protecting and restoring our natural environment. We can also leverage each other's strengths to find innovative solutions and approaches that would be difficult for any single district or borough to achieve.
- **Utilising combined resources:** By working together, we can combine our resources, such as staff, volunteers, equipment and funding to achieve more than we could on our own. This will allow us to implement more ambitious projects and achieve greater results.
- **Attracting greater levels of investment:** The NCIS and NCIIP will develop new investment, income and funding streams which will drive the development of ambitious and impactful projects. By creating a joint sub-regional Investment Strategy and Implementation Plan, we can offer investors a stable and low-risk platform for those looking to advance environmental goals or invest ethically.
- **Develop a project pipeline:** The NCIIP will include a region-wide pipeline of shovel and investment ready projects. These will allow swift and efficient reactions to funding, buying or investment opportunities and further develop a regional environmental vision and identity.
- **Each local authority will benefit in the same way, proportionally, over the lifespan of the strategy:** Full details of how the benefiting environmental projects will be chosen and funded will be explained within the NCIIP and will be closely linked to the sub-regional Green Infrastructure Strategy, the respective Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) and the ecosystem services trading protocol.
- **Best for nature – a ‘more, bigger, better & joined up’ approach delivered at a local scale:** A regional NCIS will allow us to take a more comprehensive, shared approach to protecting and restoring our natural environment. We can identify and address cross-boundary issues, such as air pollution and water quality, and work together to develop a more connected and resilient network of natural habitats.
- **Delivering natural capital benefits, climate change mitigation and resilience which will benefit local people:** The NCIS will help to deliver a wide range of benefits for communities across Warwickshire, Coventry, and Solihull. These will include improved air quality, cleaner water, increased biodiversity, healthier people, and a more resilient environment in the face of climate change.

- **Working alongside other regional and national policies and strategies:** This joint sub-regional Investment Strategy and Implementation Plan will make it easier to align our strategies with the environmental ambitions of the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) and national initiatives including the Environment Act 2021 and emerging LNRS. This will also reflect and enhance the overlap between the Warwickshire LNRS and WMCA LNRS.

4. GOVERNANCE

- 4.1 Governance of the NCIIP will be managed by the Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Natural Capital Investment Board. The Board will be supported by a Natural Capital Investment Management Group and Technical Advisory Groups (Figure 1).
- 4.2 Board membership will be comprised of the relevant Cabinet Members, or representative, from each of the eight constituent local authorities. Supported by the officer-led Management Group, the Board will be the key steering and decision-making body in relation to the allocation and investment of current S106 funds and future local authority environmental income streams. It will ensure that decisions made in respect of natural capital investment are transparent, sustainable and ultimately maximise the benefit to the environment and the local communities in Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull.

Figure 1: Governance Structure



5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Taken as a whole and over time, the Strategy seeks to ensure a proportionate distribution of the funding to enable all communities within the sub-region to benefit in a fair way. In the short-term, the flexibility offered by working together means that some funding arising in one part of the sub-region may not be spent directly within the area if there are no suitable investable projects. However, by focusing on bringing forward investable projects in areas where underspending has occurred, it is expected that over time and fair balance will be struck.
- 5.2 Income will be generated through planning contributions, trading credits/units from ecosystem service markets (such as Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), carbon offsetting, Green social prescribing, etc) and/or regulatory compensation mechanisms linked to local authority regulatory functions.
- 5.3 Existing funds relating to the already established Biodiversity Offsetting scheme are held by Warwickshire County Council within various local authority Section 106 accounts. Where these are held to be paid incrementally to project delivery organisations on an annual basis (in other words released on annual basis over time – sometimes as much as 30 years), there are significant interim funds which are available and could be invested, subject to applying strict criteria to manage risk and deliver benefits. In addition, some of these offset schemes have also delivered financial surpluses.
- 5.4 Until recently the Warwickshire Biodiversity Offsetting scheme has seen funding from Rugby being provided to Warwickshire County Council to oversee the funding of offsetting initiatives, including funding for ongoing management. The NCIS provides an opportunity for more local influence over where and how natural capital monies are spent.
- 5.5 Current, or nearly established, ecosystem services markets applicable to Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull are:
- Biodiversity Net Gain - already established in Warwickshire through planning and mandatory from 12 February 2024
 - The Net Zero Carbon Buildings Planning Policy providing capital for Woodland Carbon (through implementation of the Warwickshire Carbon Standard and Woodland Carbon Code)
 - District Level Licensing funding (e.g. great crested newts)
- 5.6 Other ecosystem services markets which could be applicable to Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull are:
- Future carbon markets, including soil, grassland and hedgerows.
 - Air quality
 - Flood risk mitigation
 - Nutrient neutrality
 - Water quality
 - Green social prescribing
 - Health and wellbeing
- 5.7 The NCIIP will investigate the funding mechanisms to deliver the NCIS and NCIIP under the instruction to follow a full cost recovery principle.

5.8 Figure 2 below sets out the hierarchy that will be used to allocate, noting that the lowest level (“Elsewhere in England”) will only be used in exceptional circumstances and then only with the agreement of the Natural Capital Investment Board.

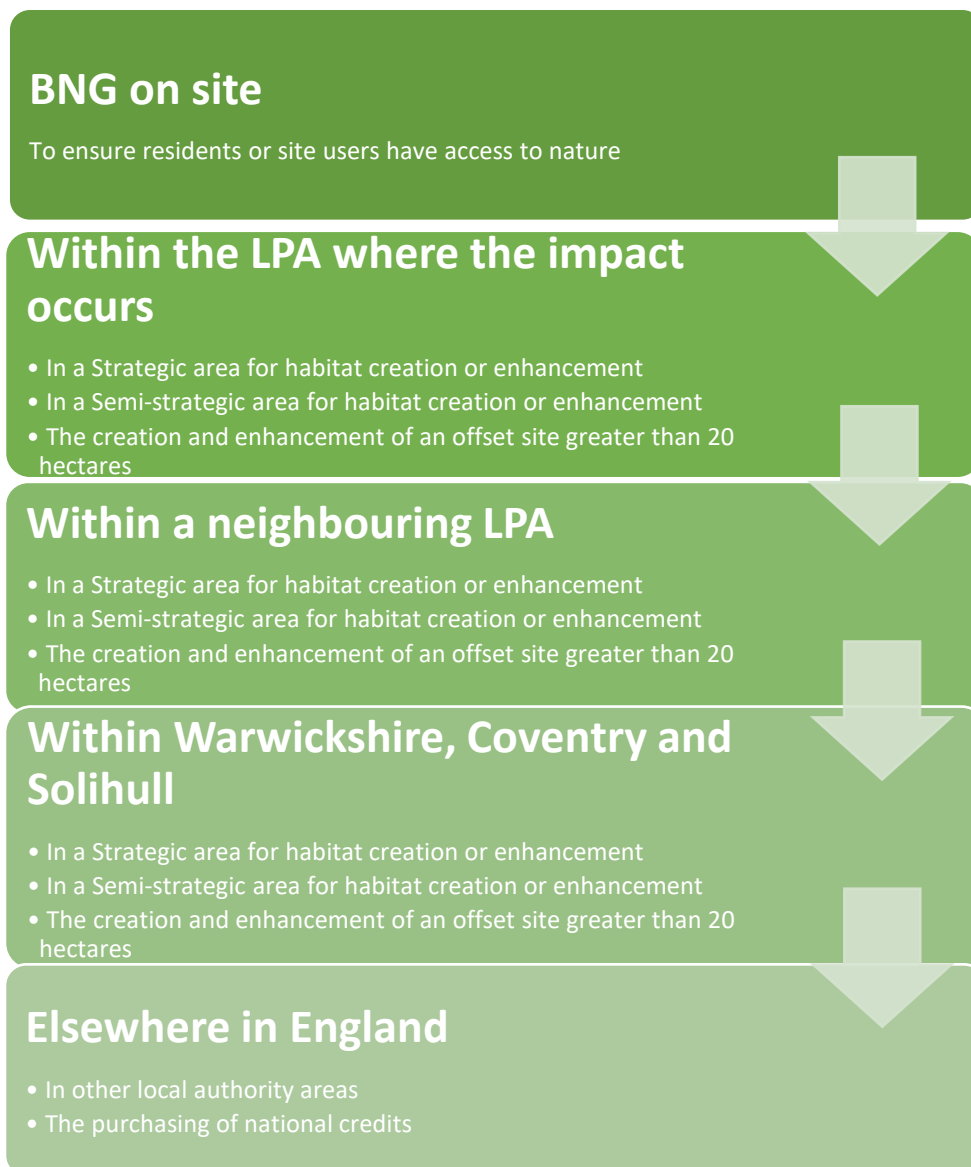


Figure 1: Biodiversity Net Gain sequential mitigation hierarchy for Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull (based upon the Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Green Infrastructure Strategy) presented as an example of mitigation hierarchy.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 The NCIS gives a strategic direction for the local authorities to achieve and implement investment in Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull’s natural capital assets. It lays the foundations for a detailed Natural Capital Investment Implementation Plan that will describe what actions are required, how they will

be carried out, who will be involved and how funding will be distributed, monitored and reported.

- 6.2 By working together with other Warwickshire authorities, with a common approach, the councils can pool their resources and expertise in a cost-effective and efficient manner to create a more comprehensive and effective strategy for protecting and restoring our natural environment. They can also leverage each other's strengths to find innovative solutions and approaches that would be difficult for any single district or borough to achieve.

Name of Meeting: Cabinet
Date of Meeting: 1 July 2024
Subject Matter: Natural Capital Investment Strategy
Originating Department: Growth and Investment

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



Investing in our natural environment - Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Local Authorities Natural Capital Investment Strategy

(DRAFT)



Prepared by
Chris Bowden Consulting and Warwickshire County Council
Ecology, Landscape & Historic Environment Team,
supported by the Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Local Authorities
NCIS Project Board and Working Group.

January 2024

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Acknowledgements

This strategy was produced by Chris Bowden and the Warwickshire County Council Ecology, Landscape & Historic Environment Team, supported by the Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Local Authorities NCIS Project Board and Working Group.

The authors would like to thank all members of the NCIS Project Board and Working Group for their work, advice, encouragement and support during this project.

1 Executive Summary

1.1 Warwickshire County Council funded work to produce a natural capital investment strategy for all local authorities within Warwickshire. Given the focused nature of this document and the clear partnerships already in place, it will also be inclusive of Coventry and Solihull Local Authorities and will complement any additional natural capital investment strategies they may adopt.

1.2 The Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Local Authorities Natural Capital Investment Strategy (known henceforth as the NCIS) has been adopted as a top-level local authority strategy which specifically manages how the sub-region Local Authorities will utilise the nature-based compensation monies, and other income streams, generated through the planning system or other voluntary environmental markets.

1.3 The NCIS gives a 'strategic direction of travel' for the local authorities to achieve and implement investment in Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull's natural capital assets. It lays the foundations for a detailed Natural Capital Investment Implementation Plan (NCIIP) that will describe what actions are required, how they will be carried out, who will be involved and how funding will be distributed, monitored and reported.

1.4 Strategic aim

Local authorities in Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull will use the income raised from environmental markets and nature-based compensation schemes to enhance nature and the environment, benefit its people and help tackle climate change. They will do this through an agreed, region-wide strategy and Natural Capital Investment Implementation Plan.

1.5 This strategy document presents the key outcomes and actions of the NCIS. It outlines the proposed governance of the strategy and the formation of a Natural Capital Investment Board, a Natural Capital Investment Management Group and Technical Advisory Groups. This document also describes the funding and income sources; how they will be generated and used to benefit nature, the local environment and the people of Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull.

2 Background

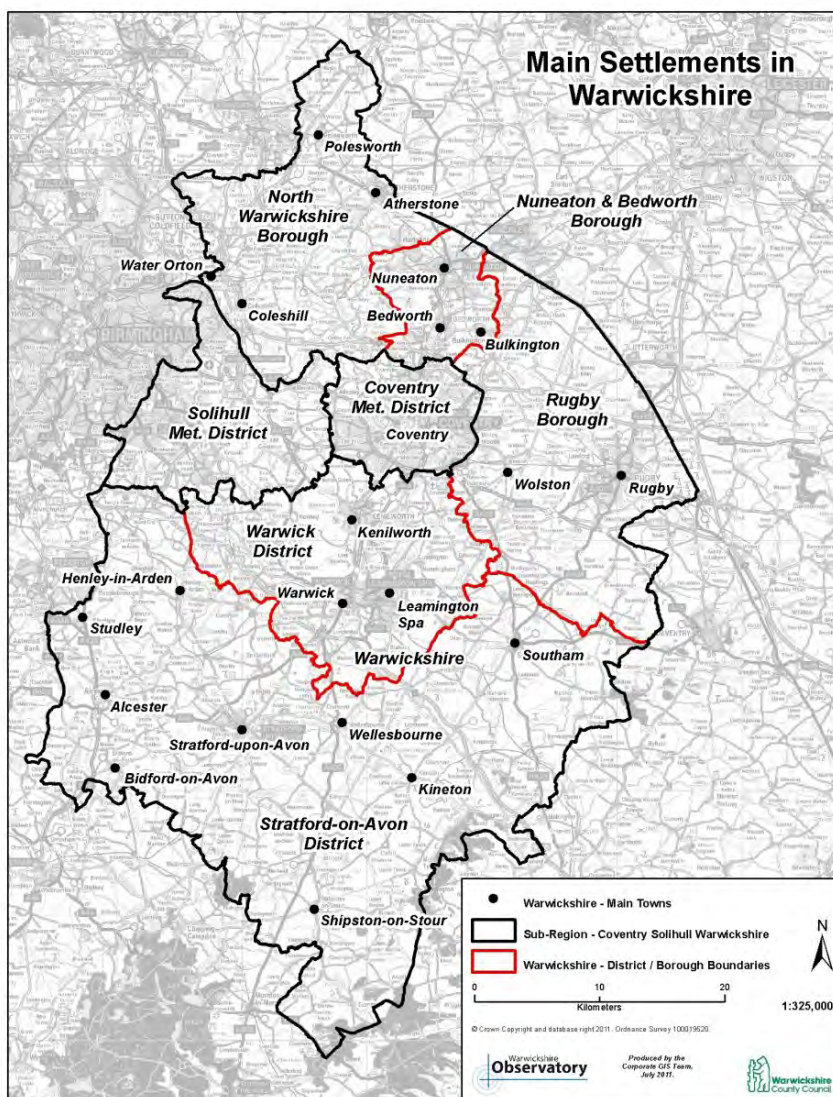
2.1 Those who live, work, visit or do business in Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull draw enormous and varied benefits and value from the rich and diverse natural environment of the region. However, this value is poorly understood and often goes unrecognised.

2.2 Taking a natural capital approach will help us to recognise and understand the true value of the natural environment, the benefits it provides us and embed this within all relevant local authority policies and strategies.

2.3 The strategy will encompass the sub-region of Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull and all eight local authorities within this area (see map). This reflects long standing partnership working between the eight authorities over three decades and includes a national pilot scheme for Biodiversity Offsetting, an extensive sub-regional Habitat Biodiversity Audit, sub-regional Green Infrastructure Strategy and shared,

nationally recognised expertise in our natural environment.

2.4 The strategy will specifically focus on the investment and funding side of the NCIS and will relate to all nature-based compensation monies, and other income streams, and nature recovery or environmental projects within this sub-region. In that respect, whilst this strategy will be the lead document for the six Warwickshire local authorities it will complement the broader strategies being developed by Coventry (CCC) and Solihull (SMBC)¹ by providing a sub-regional investment focus.



¹ The draft SMBC NCIS was approved or consultation in October 2023 and published in January 2024. It is due to be adopted in Spring 2024.

What is natural capital?

2.5 Natural capital is a concept that refers to the elements of nature that produce value (directly and indirectly) to people, It is our stock of natural assets. The stocks of renewable and non-renewable natural capital (known as natural capital assets) include soils, freshwater, farmland, forests, the atmosphere, oceans, biodiversity, ecological processes and the natural processes that underpin them. The flows of ecosystem services and benefits they provide can be very obvious such as food, fuel, clean air, clean water and opportunities for recreation. Others are much less visible, such as climate regulation, flood defences provided by natural vegetation, the billions of tonnes of carbon stored by peatlands and other habitats, the pollination of crops by insects, the provision of valuable shade and cooling in hot weather by trees and other vegetation and the positive contribution of nature to human health and wellbeing.

2.6 These services and benefits all have a value to people, society and the economy. Some of these values can be easily quantified and reflected in the economy (such as the value of timber or food produced from farmland), whereas many others cannot and are thus hidden or missing from decision-making and economic valuation.

2.7 Natural capital approaches to environmental management have a few defining characteristics:

- a focus on the environment as a set of assets (Natural Capital)
- these assets provide a wide range of services and benefits for people (Ecosystem Services)
- there is an emphasis on a spatial and place-based understanding of these assets
- opportunities are sought to maximise multiple ecosystem services benefits across issues/sectors, and these can help manage multiple risks.

2.8 Ecosystem services benefits are commonly divided into three types:

- Provisioning services – products obtained from nature
- Regulating services – benefits obtained from environmental processes that regulate the environment
- Cultural services – Non-material benefits that people obtain from nature

2.9 Diagram 1: Ecosystem services benefits



2.10 Natural capital approaches typically comprise of natural capital investment strategies and plans which define a specific vision, programmes of activities, funding models and income/revenue streams.

Warwickshire Carbon and Environmental Markets project

2.11 The Defra-funded Warwickshire County Council (WCC) Natural Environment Investment Readiness Fund (NEIRF) project ran from October 2021 to March 2022. It was designed to investigate opportunities to develop long-term, sustainable funding mechanisms for the sub-region of Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Councils' (sub-region) environmental ambitions within the mandatory system of Local Authority consenting regimes. This project, titled 'Warwickshire Carbon and Environmental Markets', provided recommendations for the development and establishment of a carbon market (a Warwickshire Carbon Standard based on the UK Woodland Carbon Code) and an air quality market. It also identified other potential mandatory ecosystem services markets (nutrient neutrality, flood risk mitigation and green social prescribing) to work alongside the current mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) market. The project also outlined options for a Warwickshire Natural Capital Investment Strategy (NCIS) and Plan, recommended what they could cover and the detailed process by which they could be developed.

Why develop a Natural Capital Investment Strategy (NCIS) and Plan for Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull?

2.12 Natural capital investment planning is a relatively new approach, both globally and nationally, however the links between the economy, human well-being and the natural environment are increasingly being realised and understood. There is also a growing recognition that this approach should be evidence-based and used to inform socio-economic decision making across all sectors of our society.

2.13 Investing in the protection, enhancement and recovery of our natural capital assets in Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull is fundamental to reversing nature's decline and securing the continued provision of services and benefits provided by nature and the environment.

2.14 Whilst the environment knows no boundaries, since the 1992 Rio Earth Summit there has been a significant movement towards 'saving wildlife in your own back yard'. This approach has developed into the Environment Act (2021) and the establishment of Local Nature Recovery Strategies. In 1994 the Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull ecological community came together to produce Local Biodiversity Action Plans. In 2013 the Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Local Nature Partnership formed and this included all sectors of society, including business and health. Warwickshire County Council, on behalf of the regional local authorities, has created a nationally acclaimed, mandatory BNG market that has generated over £6M since 2015 and they have pledged to work with partners to plant a tree for every resident, currently 566,000, by 2030. This tree-planting initiative will be a key contributor to the Council's commitment to addressing the global climate change emergency and will help restore landscape character areas and improve biodiversity by creating extensive new habitats for wildlife. The region is therefore already one of the leaders in natural capital within the UK, so taking a Natural Capital Investment approach is the logical next step. The region should invest, at scale, in its natural capital assets but on the understanding that there is zero detriment to any city, district or borough.

2.15 Taking a sub-regional approach to natural capital investment has many advantages:

- **Together we are stronger than the sum of our parts**
By working together with a common approach, we can pool our resources and expertise in a cost-effective and efficient manner to create a more comprehensive and effective strategy for protecting and restoring our natural environment. We can also leverage each other's strengths to find innovative solutions and approaches that would be difficult for any single district or borough to achieve. This approach will promote cross-boundary working and collaborative projects between departments and local authorities. It will also give a stronger political voice for nature, the environment and natural capital in the sub-region.

- **Utilising combined resources**
 By working together, we can combine our resources, such as staff, volunteers, equipment and funding to achieve more than we could on our own. This will allow us to implement more ambitious projects and achieve greater results. It could also help develop training programmes and expand the provision of local green skills, therefore increasing local employment opportunities.
- **Attracting greater levels of investment**
 The NCIS and NCIIP will develop new investment, income and funding streams which will drive the development of ambitious and impactful projects. By creating a joint sub-regional Investment Strategy and Implementation Plan, we can offer investors a stable and low-risk platform for those looking to advance environmental goals or invest ethically. Also, such a sub-regional Strategy and Implementation Plan will allow us to develop large, landscape-scale projects suitable for multi-million pound investments from financial institutions and institutional investors.
- **Develop a project pipeline**
 The Natural Capital Investment Implementation Plan will include a region-wide pipeline of shovel and investment ready projects. These will allow swift and efficient reactions to funding, buying or investment opportunities and further develop a regional environmental vision and identity.
- **Each local authority will benefit in the same way, proportionally, over the lifespan of the strategy**

 Full details of how the benefiting environmental projects will be chosen and funded will be explained within the NCIIP and will be closely linked to the sub-regional Green Infrastructure Strategy, the respective Local Nature Recovery Strategies² (LNRS) and the ecosystem services trading protocol.
- **Best for nature – a ‘more, bigger, better & joined up’ approach delivered at a local scale**
 A regional NCIS will allow us to take a more comprehensive, shared approach to protecting and restoring our natural environment. We can identify and address cross-boundary issues, such as air pollution and water quality, and work together to develop a more connected and resilient network of natural habitats.
- **Delivering natural capital benefits, climate change mitigation and resilience which will benefit local people**
 The NCIS will help to deliver a wide range of benefits for communities across Warwickshire, Coventry, and Solihull. These will include improved air quality, cleaner water, increased biodiversity, healthier people, and a more resilient environment in the face of climate change.

² DEFRA have identified Warwickshire as one Local Nature Recovery Strategy area whilst Coventry and Solihull are grouped with the Birmingham and Black Country authorities within the West Midlands Combined Authority area.

- **Working alongside other regional and national policies and strategies**
This joint sub-regional Investment Strategy and Implementation Plan will make it easier to align our strategies with the environmental ambitions of the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) and national initiatives including the Environment Act 2021 and emerging Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS). This will also reflect and enhance the overlap between the Warwickshire LNRS and WMCA LNRS.

2.16 Although investing in natural capital is an investment in nature and our environment, it is also an investment which benefits the people of Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull. It could provide:

- cleaner water, green spaces and fresh air
- an investment in jobs and prosperity
- improved health and wellbeing
- an investment in our future and the future of our children

The Natural Capital Investment Strategy

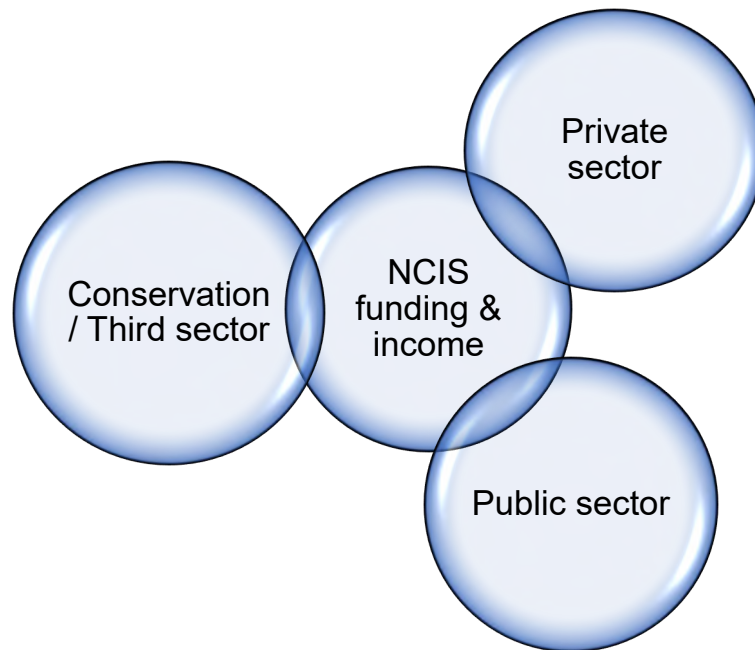
2.17 A Natural Capital Investment Strategy offers a critical tool in society's response to the biodiversity and climate emergencies by enabling the creation and enhancement of habitats, and increasing the resilience of the natural environment, communities and economy to the impacts of climate change, such as extreme weather events.

2.18 This Natural Capital Investment Strategy has been adopted as a top-level local authority strategy which manages how the sub-region Local Authorities will utilise the nature-based compensation monies, and other income streams, generated through the planning system or other voluntary environmental markets. This builds upon and continues the work carried out in developing the mandatory Warwickshire BNG market and developing Warwickshire Carbon and Environmental Markets.

2.19 The strategy gives a 'strategic direction of travel' for the local authorities to achieve and implement investment in Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull's natural capital assets. The strategy lays the foundations for a detailed Natural Capital Investment Implementation Plan (NCIIP) that will describe what actions are required, how they will be carried out, who will be involved and how funding will be distributed, monitored and reported. The NCIIP will align with local strategies and policies including the 'Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Ecosystem Services Trading Protocol' [WCSGI Strategy CSWAPO consultation](#).

2.20 The NCIIP will be based upon a blended finance model (see diagram 2) incorporating public, private and third sector income streams in addition to grant funding, philanthropic support and some of the monies already generated through mandatory BNG.

Diagram 2: The key elements of a blended finance approach.



2.21 The purpose of the plan, and the Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Ecosystem Services Trading Protocol (currently in development), is to examine the roles of different types of potential sellers, buyers and investors within the wider picture of the social, economic and governance structure of the county and supporting local and national environmental policies and regulations. The plan will include a pipeline of potential projects, financial flow models (to facilitate income streams from the public, private and third sectors) and contain the recommendations to put the plan into practice over the next ten years.

2.22 Following adoption of the NCIS, the accompanying NCIIP will develop a range and pipeline of environmental projects and it will model potential flows of finance and investment, and could produce a process similar to the draft proposal presented in diagram 3.

Diagram 3: A draft financial flow model for the NCIS and NCIIP.



2.23 This indicative model shows how finance and investment could flow through a NCIIP. It shows sources of income and investment, and projects that these could support. The sizes of arrows indicate the relative amounts of investment, funding or profit (return on investment) that might be expected.

2.24 See Appendix 1 for examples of UK NCIS visions or key principles, and Appendix 2 for examples of UK Natural Capital Investment Strategies and approaches.

2.25 It is important that the NCIS works alongside all relevant, current and forthcoming national and regional policies and strategies (see diagram 4). These include the Environment Act 2021, emerging Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) for Warwickshire and the West Midlands, current and forthcoming Local Planning documents and the Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Sub-regional Green Infrastructure Strategy.

2.26 A full list of these policies, with hyperlinks where suitable, is given in Appendix 3.

2.27 Diagram 4: The inter-relationships between the NCIS and other local/regional environmental initiatives.



3 The Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Local Authorities Natural Capital Investment Strategy (NCIS)

3.1 Strategic aim and outcomes of the NCIS

3.1.1 Strategic aim

Local authorities in Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull (WCS) will use the income raised from environmental markets and nature-based compensation schemes to enhance nature and the environment, benefit its people and help tackle climate change. They will do this through an agreed, region-wide strategy and Natural Capital Investment Implementation Plan (NCIIP).

3.1.2 Key outcomes

- The Warwickshire local authorities, working in partnership with Coventry and Solihull, will be recognised as being leaders in the provision of high quality, high integrity environmental markets and nature-based compensation schemes.
- The strategy will ensure that all legal agreements for the delivery of nature-based compensation schemes (e.g. Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)) are fulfilled and fully compliant with respective legislation.
- The strategy will provide enduring financial opportunities to support environmental initiatives within the sub-region, for example by offering repayable development finance, environmental market development or pump-priming opportunities.
- Key local authority leaders and decision makers will have a good awareness and understanding of Natural Capital approaches and Ecosystem Services. This will include knowledge and understanding of the associated markets, income streams and investment opportunities which could benefit the local authorities, its people, nature, environment and economy.
- The strategy will help develop and promote Warwickshire's green ambitions and credentials, and complement the range of national and local nature recovery strategies, policies and projects in Warwickshire and adjoining Coventry and Solihull.
- The strategy will increase cross-boundary working and departmental cross-cutting themes, and incorporate them in all relevant local authority and regional strategies and policies, e.g. community, climate, health and wellbeing, power, transport, etc.
- The strategy will support the development, implementation, monitoring and long term management of a Natural Capital Investment Implementation Plan.

- Environmental markets and funding/income streams will be developed and delivered within the sub-region.

Where appropriate, it is envisaged that environmental initiatives will be developed in strategic locations as close to the planned loss (e.g. BNG) or damage (e.g. water or air quality) as possible, with any habitat banks being designed to match this approach. Subject to ecological advice, the Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull sub-regional green infrastructure strategy mitigation hierarchy and Governing Board approval.

3.2 Summary of actions, roles and responsibilities

3.2.1 The key actions for delivery of the NCIS will be:

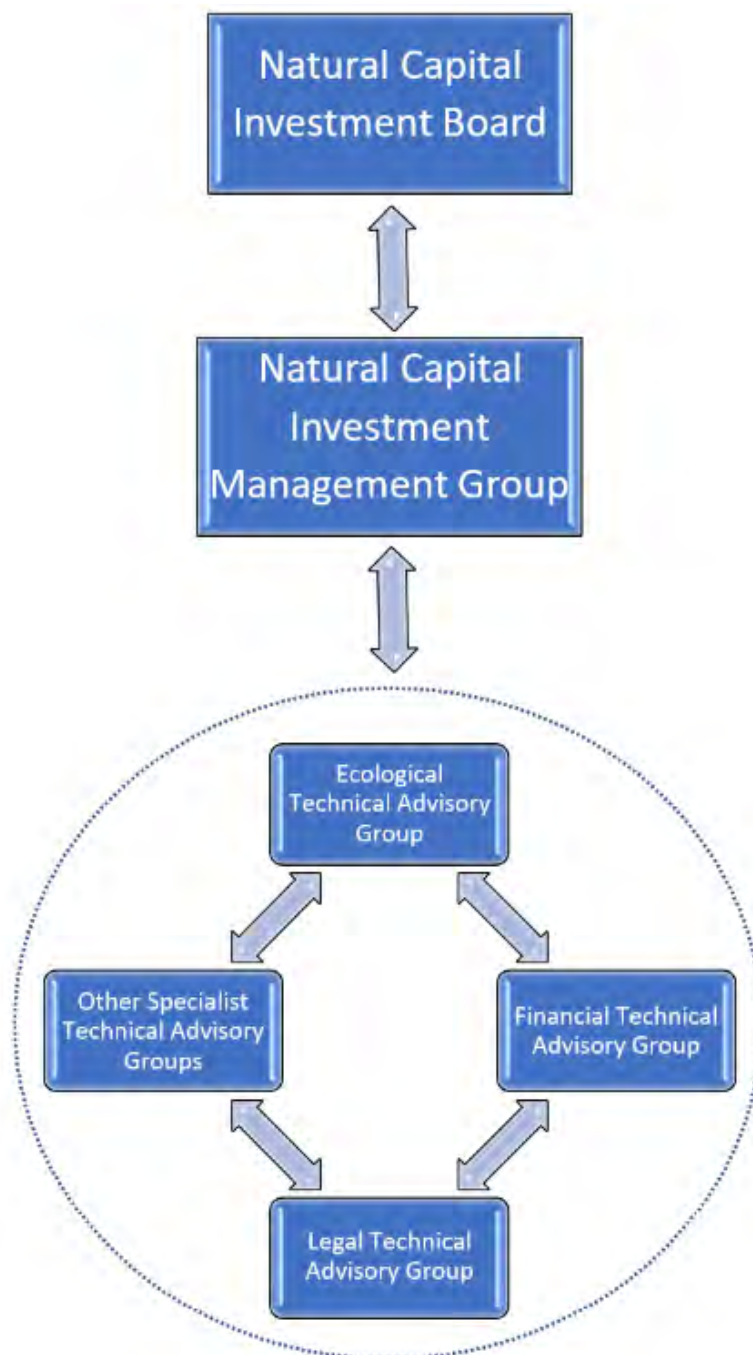
- A commitment to biodiversity and the recovery of nature through all WCS local authorities adopting a natural capital approach.
- Embed a natural capital approach within all current and forthcoming local authority policies and strategies.
- Development and implementation of the NCIIP.

3.2.2 The outcomes for the NCIS will be delivered as part of the development, delivery and implementation of the NCIIP. This is currently being managed by Warwickshire County Council, supported by a specialist, external consultant.

3.3 Governance

3.3.1 Governance of the Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Natural Capital Investment Strategy and Implementation Plan will be managed by the Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Natural Capital Investment Board. The Board will be supported by a Natural Capital Investment Management Group and Technical Advisory Groups (see diagram).

Diagram 5: An indicative governance structure for the NCIS



Natural Capital Investment Board (NCIB)

3.3.2 Membership will be comprised of the relevant Cabinet Member, or representative, from each of the eight constituent authorities. Initial leadership will be provided by Warwickshire County Council, until a Chair is elected.

3.3.3 The Investment Board is the key steering and decision body for the implementation of the WCS Natural Capital Investment Strategy and Implementation Plan. All eight local authorities have formally agreed the creation of the Board and the following tasks and responsibilities.

3.3.4 The objective of the Board is to ensure that decisions made in respect of natural capital investment are transparent, sustainable and ultimately maximise the benefit to the environment and the local communities in Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull.

Natural Capital Investment Management Group (NCIMG)

3.3.6 This group will be responsible for drafting reports and advising the Board on non-delegated decisions. Membership of this group will comprise relevant senior officers from each of the eight constituent authorities.

3.3.7 The Natural Capital Investment Management Group will have delegated powers and budgetary control as agreed by the NCIB.

Technical Advisory Groups

3.3.8 In order to identify and select potential projects and income/investment opportunities the Natural Capital Investment Management Group will need to seek advice from a range of technical advisory groups. The groups will comprise relevant experts and specialists from within local authority, statutory body and third sector partner teams, as necessary. The operational work of such groups will be overseen by a member(s) of the Management Group.

3.3.9 The Technical Advisory Groups will provide technical advice and direction in progressing and co-ordinating the various programmes, projects and funding bids.

3.4 Internal partners and stakeholders

3.4.1 Local Authority partners

- Coventry City Council
- North Warwickshire Borough Council
- Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council
- Rugby Borough Council
- Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
- Stratford District Council
- Warwickshire County Council
- Warwick District Council

Note that external partners and stakeholders are not considered to be required for this local authority-focussed approach. However, they will be involved in the development of the NCIP.

3.5 Funding and income sources

The current funding situation

3.5.1 Income has been generated through planning contributions and trading credits/units from ecosystem service markets (BNG) linked to local authority regulatory functions. Current funds are held within various local authority S106 accounts and these are paid to project delivery organisations on an annual basis, so there are significant surplus funds in the S106 accounts which we have access to.

How will income be generated within the NCIS going forwards?

3.5.2 Current ecosystem services markets applicable to Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull:

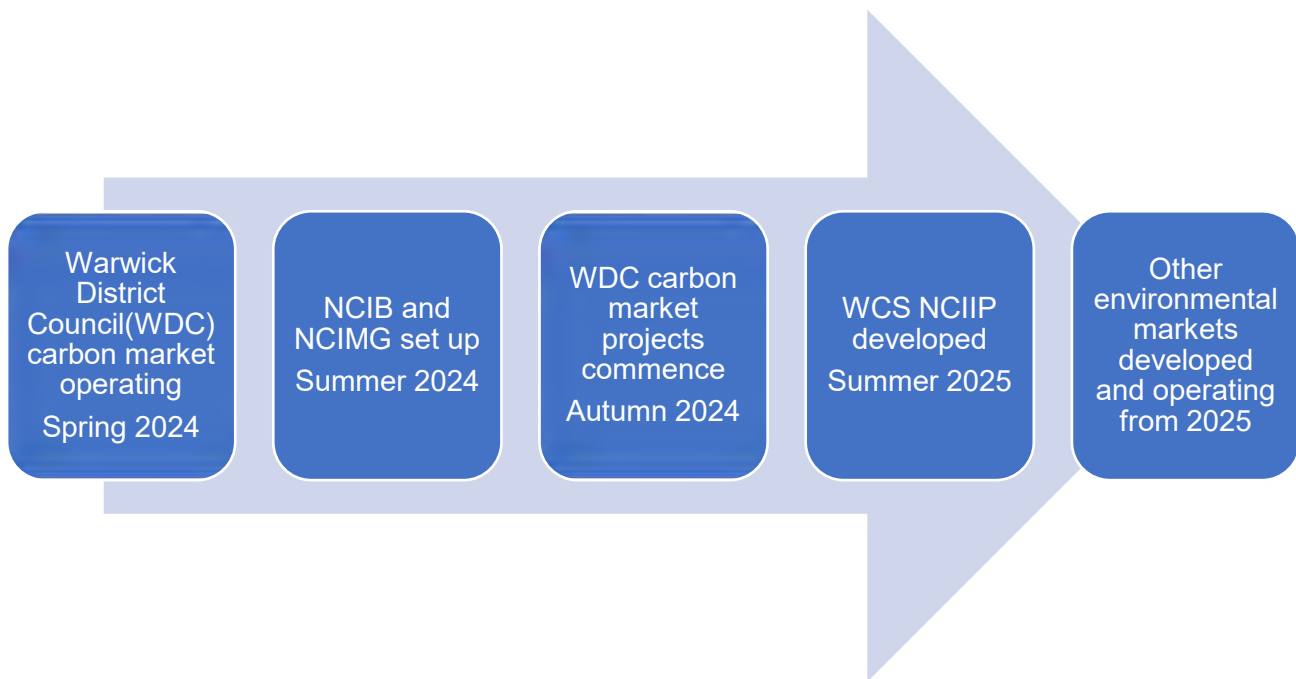
- Biodiversity Net Gain (currently mandatory in Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull and nationally mandated from January 2024)
- Woodland Carbon (through implementation of the Warwickshire Carbon Standard linked to the Warwick District Council Net Zero Carbon Policy)
- District Level Licensing funding (e.g. great crested newts)

3.5.3 Forthcoming ecosystem services markets which could be applicable to Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull:

- Future carbon markets, including soil, grassland and hedgerows.
- Air quality
- Flood risk mitigation
- Nutrient neutrality
- Water quality
- Green social prescribing
- Health and wellbeing

3.5.4 For all ecosystem services markets a mitigation hierarchy will be developed, influencing what mitigation will be required and where it should be carried out. See the Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull sub-regional Green Infrastructure Strategy and diagram 7.

3.5.5 Diagram 6: A proposed roadmap towards the development of an NCIP and environmental markets in Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull.



How will this income be used?

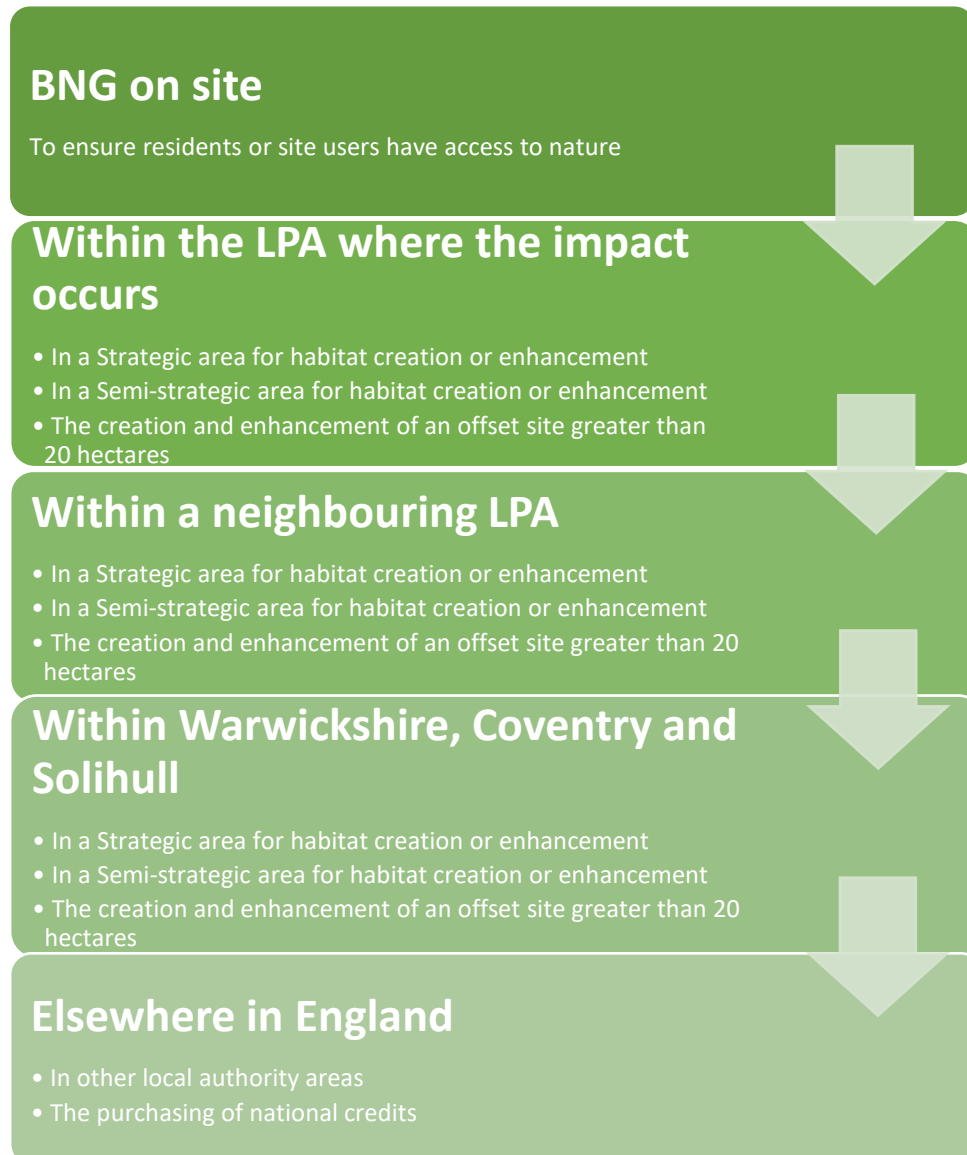
3.5.6 Note: This section covers what the NCIS and the Board (NCIB) will do with the monies already generated, and earmarked for spending, from the current BNG market and with any newly raised monies going forwards. It must follow current and future national trading rules and schemes.

3.5.7 Funds generated from environmental markets and nature-based compensation schemes will be available to support environmental initiatives within the sub-region, specifically those focussing upon enhancing biodiversity and tackling climate change. These will be exclusively natural capital related projects.

3.5.8 Environmental initiatives will be developed in appropriate strategic locations however all decisions will be subject to ecological advice and NCIB approval. Diagram 7 suggests a sequential mitigation hierarchy for BNG, a similar hierarchy could be applied to other environmental projects, and ecosystem services markets, and become a key part of the spatial decision-making process. Every local authority area will receive a fair share of the benefits in proportion to the funds or investments raised within its boundaries. This will help to ensure that the strategy is equitable and that all

residents and communities have the opportunity to benefit from improvements to the local natural environment.

3.5.9 Diagram 7: Here the Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull BNG mitigation hierarchy (currently being consulted upon as part of the sub-regional GI strategy) is presented as an example of what a future Ecosystem Service or Natural Capital Investment Strategy hierarchy might look like. The actual hierarchies adopted will be designed by the Natural Capital Investment Management Group and ratified by the Natural Capital Investment Board.



3.5.10 Current funds are already allocated to specific 'spends' associated with habitat compensation agreements (e.g. BNG), so any finance made available to other projects will need to conform to strict risk, repayment, liquidity and return on investment rules which will be determined within the proposed Natural Capital Investment Implementation Plan. Decisions will also consider the potential benefits for nature, the environment and people of the sub-region. Examples could include

offering repayable development finance, market development or pump-priming opportunities.

3.5.11 Future income will be subject to similar rules, though the requirement for repayment or return on investment will be determined by the funding source and the discretion of the Governing Board and/or awarding body. From Spring 2024 BNG will be nationally mandated and traded income will need to follow statutory Defra rules and regulations.

3.5.12 It is important to plan for and manage risks associated with any income streams, financing and investment arrangements as well as in any proposed environmental projects or initiatives. A detailed Risk Management Plan will be developed within the NCIIP.

Appendix 1 - Examples of UK NCIS visions or key principles

- **Solihull Council draft NCIS vision**

Solihull is a borough where all parts of society, including local authorities, companies, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and communities can enjoy the benefits, are invested in the protection of and have access to all parts of the natural environment and recognise our reliance on natural capital and the impact we have on it.

- **Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Sub-regional Green Infrastructure Strategy**

Vision

A diverse and well-managed Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Green Infrastructure network that underpins the quality of life for communities. This will be the result of a well-connected, accessible and biodiversity resilient landscape, supporting economic growth, social health and climate change adaptation.

- **Surrey Nature Partnership (LNP led by the Surrey Wildlife Trust)**

Vision

A thriving, resilient and attractive county providing natural benefits to all who live and work here.

- **Sussex LNP**

Overarching principle

A commitment to biodiversity within the natural capital approach.

Key elements of the strategy:

1. Protection and enhancement of natural capital
2. Investment in natural capital to deliver specific benefits and services
3. Making it happen: the steps needed to take the natural capital approach forward within Sussex through the work of the LNP

In Summary the strategy seeks to:

- Gain a better understanding of the natural capital of Sussex, where it is located and what benefits it provides to the economy of the area, using the best data available.
- Assess how best to focus effort, resources and funds to look after natural capital assets for the benefit of nature and people.
- Identify opportunities to use a natural capital approach to enhance services and benefits, such as clean water, accessible nature, carbon storage, flood risk reduction and healthy/productive inshore waters.

- Provide guidance on the steps needed to take this strategy forward into action.
- **North Devon Biosphere Natural Capital Strategy**

Their natural capital strategy identifies four priorities for urgent action:

- Protect and improve water quality
- Minimise flood risk
- Increase carbon capture and storage
- Manage tourism and recreation pressure

Here are two examples of Investment visions or key principles:

- **HSBC Pollination: Nature is capital**

Sustainable investment in natural capital provides exposure to projects focused on nature including sustainable forestry, regenerative and sustainable agriculture, water supply, blue carbon (carbon captured by oceans and coastal ecosystems), nature-based biofuels, or nature-based projects that generate returns from reducing greenhouse emissions.

- **Triodos Bank**

We believe investing should support a sustainable future. All the **investments in our funds** have been hand-picked by impact investing experts using a themed approach, which ensures they have a positive impact on society and the environment.

Appendix 2 – Examples of UK Natural Capital Investment Strategies and approaches

The **Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council** draft Natural Capital Investment Strategy



Draft NCIS
September 2023.docx

In 2015, the **Surrey Nature Partnership** launched 'Naturally Richer - A Natural Capital Investment Strategy for Surrey'

(<https://surreynaturepartnership.files.wordpress.com/2015/11/naturally-richer-a-natural-capital-investment-strategy-for-surrey.pdf>).

This was a high-level document which gave a strategic direction of travel for implementing investment in Surreys' natural capital assets. It explained why it mattered and indicated the key areas where they thought they needed to develop in order to secure investment. The Surrey Nature Partnership used this strategy to develop a natural capital investment plan in 2018.

Sussex Local Nature Partnership launched their 2019-2024 Natural Capital Investment Strategy in December 2019.

Summary [Microsoft Word - Natural Capital Investment Strategy Summary Feb2020.docx \(sussexlnp.org.uk\)](#)

Full document [Microsoft Word - Natural Capital Investment Strategy ADOPTED Final Dec 2019.docx \(sussexlnp.org.uk\)](#)

The aim of their strategy is to:

- Support nature's recovery as a fundamental component of a healthy, prosperous and secure future for Sussex
- Protect and enhance the natural assets of Sussex so that these continue to provide multiple benefits for people into the future
- Position nature as a foundation for a strong, stable local economy and resilient society
- Increase resilience of natural capital assets in the face of current and future risks, such as climate change, increasing development and extreme weather events, which in turn will help to secure the benefits they provide

Their strategy provides:

- Initial understanding (based on best available data) of the natural capital of Sussex, where it is located and the raft of benefits and services it provides to people and the economy of the area
- Initial strategic assessment of how best to focus effort, resources and funds to protect and enhance the stock of natural capital assets for the benefit of nature and people

- Identification of opportunities to use a natural capital approach to deliver specific outputs of interest to LNP members, such as clean water, accessible nature, carbon storage and flood risk reduction
- Guidance on the steps needed to take this broad spatial strategy forward into action and outcomes on the ground

The **North Devon Biosphere Natural Capital Strategy** highlights a range of workable and affordable interventions, their next steps are to get these delivered in a consistent and organised way.

To deliver change at the scale that is needed they need to transform the way they manage the environment. Specifically, they need an approach designed for engaging with a complex system. They believe that this will require adoption and progression of four key management principles:

- **Institutional responsibility** - each environmental problem needs to be owned by an organisation or formal partnership.
- **Adaptive management** - declaring a target, tracking progress against it and adapting plans and investments as required.
- **Localisation** - devolving responsibility of environmental management to a geographical level discrete enough for integrated planning.
- **Shared commitment** – schemes should be co-developed and have shared understanding and commitment between stakeholders.

The North Devon Biosphere is working to make these a reality and engage with national and local partners. They are also considering developing a natural capital spatial plan to ensure that the right investments go in the right places.

Here is the strategy summary document

<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/file/4576451154411520>

In 2022, **Cornwall Council** produced an 'Investing in nature guidebook'

<https://letstalk.cornwall.gov.uk/19619/widgets/55725/documents/32282> and an

'Investing in nature process checklist'

<https://letstalk.cornwall.gov.uk/19619/widgets/55725/documents/32319> .

Appendix 3 - Current and forthcoming international, national and regional policies and initiatives

The NCIS needs to work alongside the following policies and initiatives:

Note: These were current at the time of writing

International

- [G7 2030 Nature Compact \(2021\)](#)
- [Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework \(COP15\) December 2022](#)
- [IPCC AR6 Synthesis Report: Climate Change 2023](#)

National

- [Environment Act 2021](#)
- [The 25 Year Environment Plan 2018](#)
- [Environment Improvement Plan 2023 \(first revision of 25 Year Environment Plan\)](#)
- [The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill](#)
- [Forthcoming Land Use Framework 2023](#)
- [Environmental Land Management schemes \(ELMs\)](#)
- [Natural England Green Infrastructure Framework](#)
- [National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\) 2023](#)
- [The John Lawton Review 2010 – Making Space for Nature](#)
- [The Natural Environment White Paper \(NEWP\) The Natural Choice: Securing the Value of Nature \(2011\)](#)
- [England Tree Strategy \(2021\)](#)
- [England Peat Action Plan \(2021\)](#)
- [National Pollinator Strategy \(2014\)](#)
- [Biodiversity Net Gain \(2024\)](#)
- [Nature Recovery Networks](#)
- [The Economics of Biodiversity: The Dasgupta Review \(2021\)](#)
- [State of Nature Report \(2013, 2016, 2019, 2023\)](#)
- [Nature Positive 2030 \(2022\)](#)
- [Urban Design Compendium](#)
- [National Design Guide](#)
- [National Model Design Code](#)
- [Building for Healthy Places](#)
- [Building for a Healthy Life](#)
- [Building with Nature](#)

Regional

- [Emerging Local Nature Recovery Strategies \(LNRS\) for Warwickshire and West Midlands](#)
- [Current and forthcoming Local Plans](#)
- [Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Sub-regional Green Infrastructure Strategy](#)

- Draft Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council Natural Capital Investment Strategy (NCIS)
- [Warwickshire Local Nature Partnership plans and initiatives](#)
- [Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Species and Habitat Action Plans](#)
- [Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines for Arden](#)
- [Warwickshire Sustainable Futures Strategy](#)
- [Solihull Green Infrastructure Study](#)
- [Warwickshire Historic Landscape Characterisation](#)
- [Warwickshire Historic Farmsteads Characterisation](#)
- Catchment Management Plans
- [West Midlands Natural Environment Plan 2021-2026](#)
- Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Local Authority Corporate Strategies
- Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Local Authority Climate Change Strategies
- Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Local Authority Health and Wellbeing Strategies
- Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Local Authority Flood Risk Management Strategies
- Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Local Authority Air Quality Management Strategies
- Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Local Authority Tree Planting and Woodland Strategies
- Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Local Authority Green Space Strategies
- Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Local Authority Economic Strategies
- Emerging Warwick District Council Biodiversity Action Programme
- Emerging Warwick District Council Net Zero Carbon Development Plan Document (DPD)

Warwickshire, Coventry & Solihull Natural Capital Investment and Implementation Plan (NCIIP)

Skeleton plan: What will the NCIIP contain?

Main sections

- How the NCIIP will support and enable the Natural Capital Investment Strategy (NCIS)
- How and where income will be generated.
- Where funds will be kept and managed
- In line with the NCIS, the criteria for deciding what is funded and how
- Method of identifying investible or fundable projects (standard proforma?).
- Portfolio of current sites/projects and a pipeline of investment-ready projects
- Operating model
- Marketing and business strategies for investment and income generation.
- NCIIP role in supporting (but not developing) new Environmental Services markets.
- Links with wider regional strategies/policies – i.e. using monies to help pump-prime or support Local Nature Recovery Strategy, Green Infrastructure Strategy and other strategic initiatives.
- Financial requirements including requirements for investments or loans.
- Funding and investment decision-making processes and roles (including mitigation or funding hierarchies).
- Monitoring and reporting processes.
- Legal implications/parameters.
- Governance and accountability relating to specific funded projects.
- Links and relationships with funding bodies
- Insurance requirements.
- Ethical implications/parameters.
- Day to day management of the NCIS and NCIIP including any staffing, costs and funding.

Rugby Borough Council

Climate Change and Environmental Impact Assessment

CONTEXT

In 2019 the UK Parliament set a commitment in law to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050. Achieving this target will require considerable effort with public bodies, private sector organisations, the third sector and individuals working together to take action. Rugby Borough Council declared a climate emergency in 2019, in doing so committed to:

- To move the Council's operations towards Carbon Neutrality by 2030.
- To establish action to tackle climate change as a key driver of all decision-making.
- To provide community leadership in reducing the impact of Climate Change.
- To take action to mitigate the impact of climate change on a Borough wide basis and beyond, through adaptation.

The Council's Corporate Strategy (2021-2024) [link](#) sets ambitious outcomes in relation to Climate Change. These ambitions must now be progressed through the decisions which the Council makes.

It is therefore important that Rugby Borough Council gives due regard to climate change when making decisions. In the context of the Council's business, Climate Change includes carbon emissions, biodiversity, habitat loss and environmental destruction. When putting forward recommendations for decision, officers must assess how these recommendations are likely to influence our climate change commitments by completing the following Climate Change and Environmental Impact Assessment.

A copy of this Climate Change and Environmental Impact Assessment, including relevant data and information should be forwarded to the Deputy Chief Executive.

If you require help, advice and support to complete the form, please contact Dan Green, Deputy Chief Executive.

SECTION 1: OVERVIEW

Portfolio and Service Area	Growth and Investment
Policy/Service/Change being assessed	Natural Capital Investment Strategy
Is this a new or existing Policy/Service/Change?	New Policy
If existing policy/service please state date of last assessment	N/A
Ward Specific Impacts	All
Summary of assessment Briefly summarise the policy/service/change and potential impacts	<p>The Natural Capital Investment Strategy and Natural Capital Investment Implementation Plan will provide long-term, sustainable funding and income sources to support the delivery of Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull's Green Infrastructure Strategy and the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (in preparation), as well as local strategies.</p> <p>Funds generated from environmental markets and nature-based compensation schemes will be available to support environmental initiatives within the sub-region, specifically those focussing upon enhancing biodiversity and tackling climate change. These will be exclusively natural capital related projects.</p> <p>It is expected that some of the projects delivered on the basis of this Strategy will help to mitigate climate change by sequestering carbon; and to enable our environment to adapt to the changing climate.</p>
Completed By	Nicola Smith
Authorised By	Nicola Smith
Date of Assessment	11/06/24

SECTION 2: IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Climate Change and Environmental Impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner	Timescales
Energy usage	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The strategy does not relate to energy usage			
Fleet usage	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The strategy does not relate to fleets			
Sustainable Transport/Travel (customers and staff)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The strategy does not relate to sustainable travel			
Sustainable procurement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	This strategy has been procured by Warwickshire County Council in conjunction with all authorities in the sub region which creates efficiencies and also the pooling of expertise.			Complete
Community leadership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The Board will allow elected members to be decision makers in how natural capital investment will take place.			Ongoing
Biodiversity and habitats	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The strategy is designed to improve investment in natural capital which will have significant future positive impacts.			Ongoing in accordance with the delivery plan
Adaptation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The strategy is designed to look at how natural			Ongoing in accordance

Climate Change and Environmental Impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner	Timescales
				capital can complement adaption strategies			with the delivery plan
Impact on other providers/partners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Working with all relevant partners across the sub-region ensures the positive impacts are felt by all.			Ongoing in accordance with the delivery plan

SECTION 3: REVIEW

Where a negative impact is identified, the proposal and/or implementation can be adapted or changed; meaning there is a need for regular review. This review may also be needed to reflect additional data and evidence for a fuller assessment (proportionate to the decision in question). Please state the agreed review timescale for the identified impacts of the policy implementation or service change.

Review date	June 2025
Key points to be considered through review	Has the NCIP been implemented. Has the Board been established. What are the impacts so far.
Person responsible for review	Climate Change Officer
Authorised by	Nicola Smith

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:
Aftab Razzaq
Chief Officer for Legal and Governance
aftab.razzaq@rugby.gov.uk
01788 533521



Equality Impact Assessment

Service Area	Growth and Investment
Policy/Service being assessed	Natural Capital Investment Strategy
Is this a new or existing policy/service? If existing policy/service please state date of last assessment	New policy
EqlA Review Team – List of members	
Date of this assessment	
Signature of responsible officer (to be signed after the EqlA has been completed)	Aftab Razzaq

A copy of this Equality Impact Assessment report, including relevant data and information to be forwarded to the Chief Officer for Legal and Governance.

Details of Strategy/ Service/ Policy to be analysed

<u>Stage 1 – Scoping and Defining</u>	
(1) Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the Strategy/Service/Policy (or decision)?	The Natural Capital Investment Strategy and Natural Capital Investment Implementation Plan will provide long-term, sustainable funding and income sources to support the delivery of Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull’s Green Infrastructure Strategy and the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, as well as delivering the aims of the Councils Corporate Strategy and Climate Strategy.
(2) How does it fit with Rugby Borough Council’s Corporate priorities and your service area priorities?	It delivers on Priority Outcome 1 Climate to link places together with good quality green infrastructure and improve biodiversity across the Borough
(3) What are the expected outcomes you are hoping to achieve?	An agreed strategy for the long term support for improvement of natural capital across the Borough and the sub region.
(4) Does or will the policy or decision affect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customers • Employees • Wider community or groups 	All
<u>Stage 2 - Information Gathering</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).
(1) What does the information tell you about those groups identified?	This is a high level strategy adopted across the sub region.

<p>(2) Have you consulted or involved those groups that are likely to be affected by the strategy/ service/policy you want to implement? If yes, what were their views and how have their views influenced your decision?</p>	<p>No this is a high level strategy across the sub region.</p>		
<p>(3) If you have not consulted or engaged with communities that are likely to be affected by the policy or decision, give details about when you intend to carry out consultation or provide reasons for why you feel this is not necessary.</p>	<p>This is a high level strategy adopted across the sub region. To ensure that all residents are impacted equally by the funding benefit from the investment, a sequential mitigation hierarchy similar to that used for Biodiversity Net Gain will be applied to decide where the compensation is to be sited.</p>		
<p><u>Stage 3 – Analysis of impact</u></p>			
<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? If yes, identify the groups and how they are affected.</p>	<p>RACE The outcomes proposed are designed to enhance natural capital across the Borough</p>	<p>DISABILITY The outcomes proposed are designed to enhance natural capital across the Borough</p>	<p>GENDER The outcomes proposed are designed to enhance natural capital across the Borough</p>
	<p>MARRIAGE/CIVIL PARTNERSHIP The outcomes proposed are designed to enhance natural capital across the Borough</p>	<p>AGE The outcomes proposed are designed to enhance natural capital across the Borough</p>	<p>GENDER REASSIGNMENT The outcomes proposed are designed to enhance natural capital across the Borough</p>

	RELIGION/BELIEF The outcomes proposed are designed to enhance natural capital across the Borough	PREGNANCY MATERNITY The outcomes proposed are designed to enhance natural capital across the Borough	SEXUAL ORIENTATION The outcomes proposed are designed to enhance natural capital across the Borough
(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? (b) Are your proposals likely to impact on a carer who looks after older people or people with disabilities? If yes, please explain how?	No	No	No
(3) If there is an adverse impact, can this be justified?			
(4) What actions are going to be taken to reduce or eliminate negative or adverse impact? (This should form part of your action plan under Stage 4.)			
(5) How does the strategy/service/policy contribute to the promotion of equality? If not, what can be done?	To ensure that all residents are impacted equally by the funding benefit from the investment, a sequential mitigation hierarchy similar to that used for Biodiversity Net Gain will be applied to decide where the compensation is to be sited.		
(6) How does the strategy/service/policy promote good relations between groups? If not, what can be done?	The strategy has been jointly commissioned by Warwickshire County Council and surrounding authorities across the sub- region who have all had the opportunity to shape the strategy		

(7) Are there any obvious barriers to accessing the service? If yes how can they be overcome?	This is not a service that would be access directly by residents
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<u>Stage 4 – Action Planning, Review and Monitoring</u>																														
<p>If No Further Action is required then go to – Review and Monitoring</p> <p>(1) 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" data-bbox="875 683 2112 914"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="875 683 1120 762">Action</th> <th data-bbox="1120 683 1364 762">Lead Officer</th> <th data-bbox="1364 683 1615 762">Date for completion</th> <th data-bbox="1615 683 1865 762">Resource requirements</th> <th data-bbox="1865 683 2112 762">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																				
Action	Lead Officer	Date for completion	Resource requirements	Comments																										
(2) Review and Monitoring State how and when you will monitor policy and Action Plan	June 2025. This will give time for the NCIIP to be agreed and adopted and the Board set up. It will also allow time for initial schemes to come forward and for funding to be assigned. These schemes can then be evaluated.																													

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).’

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Report Title: Customer Service Centre Direct Debit Digitisation Program

Name of Committee: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 1 July 2024

Report Director: Chief Officer – Digital & Communications

Portfolio: Growth & Investment, Digital & Communications

Ward Relevance: None

Prior Consultation: None

Contact Officer: Dr. Thomas David Griffiths
Chief Officer – Digital & Communications
Thomas.Griffiths@rugby.gov.uk

Public or Private: Public

Report Subject to Call-In: Yes

Report En-Bloc: No

Forward Plan: Yes

Corporate Priorities: This report relates to the following priority(ies):
 Rugby is an environmentally sustainable place, where we work together to reduce and mitigate the effects of climate change. (C)
 Rugby has a diverse and resilient economy that benefits and enables opportunities for all residents. (E)
 Residents live healthy, independent lives, with the most vulnerable protected. (HC)
 Rugby Borough Council is a responsible, effective and efficient organisation. (O)
[Corporate Strategy 2021-2024](#)
 This report does not specifically relate to any Council priorities but

Summary: The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of the historic and current challenges facing the Customer Service Centre, specifically the manual handling of Direct Debits - presenting an assessment of options and a recommendation to mitigate a further decline in performance – whilst

safeguarding vulnerable residents who rely on the service.

Financial Implications:

The financial requirements of this project include a £97,500 capital investment, a one-off revenue contribution of £30,000 for the communications around the offer plus an ongoing annual maintenance cost of £17,000. The honorarium will be funded from existing budgets.

Full revenue implications are outlined in Section 4 of this report.

Risk Management/Health and Safety Implications:

There are no risk management implications arising directly from this report.

Environmental Implications:

There are no environmental implications arising directly from this report.

Legal Implications:

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

Equality and Diversity:

The equality and diversity implications have been assessed and no adverse impacts have arisen directly from this report. See Appendix A.

Options:

Option 1: Approval of a capital budget and increase of establishment headcount to recruit additional Customer Service Agents.

Option 2: Approval of the capital budget for the Customer Service Centre Direct Debit Digitisation.

Recommendation:

- 1) A supplementary revenue budget of £30,000 for the marketing campaign as set out in Section 3 of this report be approved;
- 2) A maintenance budget of £17,000 be established within the general fund from 2025/26 be approved;
- 3) An extension to the existing honorarium of £2,002 for the Interim Contact Centre Manager position, detailed in Section 7 be approved; and
- 4) Delegated authority be granted to the Chief Officer for Digital and Communications to implement the scheme as detailed within this report and authorise any necessary

expenditure as detailed in Section 3 of this report.

IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL THAT –

- 5) The purchase of Direct Debit software be added to the capital programme and a supplementary budget of £97,500 be approved.

**Reasons for
Recommendation:**

Improve the efficiency of Rugby Borough Council and prioritisation of customer service centre resource for vulnerable residents.

Cabinet - 1 July 2024

Customer Service Centre Direct Debit Digitisation Program

Public Report of the Chief Officer – Digital and Communications

Recommendation

- (1) A supplementary revenue budget of £30,000 for the marketing campaign as set out in Section 3 of this report be approved;
- (2) A maintenance budget of £17,000 be established within the general fund from 2025/26 be approved;
- (3) An extension to the existing honorarium of £2,002 for the Interim Contact Centre Manager position, detailed in Section 7 be approved;
- (4) Delegated authority be granted to the Chief Officer for Digital and Communications to implement the scheme as detailed within this report and authorise any necessary expenditure as detailed in Section 3 of this report; and

IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL THAT –

- (5) The purchase of Direct Debit software be added to the capital programme and a supplementary budget of £97,500 be approved.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The customer service centre at Rugby Borough Council is responsible for receiving all the phone calls and the majority of direct digital communications between the Council and residents, businesses and community groups.
- 1.2 The primary challenge faced by the customer service centre is the variability in demand across quiet and peak periods. The daily call rate can vary from 40 calls on the quietest day to in excess of 800 calls a day in peak demand periods – A variability in excess of 1900%.
- 1.3 A significant majority of this peak demand, **circa 80% of calls**, are related to the setting up and management of Direct Debits relating to Council Tax between the months of March and June inclusive.
- 1.4 Customer Service agents have reported a high number of residents calling up to voice their frustration at being unable to set up and manage their direct debits

online. They feel that this is a standard service offered by organisations for all other financial transactions they carry out in their day-to-day lives.

- 1.5 The Borough is expected to grow at an estimated rate of 900 households per year, adding yet more demand for the Customer Service Centre and Council Tax payments.
- 1.6 If these calls were shifted to other channels, including the proposed self-service digital platform, this would allow for the current resources in the customer service centre to be prioritised to answering calls and queries from vulnerable residents.
- 1.7 This report recommends Option 2, a total of £97,500 of capital funding to purchase and implement an online self-service Direct Debit management platform.
- 1.8 Option 2 recommends an additional £30,000 of revenue funding to be used for communications and a campaign increasing awareness of the service across the Borough in order to encourage uptake, the campaign would include the following:
 - 1.8.1 Notifications and pop-up suggestions on the existing Council online self-service systems to encourage people to adopt direct debit self-service.
 - 1.8.2 Online advertising through social media, targeting demographics with higher existing levels of digital uptake of Council Services.
 - 1.8.3 Proactive communication with residents who are currently experiencing difficulties with their Council Tax payments to offer an avenue for them to manage their direct debit in a self-service manner.
 - 1.8.4 Proactive engagement with new housing developments and residents moving into the Borough for the first time.
- 1.9 The implementation of the software would also require an annual maintenance cost of £17,000 and the associated CPI increases.
- 1.10 This investment is integral to creating a Customer Service Centre which is fit for the future of the Council and the Borough and delivering the Corporate Strategy.

2. OPTION 1: CONTINUATION OF CURRENT POSITION

- 2.1 It would be possible to meet the increasing demand by continuing the current approach of hiring more Customer Service Agents within the Customer Service Centre. However, this is an expensive and ineffective long-term solution.
- 2.2 In 2025 and 2026 an additional x2 FTE agents would be required to make a meaningful contribution to the peak demand.
- 2.3 As predicted demand increases, this would rise to x3 FTE agents from 2027 onwards to provide the same level of service.

- 2.4 Option 1 would require a permanent revenue budget of £67,000, and an increase in establishment headcount to cover the x2 FTE customer service agents in 2025 and 2026.
- 2.5 From 2027 Option 1 would further require a further customer service agent that would bring the total to x3 FTE. At this stage it would constitute a total permanent revenue budget of £100,500.

3. OPTION 2: CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTER DIRECT DEBIT DIGITISATION

- 3.1 Option 2 is the purchasing of additional software modules, building upon the existing Civica software platform and ecosystem utilised by Rugby Borough Council.
- 3.2 The software modules will provide residents and businesses with an online self-service platform with an almost identical interface, but with reduced functionality, to that seen by Customer Service Agents. This would allow individuals within the Borough to carry out the following activities without needing to directly contact the Customer Service Centre:
 - 3.2.1 Set up a new Direct Debit
 - 3.2.2 Check the date of the Direct Debit payment
 - 3.2.3 Check the value of the Direct Debit payment
 - 3.2.4 Manage an existing Direct Debit
 - 3.2.5 Inform us of an address change
 - 3.2.6 Inform us of a change in circumstances
- 3.3 We anticipate uptake to be a gradual process, with an expectation to have onboarded 22% of residents by the end of 2026 and 30% of residents by the end of 2027.
- 3.4 It is expected that this will lead to a reduction of approximately 4,000 phone calls into the customer contact centre, with an estimated total duration of **1,800 hours**, by the end of 2026.
- 3.5 The reduction in phone call duration of 1,800 hours in 2025/2026 will represent a significant cost avoidance for the council of £67,000 per annum through mitigating the need to hire an x2 FTE CSA across 2025/2026 and 2026/2027 financial years.
- 3.6 As demand increases the expected cost avoidance will increase to £100,500 per annum through mitigating the need to hire x3 FTE CSA from 2027/2028 financial year onwards.
- 3.7 This report recommends that Option 2 would require a total of £127,500 of one-off funding, broken down into the following items:
 - 3.7.1 £97,500 to purchase and implement the required software packages and additions to the existing Civica system utilised by Rugby Borough Council, it is proposed that this will be funded by borrowing through the capital programme. This would increase the MRP by an average of £18,000 in each of the next five years with the cost of borrowing of around £5,100 pa.

3.7.2 £30,000 for a targeted marketing campaign across the borough promoting the program, informing residents and encouraging uptake. It is proposed that this is funded through the budget stability reserve which has a balance of £1.824m at 1 April 2024.

3.8 There would also be a recurring maintenance and licensing cost of £17,000 per annum which would need to be built into the base budget from 1 April 2025, this will lead to corporate efficiencies across the council which should match the increase in this revenue budget

3.9 The implementation and testing of the software modules will take four months to complete, with a recommended additional 40-day contingency period.

4. COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS

4.1 Figure 1. shows a 5-year outline cost benefit analysis, showing predicted cost avoidances, initial investment costs, and an estimated time efficiency savings.

<i>Description</i>	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028	2028/2029
	£	£	£	£	£
Option 1					
Continuation of Current Position	67,000	67,000	100,500	100,500	100,500
Option 2					
Annual Revenue Costs					
Communications and Engagement	30,000	-	-	-	-
Licences and Maintenance	-	17,000	17,000	17,000	17,000
Minimum Revenue Provision	-	16,908	17,669	18,464	19,295
Interest on Borrowing	5,092	5,092	5,092	5,092	5,092
Annual Revenue Costs	35,092	39,000	39,761	40,556	41,387
Annual Cost Avoidance	(31,908)	(28,000)	(60,739)	(59,944)	(59,113)
Option 2 Initial 5-year cost avoidance	(239,704)				

Figure 1.

5. SUPPORTING VULNERABLE RESIDENTS

5.1 Option 2, would have the added benefit of reducing the demand on the existing Customer Service Centre staff, allowing for the resource to be reprioritised to answer calls and queries from vulnerable residents.

5.2 There will always be residents who prefer and feel more comfortable talking to Customer Service Agents over the phone – we will keep this service as an available option but encourage other residents, where possible, to embrace the digital channels we have available.

5.3 Residents will be able to contact the council in a manner that best suits their needs and circumstances. However, at extremely busy peak periods it may take longer than anticipated to get through to the Customer Service Centre via phone.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 Rugby Borough Council is aiming to be a more effective and efficient Council, finding technological and innovative solutions to existing challenges, whilst being responsible and respectful of our financial and resource constraints. This report recommends the approval of Option 2, the capital funding for the Customer Service Centre Direct Debit Digitisation Program.
- 6.2 This will provide a digital self-service option for residents to utilise to set-up and manage their direct debits. This is commonly used across all other business sectors and elsewhere in local authority and central government.
- 6.3 The recommendation contained within the report illustrate an opportunity to 'invest to save' where an initial investment in technological solutions will increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the customer service centre, avoiding the future costs of additional FTE.
- 6.4 The recommended self-service digital platform will provide a foundation for other transformation initiatives within the Customer Service Centre, ensuring we can meet the needs of a changing resident population currently and into the future – including the adoption of Artificial Intelligence based customer engagement tools and productivity enhancements.
- 6.5 Upon the successful adoption of the recommended platform, the software could readily, with minimal disruption, be utilised across other service areas within Rugby Borough Council where Direct Debit payments are processed. The future extensibility of the recommended platform will aid future transformation efforts.

7. HONORARIUM EXTENSION

- 7.1 A continuation of the previously approved honorarium for the Interim Customer Services Manager position shall be approved to cover the additional duties carried out for the period covering 1st April 2024 to 19th May 2024.
- 7.2 The existing honorarium cannot be extended as it would breach the £3,000 budget limit for delegated powers under the granting of honoraria in Part 2(b) of the Council Constitution.
- 7.3 The cost of the Honorarium extension, inclusive of oncosts, is £2,002 and be funded from salary savings from vacancies within the service.

Name of Meeting: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 1 July 2024

Subject Matter: Customer Service Centre Direct Debit Digitisation Program

Originating Department: Digital and Communications

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:
Minakshee Patel
Corporate Equality & Diversity Advisor
minakshee.patel@rugby.gov.uk
Tel: 01788 533509

Equality Impact Assessment

Service Area	Digital and communications
Policy/Service being assessed	Customer Service Centre Direct Debit Digitisation Program
Is this is a new or existing policy/service? If existing policy/service please state date of last assessment	New Service
EqlA Review team – List of members	Dr. Thomas David Griffiths
Date of this assessment	12/06/2024
Signature of responsible officer (to be signed after the EqlA has been completed)	

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

If you require help, advice and support to complete the forms, please contact Minakshee Patel, Corporate Equality & Diversity Advisor via email: minakshee.patel@rugby.gov.uk or 01788 533509

Details of Strategy/ Service/ Policy to be analysed

<u>Stage 1 – Scoping and Defining</u>	
(1) Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the Strategy/Service/Policy (or decision)?	It is recommended to Council to invest in a Direct Debit Digitalisation Program to enable residents to self-serve online when interacting with the Council regarding Direct Debit payments and/or queries.
(2) How does it fit with Rugby Borough Council's Corporate priorities and your service area priorities?	<p>Outcome 3 – Health and Communities The program will enable residents to access services in a variety of locations and timings of their choosing, in addition to the existing phone options. This will reduce demand on the Customer Service Centre, allowing for the current resource to be reallocated to better serve vulnerable and high-need residents.</p> <p>Outcome 4 – Organisation The program will lead to significant efficiency improvements and lead to an increase in both staff and resident satisfaction by removing barriers to success. The program will realise significant revenue budget savings.</p>
(3) What are the expected outcomes you are hoping to achieve?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote an increased range of options for residents to manage their direct debit payments and schedules in a time and place and using a medium that suits them. • Reduce critical peak demand on the customer service centre. • Reduce the need for future staffing increases and reduce current resource pressures across the Customer Service Centre.
(4) Does or will the policy or decision affect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customers • Employees • Wider community or groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Breaking down barriers to accessing services • Employees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reduce stress and overall demand by removing technological and process related barriers to success and increasing the level of automation present in the end to end process. • Wider community or groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Accessible services

<u>Stage 2 - Information Gathering</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, eg service uptake/usage, customer satisfaction surveys, staffing data, performance data, research information (national, regional and local data sources).		
(1) What does the information tell you about those groups identified?	The borough is expected to an increase of approximately 900 households a year, increasing the existing pressure on the Customer Service Centre to handle and respond to Council Tax Direct Debit related queries and complaints.		
(2) Have you consulted or involved those groups that are likely to be affected by the strategy/ service/policy you want to implement? If yes, what were their views and how have their views influenced your decision?	We have received extensive feedback and complaints from residents and elected members who have been dissatisfied with the recent drop in performance. We have taken action on this feedback and sought a cost-positive technological solution which will increase performance and deliver significant revenue cost savings over the 5 year project lifespan.		
(3) If you have not consulted or engaged with communities that are likely to be affected by the policy or decision, give details about when you intend to carry out consultation or provide reasons for why you feel this is not necessary.	N/A		
<u>Stage 3 – Analysis of impact</u>			
(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? If yes, identify the groups and how they are affected.	RACE No.	DISABILITY Positive. Adding an additional avenue for residents to access services at a location and time of their choosing.	GENDER No
	MARRIAGE/CIVIL PARTNERSHIP No	AGE No	GENDER REASSIGNMENT No

	RELIGION/BELIEF No	PREGNANCY MATERNITY No	SEXUAL ORIENTATION No
<p><u>(2) Cross cutting themes</u></p> <p>(a) Are your proposals likely to impact on social inequalities e.g. child poverty, geographically disadvantaged communities? If yes, please explain how?</p> <p>(b) Are your proposals likely to impact on a carer who looks after older people or people with disabilities? If yes, please explain how?</p>	N/A		
(3) If there is an adverse impact, can this be justified?	N/A		
(4) What actions are going to be taken to reduce or eliminate negative or adverse impact? (this should form part of your action plan under Stage 4.)	N/A		
(5) How does the strategy/service/policy contribute to the promotion of equality? If not what can be done?	Equality of service provision will be increased. Focus on mitigating inequalities and corporate awareness of the presence of inequalities.		
(6) How does the strategy/service/policy promote good relations between groups? If not what can be done?	Increasing accessibility of services should encourage community inclusion		
(7) Are there any obvious barriers to accessing the service? If yes how can they be overcome?	N/A		

<u>Stage 4 – Action Planning, Review & Monitoring</u>																														
<p>If No Further Action is required then go to – Review & Monitoring</p> <p>(1) 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" data-bbox="891 539 2130 764"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="891 539 1133 612">Action</th> <th data-bbox="1133 539 1377 612">Lead Officer</th> <th data-bbox="1377 539 1621 612">Date for completion</th> <th data-bbox="1621 539 1865 612">Resource requirements</th> <th data-bbox="1865 539 2130 612">Comments</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="891 612 1133 651"></td> <td data-bbox="1133 612 1377 651"></td> <td data-bbox="1377 612 1621 651"></td> <td data-bbox="1621 612 1865 651"></td> <td data-bbox="1865 612 2130 651"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="891 651 1133 689"></td> <td data-bbox="1133 651 1377 689"></td> <td data-bbox="1377 651 1621 689"></td> <td data-bbox="1621 651 1865 689"></td> <td data-bbox="1865 651 2130 689"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="891 689 1133 727"></td> <td data-bbox="1133 689 1377 727"></td> <td data-bbox="1377 689 1621 727"></td> <td data-bbox="1621 689 1865 727"></td> <td data-bbox="1865 689 2130 727"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="891 727 1133 767"></td> <td data-bbox="1133 727 1377 767"></td> <td data-bbox="1377 727 1621 767"></td> <td data-bbox="1621 727 1865 767"></td> <td data-bbox="1865 727 2130 767"></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>					Action	Lead Officer	Date for completion	Resource requirements	Comments																				
Action	Lead Officer	Date for completion	Resource requirements	Comments																										
<p>(2) Review and Monitoring State how and when you will monitor policy and Action Plan</p>	<p>Process review is part of the strategy to provide outstanding customer experience and will be built into corporate action plans.</p>																													

Please annotate your policy with the following statement:

‘An Equality Impact Assessment on this policy was undertaken on 12/6/24 and will be reviewed on 31/6/26.’

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Report Title: Finance and Performance Monitoring 2023/24 - Year-End

Name of Committee: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 1 July 2024

Report Director: Chief Officer – Finance and Performance

Portfolio: Finance, Performance, Legal and Governance

Ward Relevance: All Wards

Prior Consultation: All Group Leaders

Contact Officer: Paul Conway, Finance Manager,
paul.conway@rugby.gov.uk

Public or Private: Public

Report Subject to Call-In: Yes

Report En-Bloc: No

Forward Plan: Yes

Corporate Priorities: This report relates to the following priority(ies):
 Rugby is an environmentally sustainable place, where we work together to reduce and mitigate the effects of climate change. (C)
 Rugby has a diverse and resilient economy that benefits and enables opportunities for all residents. (E)
 Residents live healthy, independent lives, with the most vulnerable protected. (HC)
 Rugby Borough Council is a responsible, effective and efficient organisation. (O)
[Corporate Strategy 2021-2024](#)
 This report does not specifically relate to any Council priorities but

Summary: This report sets out the 2023/24 Year-End financial and performance position for the Council and other adjustments for approval as required by Financial Standing Orders.

Financial Implications:	As detailed in the main report.
Risk Management/Health and Safety Implications:	This report is intended to give Cabinet an overview of the Council's spending and performance position for 2023/24 to inform future decision-making.
Environmental Implications:	There are no environmental implications arising from this report and no environmental assessment is required for this report.
Legal Implications:	There are no legal implications arising from this report.
Equality and Diversity:	No new or existing policy or procedure has been recommended and no Equalities Impact Assessment is required for this report.
Options:	Members can elect to approve, amend or reject the reserve contributions as listed in paragraph 2.19 and the creation of a provision as detailed in paragraph 2.10
Recommendation:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The Council's anticipated financial position for 2023/24 in Sections 1 to 4 and Appendices 1 and 2 be considered; 2) General Fund movement in reserves as detailed in paragraph 2.16 and Appendix 1 be approved; 3) General Fund reserves forecast included in Appendix 1 be noted; 4) HRA Movement in Reserves as detailed in paragraph 3.9 and Appendix 2 be approved; 5) HRA reserves forecast included in Appendix 2 be noted; 6) General Fund capital project reprofiling detailed in paragraph 2.28 and Appendix 1 and the budget added to the 2024/25 programme: 7) HRA capital project reprofiling detailed in paragraph 3.13 and Appendix 2 be noted and the budget added to the 2024/25 programme: 8) performance summary and performance data included in Section 5 and Appendix 3 be considered and noted; and

9) IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL THAT

-

(a) the General Fund surplus of (£0.683m) be transferred to the Transformation Reserve as detailed in paragraph 2.19 be approved; and

(a) a £0.400m provision for the loss on investment in relation to the Lothbury property fund, as detailed in paragraph 2.10, be created.

**Reasons for
Recommendation:**

A strong financial and performance management framework, including oversight by Members and the Leadership Team, is an essential part of delivering the Council's Corporate Strategy.

Cabinet - 1 July 2024

Finance and Performance Monitoring 2023/24 - Year-End

Public Report of the Chief Financial Officer

Recommendation

- 1) The Council's anticipated financial position for 2023/24 in Sections 1 to 4 and Appendices 1 and 2 be considered;
- 2) General Fund movement in reserves as detailed in paragraph 2.16 and Appendix 1 be approved;
- 3) General Fund reserves forecast included in Appendix 1 be noted;
- 4) HRA Movement in Reserves as detailed in paragraph 3.9 and Appendix 2 be approved;
- 5) HRA reserves forecast included in Appendix 2 be noted;
- 6) General Fund capital project reprofiling detailed in paragraph 2.28 and Appendix 1 and the budget added to the 2024/25 programme;
- 7) HRA capital project reprofiling detailed in paragraph 3.13 and Appendix 2 be noted and the budget added to the 2024/25 programme;
- 8) performance summary and performance data included in Section 5 and Appendix 3 be considered and noted; and
- 9) IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL THAT -
 - (a) the General Fund transfer of (£0.683m) to the Transformation Reserve as detailed in paragraph 2.19 be approved; and
 - (b) a £0.400m provision for the loss on investment in relation to the Lothbury property fund, as detailed in paragraph 2.10, be created.

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide the final outturn position for 2023/24. It combines finance (revenue and capital) as well as performance for the General Fund (GF) and Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The year-end position for 2023/24 is based on actual expenditure from 01 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

Please note that this financial position is subject to change following the outcome of the external audit review of the Statement of Accounts with any changes to be reported as part of the 2024/25 quarterly monitoring exercises.

The key findings of this report are as follows:

- **General Fund Revenue (GF)** – across the council there is a final variance of (£0.683m) compared to the budget of £20.635m. The service variance was £1.643m, which was offset from savings in the net cost of borrowing.
- **General Fund Corporate and Earmarked Reserves** – reserves have a balance of (£33.446m) at 31 March 2024. This includes (£30.154m) of corporate reserves and (£3.292m) of earmarked reserves.
- **General Fund Capital Programme** – the revised approved GF capital programme for 2023/24 is £18.962m. The programme shows a net variance at year-end of (£10.252m).
- **General fund savings programme** – the council has delivered 92%, (£1.879m) of savings against a 2023/24 target of (£2.053m).
- **Housing Revenue Account (HRA)** – the final outturn reports a balanced position.
- **Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme** – the approved HRA capital programme for 2023/24 is £30.230m. The programme shows a net variance of (£0.591m).
- **Collection Fund** – the final outturn has resulted in a council tax surplus of (£0.139m) and a business rates deficit of £6.345m
- **Performance measures** – Quarter Four performance measures are detailed in Section 5 and Appendix 3

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. Local Authorities have a requirement to account separately for core operational services and the provision of dwellings. This is achieved by creating two reporting functions. The General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account.
- 1.2. The General Fund is the main revenue account of the local authority, which includes day-to-day income and expenditure on the provision of services. Activities within the General Fund include waste and recycling, parks and recreation and regulatory services.
- 1.3. The Housing Revenue Account is a statutory requirement for local authorities with a council housing stock. It contains all the expenditure and income relating to the direct provision of that stock. Included in the Housing Revenue Account are elements such as rent, service charges, maintenance, repairs, and property management.
- 1.4. The Council takes a multiyear approach to its budget planning and monitoring, recognising that the two are inextricably linked. At three-month intervals officers provide their latest forecast expectations for each of the reporting units. This report provides the final outturn for the council based on the information available at 31 March 2024.
- 1.5. Throughout the report, pressures on expenditure and income shortfalls are shown as positive values. Savings on expenditure and additional income are shown in brackets.
- 1.6. This report also contains an update on the Collection Fund and the performance measures that are seen as fundamental to the Council's continued focus on improving its offering to the local community.

2. GENERAL FUND (GF)

2.1. GF Operating Position (Appendix)

2.2. The 2023/24 General Fund revenue outturn position is summarised below.

Table One: General Fund Revenue Outturn

Type	Revised Budget £000	2023/24 Outturn £000	Outturn Variance to Budget £000
General Fund services	18,585	20,228	1,643
Corporate items	(1,150)	(3,203)	(2,053)
Reserves	3,200	4,494	1,294
Total	20,635	21,519	884
Grants	(2,464)	(2,494)	(30)
Business Rates	(8,572)	(10,109)	(1,537)
Council Tax	(9,599)	(9,599)	0
Total Funding	(20,635)	(22,202)	(1,567)
Total Net Position	0	(683)	(683)

- 2.3. Across the Council there is a final variance of (£0.683m) compared to the budget of £20.635m. The service variance was £1.643m, which was offset from savings in the net cost of borrowing of (£2.723m) see paragraph 2.10.
- 2.4. Where a combined Portfolio variance totals +/- £0.100m, the main contributing factors are shown below. Further details of Portfolio variances can be found in Appendix 1.
- 2.5. Operations & Traded Services is reporting a variance of £0.806m.
- £0.351m – Staff and agency costs - The high levels of staff sickness, absence and vacancies have necessitated the need to turn to the agency market to ensure that the service continues to operate. There is also a need to use agency staff to cover holiday periods. The service is working with HR to help manage sickness and absence levels as well as exploring initiatives to deliver efficiencies across working practices.
 - £0.337m – External Contractors - a significant percentage of the Operations and Traded Services variance relates to Domestic Waste Collection/Recycling. A change in the arrangements for 2023/24 have seen costs rise above the expectations that were set out during the budget setting process. Work is ongoing to understand how the impact of this can be managed.
- 2.6. Leisure and Wellbeing is reporting a variance of £0.257m.
- £0.142m – Sports & Recreation Income - Vacancies covering permanent and casual staff have played a part in the income shortfall across On-Track, Play and Recreation and Sports Development. There is an ongoing recruitment campaign to fill the vacancies within the service. The Service is currently embarking on identifying additional income opportunities. This could include corporate sponsorship and additional grant funding.
 - £0.095m – Parks & Open Spaces Maintenance & Repairs - Higher-than-expected levels of maintenance and repairs of play areas partly due to vandalism and equipment needing to be made safe. There have also been increased fencing works due to deterioration of adopted infrastructure. The service intends to review the arrangements for these activities. This includes embedding in the planning process the use of non-wooden street furniture and infrastructure. This should prolong the life of the asset as well as aiding the Council's sustainability and environmental aspirations.
- 2.7. Finance, Performance, Legal and Governance reports a variance of £0.198m.
- £0.169m – Audit Fees - The 2023/24 external audit contract fees were not communicated until quarter 4 of the financial year. Although an assessment of the fees was made at budget setting, the budget was ultimately lower than the final value. In addition to this the Housing Benefit audit was double the previous year's value and the PSAA approved additional fees for the 2022/23 year which was not included in the original budget.

- (£0.141m) – Financial Services Staff Costs – A difficult recruiting environment during the majority of 2023/24 has led to continued vacancies within the team. Several rounds of recruitment for key roles within the team have proved unsuccessful. This has led to increased pressure on existing team members to continue to keep the service operational. At the end of 2023/24 a dedicated finance recruiter was commissioned to assist with recruitment to specialist roles. This also failed to source suitable candidates, with salary being cited as the key barrier.
- £0.200m – Financial Services Agency Costs - As an interim measure contractors have been used to fill vacancies. Experienced agency staff with the right level of skills are highly sought after and come at a premium cost.

2.8. Growth and Investment is reporting a variance of £0.160m.

- £0.373m – Planning Income - Whilst the number of major planning applications received during 2023/24 was similar to 2022/23, the type and scale of these applications were smaller and hence the associated application fee was less. Planning income fluctuates each year because external factors such as uncertainty in the global economic market, interest rate rises and cost of living concerns.
- (£0.285m) – Staff and agency costs - Recruitment to vacant roles primarily within Development Strategy and Planning has proved challenging. The vacant posts within the Local Planning Authority can result in the service being unable to fulfil its statutory duties and provide decisions in a timely manner. This has led to the service utilising agency staff who are proficient and experienced enough with the right level of skills in planning. Posts are currently being readvertised and work has commenced with WM Employers to review the grading and benchmarking of all planning officer posts across Growth and Investment due to the failure to recruit to numerous posts on numerous occasions.
- (£0.183m) – Town Centre Development Activities - The saving has occurred because projects which were intended to be funded from this budget were funded from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) as this is a time limited fund from government. The Council were required to demonstrate the maximum delivery of spend on projects in Years One and Two of UKSPF to ensure a high proportion of Year Three money was received in the first quarter of 2024/25. Following the adoption of the Shop Front Supplementary Planning Document and other studies and masterplans currently in train, it is proposed the 2024/25 budget will be used to supplement a town centre improvement project by the end of March 2024/25.
- £0.115m – Planning Appeals - Following the refusal of planning permission the applicant has the right of appeal to the Secretary of State who appoints a Planning Inspector to review the case. The majority of appeals are dealt with by Planning Officers however in complex cases which require legal representation and expert witnesses on matters which the Council does not have the relevant expertise in house e.g. landscape

and heritage, then these services will need to be procured in order to defend the Council's decision. There have been three major appeals that have required the procurement of legal and or experts in 2023/24.

2.9. Regulation and Safety is reporting a variance of (£0.131m).

- (£0.182m) – Staff and Agency costs – As with other Portfolios recruiting to key posts within the service is proving challenging. This is causing resilience issues and pressure on existing team members. The service is actively trying to recruit to fill vacancies and ease the pressure on the remaining team members.

2.10. Corporate Items is reporting a variance of (£2.053m).

- (£2.723m) – Net Cost of Borrowing - Treasury management activity has been significantly better than when the budget was set in February 2023, 15 months of interest rate increases plus delays in the capital programme has meant that the organisation has been able to achieve a benefit. The budget setting process for 2024/25 has taken account of this, but again given the current volatility in interest rates and that the cost of borrowing and minimum revenue provision associated with the capital programme is linked to the delivery of schemes, it is likely that there could be fluctuation in future years.
- £0.400m – Lothbury Property Fund - Since 2015, as part of its diverse investment portfolio, the Council has invested in the Lothbury Property Fund, managed by Lothbury Investment Management. The commercial property markets have found recent economic conditions difficult and as a result the value of the Council's investment has fallen. The fund managers have recently informed the Council that the fund would close, and funds would be returned to the Authority. Although the final value of the investment is as yet still unknown the Council has prudently made a provision in the accounts of £0.400m for any loss of capital. When viewing the life performance of the investment since 2015 the fund has provided approximately £0.574m in dividends to the Council.

2.11. **Staff Recruitment and Retention**

2.12. Recruitment and retention of key roles continues to be a challenge for the sector. During 2023/24 there has been circa 45 vacant posts. In overall terms the organisation has a turnover rate of 15% (classed as regrettable leavers), the industry average is 13.4%.

2.13. This has generated a staff saving, however in order to maintain service levels agency staffing is required. In most cases there is a premium to using agency, however this is a cost requirement for the organisation.

2.14. To maximise the chances of getting the best contractors and to limit the cost as far as possible, the Council entered into a contract with Opus in January 2024. Given the timing of entering into the agreement there is little data available about

its success just yet and this will be reported at a later date. From a procurement perspective no contract with external agency will be approved unless the role has first been advertised through Opus.

- 2.15. Due to the level of vacancies, recruitment costs are high with actual spend of £0.090m against a budget of £0.049m. The additional costs relate to the volume of campaigns rather than the cost of advertising. For a number of roles, including the Lead Accountant in Financial Services and the Principal Planning Officer in Growth & Investment no appointment was made on the first campaign and the role has had to be advertised on multiple occasions. The table below provides a summary of the roles advertised on multiple occasions.

Table Two: Roles Advertised on Multiple Occasions

Portfolio	Role	Number of times advertised during 2023/24
Digital & Communications	Digital Transformation & Enablement Officer	2
Digital & Communications	Senior Infrastructure Engineer	2
Finance & Performance	Corporate Assurance Manager	2
Finance & Performance	Funding & Treasury	2
Finance & Performance	Lead Accountant	3
Growth & Investment	Principal Planning Officer	2
Leisure & Wellbeing	On Track Youth Worker	4
Transformation Unit	Estates Officer	2

- 2.16. **GF Corporate and General Fund Earmarked Reserves (Appendix 1)**
- 2.17. Corporate Reserves have a balance of (£30.154m) at 31 March 2024 which is a movement of (£5.053m) since 31 March 2023. Details can be found in Appendix 1.
- 2.18. Other earmarked reserves managed within services is (£3.292m) which is a movement of (£0.516m) since 31 March 2023. Details of this movement can be found in Appendix 1.
- 2.19. As detailed in paragraph 2.2 there is a GF surplus of (£0.683m) It is proposed that this is transferred into the Transformation Reserve.
- 2.20. It is requested that the General Fund movement in reserves as detailed in paragraphs 2.19 and Appendix 1 be approved and the forecasts in Appendix 1 be noted.
- 2.21. **GF Savings Programme (Appendix 1)**
- 2.22. The councils 2023/24 savings programme totalled (£2.053m). 92% (£1.879m) of the savings have been delivered. The balance of (£0.174m) were undelivered during the year.

Table Three: General Fund Savings Programme

Type	Target £000	£000	£000	£000
Savings target	(2,053)	(1,879)	-	(174)

- 2.23. Even though the red rated savings have not been delivered, work will continue in order to achieve them in future years. An example of this, £0.096m, is the recharges to Warwickshire County Council for share of costs of Art Gallery and Museum. Through the work of the budget working group, each Chief Officer, in collaboration with the budget manager and the finance business partner will produce an updated savings delivery plan which will detail the actions required to deliver the savings.
- 2.24. The impact of non-delivery means that the Councils reserve balances may need to be used to fund the pressures, or Council will be asked to approve additional savings proposals to ensure a balanced Medium Term Financial plan. Progress on the plans will be reported throughout the 2024/25 financial year.
- 2.25. **GF Capital Programme**
- 2.26. The approved General Fund capital programme was £18.962m. Reprofiting and savings have resulted in a 2023/24 outturn of £5.461m.

Table Four: General Fund Capital Programme

Type	Revised Budget £000	Budget Reprofilng £000	Reprofilng Budget £000	Q2 Forecast £000	Q3 Forecast £000	2023/24 Outturn £000	Outturn Variance to Budget £000
GF Capital	18,962	(3,249)	15,713	6,250	5,819	5,461	(10,252)

- 2.27. Of the reported saving of (£10.252m) against this year's programme, (£9.670m) is the planned loan to Caldecott Development Ltd (CDL). This has not taken place during the year due to a pause in the CDL initiative.
- 2.28. There is (£3.249m) of capital reprofiling. This is spread across several small schemes, the details of which can be found in Appendix 1.
- 2.29. A detailed summary of all the GF Capital programme for 2023/24 is shown in appendix 1.
- 2.30. **Capital Budget Reprofiting**
- 2.31. Budget reprofiling on the capital programme arises when the approved scheme is not completed in the year in which the budget was approved. Details of the reprofiling on both the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account is detailed in Appendix 1 and 2.
- 2.32. The reprofiling relating to the 2023/24 programme has been endorsed by the Budget Working Group and have been approved by the Chief Officer – Finance and Performance under delegated powers as detailed in the 2023/24 Capital

Strategy. Progress on the delivery of the schemes will continue to be reported as part of the quarterly reports to Cabinet.

- 2.33. It is requested that capital project reprofiling, detailed at Appendix 1 and 2 be noted.

3. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA)

3.1. HRA Operating Position (Appendix 2)

- 3.2. Housing rents were set by Council on 7 February 2023. Rent increases for 2023/24 were capped at 7% as announced in the Autumn Budget Statement on 17 November 2022.

- 3.3. The 2023 /24 HRA revenue outturn position is summarised below.

Table Five: HRA Revenue Outturn Position

Type	Revised Budget £000	2023/24 Outturn £000	Outturn Variance to Budget £000
Income	(18,461)	(18,248)	213
Expenditure	14,269	15,197	928
Cost of HRA services	(4,192)	(3,051)	1,141
Interest and investment income/expense	913	(181)	(1,094)
Net cost after interest	(3,279)	(3,232)	47
Contribution to capital expenditure	3,332	3,305	(27)
Contributions to (+) / from (-) reserves	49	29	(20)
Total	102	102	0

- 3.4. Although the HRA reports a balanced position there were variances within function that total +/- £0.100m, they are shown below.

- 3.5. Transfer to Housing Repairs Account is reporting a variance of £0.528m. This is due to several factors.

- £0.407m – External Contractor spend – The overspend on contractors can be attributed to the following.
 - An increased number of voids being received that required major works, engaging with specialist contractors to undertake sections of that work and high inflation linked to the cost of materials.
 - In terms of specialist contractors, the Property Repairs team does not employ any roofers within the service, this is due in part to market conditions and the ability of the service to successfully recruit. As a result, roofing works is currently undertaken by a contractor. It is worth noting that if there were an internally employed roofing team to undertake the work, the costs would still be high as a large part of the cost relates to scaffolding where costs have increased across the sector, plus the scope of work required would also remain consistent.

- There are benefits to outsourcing the roofing works which include the reduced risk to the council given the high-risk nature of the work, the resilience an external provider can provide and the specialist skills that the local authority does not possess.
- A further high contractor spend was on fencing works, this can be attributed to the extreme weather events within the Borough over the last 12 months. Given the volume of work reported by tenants, contractors were required to support the direct labour force in the delivery of these services. Measures taken to reduce contractor spend include engaging with a framework to expand the list of contractors available to encourage further competition, reducing the scope of works conducted on voids to minimise costs, while meeting lettable standard and reviewing of tenant and landlord responsibilities for responsive repairs.
- £0.341m – Income - A challenging budget was set with the intention to offer more external services. Due to the volume of internal works and pressure on the service to deliver in a timely manner, expansion of the service has not been possible. The service is planning to undertake a review in the new financial year, to understand where, if possible, there may be potential capacity to offer additional external services.
- (£0.133m) – Voids – Due to an excessive number of voids entering the workstream, of which 50% are classed as major voids based upon the complexity of work required, a £0.485m supplementary budget was approved at Cabinet on the 23 December. The saving is due to not all planned works having been completed before the end of the financial year.
- Measures that have been put in place to help reduce costs on voids include stock condition surveys, issuing decorating vouchers for all general rented properties, reducing scope of garden works and estate walkabouts to highlight properties that will potentially require works. Some of these measures will be seen in the form of quicker void turnaround times so that properties are available to let, and to reduce lost rental income. However, it should be noted that much of the benefit will be realised in the medium to long term.

3.6. Supervision and Management is reporting a variance of £0.345m. This is related to:

- £0.446m – Rent, Rates & Service Charges - The higher number of major repairs than expected is resulting in longer void periods. This is having an adverse impact on rental and service charge income. Void properties result in the Council having to cover council tax bills and utilities cost for vacant properties which is an added cost. A further consideration is that the current criteria to join the housing waiting list is too narrow, which has the effect of reducing the pool of potential tenants.
- The service is currently working with the property repairs team to profile the current workload to see what further action can be taken in relation to

major works. The housing allocation policy and the letting of properties is currently under review with recruitment to new posts to facilitate a more proactive approach to tenancy and property management (including bi-annual tenancy audits, more regular estate inspections, pre termination visits and closer liaison with assets in respect of tenants wishing to decline property improvements). The Housing and Benefits team have also piloted working with a local letting agent on hard to let properties.

3.7. Interest and Investment Income is reporting a variance of (£1.100m).

- As with the General Fund, the HRA has benefited from interest rate decisions in relation to the net cost of borrowing.

3.8. HRA Reserves

3.9. The reserves at 31 March 2024 have a balance of £39.437m which is a movement of £1.245m since 31 March 2023. Details can be found in Appendix 2.

3.10. It is requested the HRA movements in reserves as detailed in Appendix 2 are approved by Full Council.

3.11. HRA Capital

3.12. The approved HRA capital programme is £30.230m. Reprofiling and expected savings have resulted in a 2023/24 outturn of £0.591m.

Table Six: HRA Capital Programme

Type	Revised Budget £000	Budget Reprofiling £000	Reprofiled Budget £000	Q2 Forecast £000	Q3 Forecast £000	2023/24 Outturn £000	Outturn Variance to Budget £000
HRA Capital Programme	30,230	(11,821)	18,409	18,802	20,014	17,818	(591)

3.13. There was (£11.821m) of capital reprofiling. (£8.092m) is related to construction works at Biart Place. Delays in the planning process and appointing the main contractor, resulted in onsite construction not commencing until December 2023.

3.14. The outturn figure contains (£0.591m) of savings. This is spread across several small schemes, the details of which can be found in Appendix 2.

3.15. It is requested that the capital project reprofiling detailed in Appendix 2 be noted.

4. COLLECTION FUND

4.1. The Council has a statutory requirement to operate a Collection Fund as a separate account to the General Fund. The purpose of the Collection Fund, therefore, is to isolate the income and expenditure relating to Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Business Rates.

4.2. The administrative costs associated with the collection process are charged to the General Fund. For the purpose of this report the analysis will be split between Council Tax and Business Rates.

4.3. Council Tax

4.4. The amount of council tax income received into the General Fund for 2023/24 is fixed to the original budgeted amount, not the actual amount billed during the year. Any difference between the actual amount and the original budget will create a surplus or deficit on the Collection Fund, to be accounted for in future years. This has no impact on the 2023/24 General Fund revenue budget variance.

4.5. The final outturn has resulted in a council tax surplus of (£0.139m) and is detailed in the table below:

Table Seven: Council Tax Apportionment

Council Tax Collection Fund Surplus	2023/24 £000
Warwickshire County Council	(106)
Police and Crime Commissioner for Warwickshire	(18)
Rugby Borough Council	(15)
Total	(139)

4.6. Business Rates

4.7. The Council sets its business rates income budget based on the NNDR1 form that is submitted to Government on 31 January each year. It was forecast that the Council would collect (£62.078m) of business rates during 2023/24, of which Rugby Borough Council would retain (£9.477m).

4.8. The following table details the Council's outturn position.

Table Eight: Business Rates Income

Business Rates Income	2023/24 Budget £000	2023/24 Outturn £000	Variance £000
RBC share of NDR Income @ 40% (as per the NNDR1 forecast)	(24,831)	(24,831)	-
Less Tariff	15,354	15,354	-
Gross Amount Retained	(9,477)	(9,477)	-
Section 31 Grants	(3,865)	(3,515)	350
Levy Payment	4,610	3,360	(1,250)
Net Retained Income	(8,733)	(9,632)	(900)
Coventry & Warks' BR Pool Income*	(500)	(1,000)	(500)
Retained Disregarded Amounts	(22)	(22)	-
Business Rates Income	(9,254)	(10,654)	(1,400)
Year-end reconciliation adjustments			
Total Business Rates Income	(9,254)	(10,654)	(1,400)

*This is a provisional figure pending final closure of accounts from Business Rates Pooling in 2023/24 any further changes will be reflected in the 2023/24 accounts.

4.9. The 2023/24 budget surplus of (£1.400m) is due to the reasons below:

- In accordance with legislation, the business rates income charged to the General Fund is fixed to the statutory NNDR1 estimate, regardless of how much business rates are billed or received. Any actual cash variance is being managed through the Collection Fund.
- Section 31 grants show a pressure of £0.350m due to actual reliefs given to businesses for various schemes totalling less than the budget set which was based on estimates shared by Central Government.
- Levy payments is a saving of (£1.250m) linked to the reduction in business rates received in the year and the associated deficit as per paragraph 4.11.
- The Council is a member of the Coventry & Warwickshire Business Rates Pool (the Pool). The pooling gain in 2023/24 was (£1.000m) which was higher than the budgeted amount of (£0.500m), due to the risk-based approach taken at budget setting.

4.10. The £1.400m variance in Business Rates income relates to the budgeted amount of (£1.701m) not been utilised. For 2023/24 (£0.301m) was employed in the accounts.

4.11. The overall Business Rates deficit on the Collection Fund was £6.345m of which the relevant shares are shown in the table below. The Council's share of the deficit is £2.538m.

Table Eight: Business Rates Apportionment

Business Rates Collection Fund Deficit	2023/24 £000
Central Government	3,172
Warwickshire County Council	634
Rugby Borough Council	2,538
Total	6,345

5. PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

5.1. This section of the report summarises the performance of the organisation against key performance indicators (KPIs) for the financial year. It provides a snapshot of key achievements and areas requiring improvement across various service areas.

5.2. The reporting dashboard has now been used across the Council, with officers recognising the role it can play in driving performance. There is now a full year of measures which will help with trend and benchmarking.

5.3. Through the use of tools such as LG Inform and CFO insights officers have access to equivalent information from other local authorities. It is worth highlighting that due to the collection of government returns, there could be inconsistencies due to different reporting years, however officers will use best practice from other authorities to raise the bar for future analysis.

- 5.4. The 2023/24 Key performance indicators (KPI's) and key statistics can be accessed via the link shown below. In addition to this is a new concept summary that accompanies this report. The summary gives stakeholders the opportunity to see how the performance indicators align with the Corporate Strategy. This information is held in Appendix 3 and is a document that officers will develop during 2024/25 as new ideas are incorporated into how the Council captures, monitors and reports performance data.

<https://www.rugby.gov.uk/w/performance-dashboard>

5.5. **Overall Performance**

- 5.6. The Council has identified 77 KPIs that not only impact on Portfolio performance but are also aligned to the Corporate Strategy. 62% of all KPIs reported against in 2023/24 either met or exceeded the set target. 30% of KPIs were flagged as amber or red, this is where the target hadn't been achieved and for 8% of KPI's there were difficulties in obtaining information that prevented them been reported against in 2023/24. Information for these measures should be available for 2024/25.

5.7. **2023/24 Highlights**

- 5.8. There have been a number of instances throughout 2023/24 where performance has improved. They include:
- 5.9. The number of complaints has significantly decreased each quarter. Complaints have reduced from 199 during the first quarter of the year to 102 by the final quarter of 2023/2024, this reflects improved performance in services such as customer services, property repairs and council tax.
- 5.10. The percentage of property repairs jobs completed within our definition of 'First-Time Fix' has consistently exceeded target. This has been achieved by allocating time for operatives to complete works using the NATFED7 SOR's (Schedule of Rates) which includes SMV's (Standard Minute Value). This allows a more accurate time assessment for repairs based on industry standards for the time required for work to be carried out. The service also carries out continuing assessment of van stocks and material usage to ensure that our suppliers carry the items we require for Rugby Borough Council properties, so that repairs can be completed on the first visit.
- 5.11. The Quality of decision making in relation to major planning applications is measured by the number of appeals that are upheld as a percentage of applications. The government target for quality of decision making requires no more than 10% of appeals for major development are overturned as a percentage of all major decisions. By quarter four the Council had achieved 0%.

5.12. **Areas for Improvement**

- 5.13. In certain areas performance has fell below the targets that were set at the beginning of the year. Some examples of this include.
- 5.14. The percentage of major voids completed on time is currently below target. This is due to an excessive number of properties requiring major works entering the workstream. This directly links to the income and expenditure pressures in the HRA where a supplementary budget of £0.485m was approved at the December 2023 Cabinet to assist with the level of works required. Some of the Initiatives been put in place to highlight and target properties in potential disrepair before they are returned in such a poor condition are detailed in paragraph 3.6.
- 5.15. The % of premises within the Rugby Borough that have attained the Food Hygiene Rating 5 is currently just below the target of 75%. However, this is a variable figure and dependent on the number of inspections done and type of inspection. There has been slight decrease in standards over Q4, as a large number of overdue inspections were completed. The National figure is 69.55% so the team are well above the national average.
- 5.16. On annualised basis the number of missed green bin collections is above the target of 300. However, much of the performance slippage happened during the first two quarters of year and by quarter four the actual number of missed green bin collections was 223. This has been achieved in part by keeping regular team members on the same crew to ensure they are familiar with the rounds and areas and the impact of missed bins on residents is discussed in toolbox talks.
- 5.17. The target for the percentage of Council Tax collected is 98.6%. The actual 2023/24 percentage achieved was 97%. Although the target has not been achieved, the team has had success in that 2023/24 was the first year since 2016 that collection rate has increased on the previous year (by 0.5%) In addition to this a new software solution will be implemented for 2024/25 which will allow customers to self-serve when it comes to paying debt. The team are also introducing a tailored automated reminder service which will have a positive impact on debt collection.
- 5.18. Following the conclusion of the year all measures will be reviewed and as a result of this alternatives may be identified. This will be discussed in more detail with Portfolio holders and then wider members in the lead up to the 2024/25 Quarter 1 report.

Name of Meeting: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 1 July 2024

Subject Matter: Finance and Performance Monitoring 2023/24 - Year-End

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

Appendix 1 - General Fund Dashboard - Quarter 4 2023-24

1) Revenue Outturn

Portfolio	Current Net Budget	Total Net Expenditure	Employee Variance	Running Cost Variance	Income Variance	Pending Carry Forward Requests	Pending Supplementary Budget/Virement/Reserve transfers	Total Variance	Q3 Forecast Variance	Movement between Q3 and Q4
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Communities, Homes, Digital and Communications	2,707	2,738	(160)	(238)	429			31	(69)	100
Finance, Performance, Legal and Governance	3,533	3,827	63	557	(327)		(1)	294	(8)	302
Growth and Investment	1,527	1,687	(110)	284	(14)			160	372	(212)
Leisure and Wellbeing	4,094	4,351	(71)	653	(325)		(6)	257	259	(2)
Operation and Traded Services	5,446	6,252	359	605	(158)		(42)	806	362	444
Regulation and Safety	1,520	1,389	(185)	188	(134)			(131)	(37)	(94)
Chief Executive	(10)	67	81	118	(122)		100	77	94	(17)
Transformation Change Unit	(232)	(83)	(20)	318	(149)			149	134	15
Corporate Items - Other	(1,150)	(3,203)	0				(38)	(2,053)	(1,249)	(804)
	17,435	17,025	(43)	2,485	(800)	0	13	(410)	(142)	(268)

Funding

Grants	(2,464)	(2,494)						(30)
Business Rates	(8,572)	(10,109)						(1,537)
Council Tax	(9,599)	(9,599)						0
	(20,635)	(22,202)	0	0	0	0	0	(1,567)

Reserve Transfers

GF Revenue Carry Forward Reserve	(168)	(168)						0
Business Rates Equalisation Reserve	(1,701)	(301)						1,400
Budget Stability Reserve	69	0						(69)
Earmarked Reserves	5,000	4,963					(13)	(37)
	3,200	4,494				0	(13)	1,294
Grand Total	0	(683)				0	0	(683)

3) Delivery of new savings & income targets

PORTFOLIO	Total	Red	Green
	£000s	£000s	£000s
Communities, Homes, Digital and Communications	(167)	(113)	(54)
Finance, Performance, Legal and Governance	(41)		(41)
Growth and Investment	(401)		(401)
Operation and Traded Services	(46)	(10)	(36)
Regulation and Safety	(227)		(227)
Chief Executive	(1)		(1)
Leisure and Wellbeing	(23)		(23)
Corporate Items	(1,147)	(51)	(1,096)
TOTAL GF	(2,053)	(174)	(1,879)

2) Reserve Summary									
Name of reserve	Balance as at 31 March 2023	Total Net Expenditure	Balance as at 31 March 2024	Forecast contributions	Balance as at 31 March 2025	Forecast contributions	Balance as at 31 March 2026	Forecast contributions	Balance as at 31 March 2027
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Gen Fund Revenue Acc	(2,250)	0	(2,250)	0	(2,250)	0	(2,250)	0	(2,250)
GF Revenue Carry Forward Reserve	(168)	168	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Business Rates Equalisation Reserve	(17,041)	301	(16,740)	4,491	(12,249)	(7,066)	(19,315)	(561)	(19,876)
Budget Stability Reserve	(2,412)	(601)	(3,013)	805	(2,208)	0	(2,208)	0	(2,208)
Town Centre Strategy Reserve	0	(4,810)	(4,810)	1,425	(3,385)	550	(2,835)	0	(2,835)
Emergency Climate Change Reserve	(1,000)	0	(1,000)	150	(850)	150	(700)	150	(550)
STW Pensions Reserve	(86)	0	(86)	0	(86)	0	(86)	0	(86)
Section Agreements	(1,937)	(120)	(2,056)	114	(1,942)	114	(1,828)	0	(1,828)
Non-Conditional Revenue Grants	(205)	8	(196)	196	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)
Warwickshire Consortium Reserve	(2)	0	(2)	0	(2)	0	(2)	0	(2)
Other corporate reserves	(2,229)	(111)	(2,340)	310	(2,030)	114	(1,916)	0	(1,916)
Total corporate reserves	(25,100)	(5,053)	(30,154)	7,031	(22,123)	(6,402)	(28,525)	(561)	(29,086)
Communities, Homes, Digital and Communications	(616)	(57)	(673)	106	(567)	106	(461)	5	(456)
Finance, Performance, Legal and Governance	(59)	(0)	(59)	2	(57)	1	(56)	0	(56)
Growth and Investment	(322)	0	(322)	0	(322)	0	(322)	0	(322)
Leisure and Wellbeing	(105)	6	(100)	24	(76)	(6)	(82)	(6)	(88)
Operation and Traded Services	(126)	42	(84)	64	(20)	0	(20)	0	(20)
Regulation and Safety	(199)	47	(153)	(28)	(181)	(42)	(223)	(42)	(265)
Transformation Change Unit	(1,348)	(453)	(1,801)	384	(1,417)	50	(1,367)	0	(1,367)
Chief Executive	0	(100)	(100)	0	(100)	0	(100)	0	(100)
Total Portfolio earmarked reserves	(2,775)	(516)	(3,292)	552	(2,740)	109	(2,631)	(43)	(2,674)
Total Reserves	(27,875)	(5,569)	(33,446)	7,583	(24,863)	(6,293)	(31,156)	(604)	(31,760)

Red savings- further details	
	£000s
Procurement Framework Pagabo	(51)
Emptying of litter and dog bins on unadopted roads and locations	(10)
Recharges to Warwickshire County Council for share of costs of Art Gallery and Museum	(96)
Increase budget for Private Sector Leasing Properties	(15)
Car allowances savings	(2)
TOTAL GF	(174)

4) Capital Summary						
Portfolio	Current Budget	Total Net Expenditure	Pending Reprofiting Requests	Total Variance	Q3 Forecast Variance	Movement between Q3 and Q4
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Communities, Homes, Digital and Communication	2,775	1,473	873	(429)	(821)	392
Finance, Performance, Legal & Governance	59	0	30	(29)	(25)	(4)
Growth and Investment	46	31	15	(1)	0	(1)
Leisure and Wellbeing	2,018	937	1,084	4	25	(22)
Operation and Traded Services	3,758	2,712	1,132	86	3	83
Regulation and Safety Capital	547	308	115	(123)	(63)	(61)
Chief Executive	9,760	0	0	(9,760)	0	(9,760)
Transformation Change Unit						
Grand Total	18,962	5,461	3,249	(10,252)	(880)	(9,372)

5) Revenue variance narrative									
PORTFOLIO	Total Q4 Variance to Budget	Item Variances to budget	Pressure/(Saving)	Expenditure Type	Service Area	Description	Root Cause Analysis - When you have found a material variance you must first determine the root cause of the variance.	Impact - Next, quantify the impact. This involves not only understanding the impact to the current month; also if no changes are made, what the go-forward impact to the business is for both favourable and unfavourable budget variances.	Action - The final part of any analysis should include an action for the business. What can be put in place to mitigate the impact.
Communities & Homes	87	91	Pressure	Income	Welfare Services	Income related to the Lifeline service	In terms of trying to expand the service there has been difficulties in recruitment, due to the salary level and the unsociable working hours of the roles.	There are a number of commercial factors that means that expansion of this service is unlikely. i) as the connections are modest, the service does not have the purchasing power of competitors (rule of thumb to be commercially viable is 10k plus connections) ii) there are also other technical innovations open to households that take away the need to subscribe in the first place - for example increased use of Alexa. iii) this is a competitive market without other trusted providers.	Consultancy advice has been procured and a specialist is in the process of conducting an options appraisal to help inform decision making about the future of the service. A report will be taken to council in Q3 2024/25 outlining the potential options.
		(234)	Saving	Expense	Corporate Property Central Utilities	Gas	Gas price estimates for 2023/24 from our wholesaler ESPO projected that prices could rise by 285% for this financial year. This was in addition to the projected rise in 2022/23 of 33%. According to ESPO energy report the price of gas is now significantly lower due to higher volumes of storage and gas levels being maintained meaning that anticipated panic buying didn't happen as did in the second half of 2022. The average unit price of gas for the council has actually increased by 195% instead of the expected 285%.	There has been a significant decrease in the cost of gas for this financial year	The last 2 years have been a period which has seen energy prices remain hugely volatile as the impact of the energy crisis and ongoing geo-political tensions continued to influence prices. The high cost of energy and relatively mild winter temperatures did reduce demand and meant that prices started to fall quite quickly at the start of 2024, but given the ongoing uncertainty higher than average prices prior to the Ukraine conflict are likely to persist. These market conditions have meant that the wholesale cost of gas has decreased significantly compared to the April 2023 – March 2024 period.
		125	Pressure	Expense	Corporate Property Repair and Maintenance	Repair and maintenance costs	Sheer volume of requests for unplanned maintenance for a portfolio of buildings that is getting older. The Property Repairs Service supporting with such work has not materialised due to resourcing constraints. This has increased the dependency on external contractors.	Tends to be shocks that are difficult to plan for that incurs the expenses	To recognise the increased volume of requests a budget growth item was approved for 2024/25 for an extra £113,000.
		(39)	Saving	Expense	Corporate Property and Maintenance	Staff vacancies	A Senior Corporate Property Officer left in March 2023 and a Town Hall Superintendent also left during the year. Recruiting to the posts proved due to the current market conditions	Obvious issues around resilience in what is already a small team.	Corporate Property (Asset Maintenance) Officer has been recruited and commenced 18th March 2024. Another TH Super is now in post. Budget has been secured for a Project Manager Resource. Job is currently out to advert - interviews early June 2024.

PORTFOLIO	Total Q4 Variance to Budget	Item Variances to budget	Pressure/(Saving)	Expenditure Type	Service Area	Description	Root Cause Analysis - When you have found a material variance you must first determine the root cause of the variance.	Impact - Next, quantify the impact. This involves not only understanding the impact to the current month; also if no changes are made, what the go-forward impact to the business is for both favourable and unfavourable budget variances.	Action - The final part of any analysis should include an action for the business. What can be put in place to mitigate the impact.
		(47)	Saving	Expense	Housing Advice and Benefits Team	Staff vacancies	There are currently two vacancies within HABT (Benefit officer & Homelessness prevention officer) but there have been others throughout the year. Barriers to recruitment are numerous, however the main ones are - i) the availability of technically able staff that meet the requirements of the role ii) More competitive salaries from other organisations iii) the requirement for 40% office based working. The underspend here is offset by an increased need to spend on temporary / agency workers to fill the gap and retain capacity for service delivery. Agency spend for 2023/24 was £110,000.	Unsuccessful recruitment has the potential to lead to pressure on existing staff and delayed decisions, which could lead to households falling into crisis This is mitigated by the use of temporary staff to cover vacancies and ensure the sustainability of quality services.	There is a potential to consider applying market supplements where appropriate. There has been a move to engaging temporary staff via OPUS. This enables us to advertise posts as temp to permanent, if the temporary member of staff has performed to standard and would like to stay at RBC.
		130	Pressure	Income	Housing Advice and Benefits Team	Private Sector Leasing Income	Damage to properties due to destruction by a vulnerable client base. The properties are classed as void due to a longer lead time on repair work. It should be noted that there is an income element to this from the rents payable by the licensees.	Whilst properties are void no income is received and we are unable to recover recharges as the tenants are in receipt of benefits. Throughflow of bedspaces reduced as a result of properties needing repair. Whilst reliance on such accommodation is low for now there are peaks and troughs.	Looking to potentially procure an external supplier to undertake void works. In addition, we are reducing the supply of leased Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) as other housing options are being utilised to create churn (using grant to discharge into the private rented sector). 5 properties have since been handed back to owners and with the possibility of an additional 2 properties due by the end of June. It should be noted that for 2023/24 the Homelessness Prevention Grant was used to offset the overspend this.
		107	Pressure	Expense	Housing Advice and Benefits Team	Private Sector Leasing repair and cleaning costs	Poor state of vacated properties requiring additional expenditure on repairs	Throughflow of bedspaces reduced as a result of properties needing repairs. Whilst reliance on such accommodation is low for now there are peaks and troughs.	Contract cleaning specification to be reviewed early next year as its due for renewal in September 2024. The overall cost of Repairs and Maintenance was offset by the use of the Homelessness Prevention Grant. There has been a reduction in our spend on PSL cleaning and repair costs. Customers are recharged for damages caused during their tenure.
		(161)	Saving	Income	Housing Advice and Benefits Team	Homelessness Prevention Grants	There has been a higher number of voids this year compared to budget. Council Tax bills are not issued immediately due to the volume of shorter void periods (this would produce a bill from the vacation date to year end having to be paid , only to be repaid back once a tenant has occupied the property)	Properties are taking longer to re-let particularly if in need of repair	Periodic monitoring of voids is undertaken to understand the cost implications.
		57	Pressure	Expense	Housing Advice and Benefits Team	Temporary Accommodation /Private Sector Leasing Council Tax voids	This is funding that can be legitimately used to fund costs associated with temp accommodation etc.	Expenditure needs to be in a legitimate way or it undermines our ability to negotiate additional funding. The grant has been allocated and a portion of it will be used to offset some of the temporary accommodation pressures highlighted above. If there was an underspend it would need to be repaid to the government,	If expenditure can be legitimately charged against this then we must do so to protect the interests of the local tax payer. More spend is now being recognised as legitimate spend against this budget for example i) the consultancy support for the review of the housing allocations policy ii) offsetting the pressures for Private Sector Leasing. The redirection of funds to take care of other costs has proven successful in reducing any overspend. We have utilised the grants in line with their conditions.
Digital and Communications	(56)	80	Pressure	Expense	ITC & Support Services	Consultancy costs	The organisation has recently implemented CX regulatory software. A consultant was employed to help with this activity costing £80,000.	The consultants expertise was key in delivering the software ahead of schedule and enabling the organisation to benefit from the system sooner than anticipated	This is a one off cost borne in this financial year for the CX regulatory services.
		(43)	Saving	Expense	Communications	Salaries	Information and consultation officer post has been vacant throughout the year.		Post to be advertised and filled during 2024/25
		(118)	Saving	Expense	Customer Support Services & Apprenticeships	Salaries	The service has been operating with vacant posts including the manager post for part of the year. There has also been a level maternity of leave. There is currently 1 vacant apprentice post remaining for which they hope to recruit later in the year for Customer Services. Apprenticeships has had 1 vacancy which is hoping to be filled in September when the course college starts .		Continued effort to recruit vacant posts within Customer Services. The apprenticeship post will be advertised to be filled in September due to college start dates for the post.

PORTFOLIO	Total Q4 Variance to Budget	Item Variances to budget	Pressure/(Saving)	Expenditure Type	Service Area	Description	Root Cause Analysis - When you have found a material variance you must first determine the root cause of the variance.	Impact - Next, quantify the impact. This involves not only understanding the impact to the current month; also if no changes are made, what the go-forward impact to the business is for both favourable and unfavourable budget variances.	Action - The final part of any analysis should include an action for the business. What can be put in place to mitigate the impact.																																																							
Finance, Performance, Legal and Governance	294	(141)	Savings	Expense	Financial Services	Staff vacancies	A difficult recruiting environment during the majority of 2023/24 has led to continued vacancies within the team. As an interim measure contractors have been used to fill vacancies.	Experienced agency staff with the right level of skills are highly sought after and come at a premium cost.	At the end of 2023/24 a specialist finance recruiter was instructed to help source suitable candidates.																																																							
		200	Pressure	Expense	Financial Services	Agency costs						169	Pressure	Expense	General Financial Services	Audit Fees	The 2023/24 external audit contract fees of £180,000 were not communicated until quarter 4 of the financial year. Although an assessment of the fees was made at budget setting, the budget was ultimately lower than the final value. In addition to this the Housing Benefit audit was double the previous years value of £20,000. In addition to this the PSAA approved additional fees for the 2022/23 year which was not included in the original budget	There will be an impact on 2024/25 budget which was set prior to the announcement of the contract values.	Limited action as the fees are set nationally. Include as part of the 2025/26 budget setting process			75	Pressure	Expense	Council Tax and NNDR Collection	Agency Staff	Following an internal promotion, agency staff were utilised to fill the vacancy on a temporary basis.	This helps to reduce wait times for changes to residents council tax bills. It reduces complaints from the public which ultimately improves the councils reputation.	We intend to permanently fill the vacancy during Quarter Two of 2024/25.			(153)	Saving	Income	Council Tax and NNDR Collection	Court Summons	The court summons are for non payment of Council Tax and Business Rates. The additional income for 2023/24 is higher than expected following increased debt recovery work this year.	Allows Rugby Borough Council to recover debt unpaid through official channels agreed in Court.	With the continuation of debt collecting for Council Tax and Business Rates, this will provide a steady income stream at a lower value for future years.			57	Pressure	Expense	Council Tax and NNDR Collection	Admin fee for reassessing the rateable value of businesses	10% admin fee charged to RBC from Analyse Local who review the rateable value of our business rate properties. As a result of this the council has generated additional business rates in the year	Helps to increase business rate yield.	Costs are higher than expected this year due to one particular business and a permanent budget has been created for Analyse Local from 2024/25.			(55)	Saving	Expense	Corporate Assurance	Staff vacancies	Corporate Assurance Manager was seconded to another team.	The service is in the process of advertising the post. Until the post is recruited to, the underspend can be offset with the additional consultancy costs whilst an Interim manager is in post.	If recruitment is unsuccessful, the service will need to rely on consultancy for longer than anticipated.			93	Pressure	Expense
		169	Pressure	Expense	General Financial Services	Audit Fees	The 2023/24 external audit contract fees of £180,000 were not communicated until quarter 4 of the financial year. Although an assessment of the fees was made at budget setting, the budget was ultimately lower than the final value. In addition to this the Housing Benefit audit was double the previous years value of £20,000. In addition to this the PSAA approved additional fees for the 2022/23 year which was not included in the original budget	There will be an impact on 2024/25 budget which was set prior to the announcement of the contract values.	Limited action as the fees are set nationally. Include as part of the 2025/26 budget setting process																																																							
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		57	Pressure	Expense	Council Tax and NNDR Collection	Admin fee for reassessing the rateable value of businesses	10% admin fee charged to RBC from Analyse Local who review the rateable value of our business rate properties. As a result of this the council has generated additional business rates in the year	Helps to increase business rate yield.	Costs are higher than expected this year due to one particular business and a permanent budget has been created for Analyse Local from 2024/25.																																																							
		(55)	Saving	Expense	Corporate Assurance	Staff vacancies	Corporate Assurance Manager was seconded to another team.	The service is in the process of advertising the post. Until the post is recruited to, the underspend can be offset with the additional consultancy costs whilst an Interim manager is in post.	If recruitment is unsuccessful, the service will need to rely on consultancy for longer than anticipated.																																																							
		93	Pressure	Expense	Corporate Assurance	Consultancy Costs	An interim Corporate Assurance manager has been hired whilst the permanent manager post is recruited to. The use of an external provider via a contract has been used to provide some of the reviews .	As there is no permanent manger for the team, this is impacting on service delivery, mainly the delivery of the audit plan, hence the reason for the appointment of Interim Corporate Assurance Manager. In addition to the manager vacancy increased resource has been provided through an external provider.	During 2024/25 the vacancies should be recruited to, reducing the spend on consultancy.																																																							

PORTFOLIO	Total Q4 Variance to Budget	Item Variances to budget	Pressure/(Saving)	Expenditure Type	Service Area	Description	Root Cause Analysis - When you have found a material variance you must first determine the root cause of the variance.	Impact - Next, quantify the impact. This involves not only understanding the impact to the current month; also if no changes are made, what the go-forward impact to the business is for both favourable and unfavourable budget variances.	Action - The final part of any analysis should include an action for the business. What can be put in place to mitigate the impact.
Growth and Investment	160	373	Pressure	Income	Planning	Planning income	Whilst the number of major planning applications received during 23/24 was similar to 22/23, the type and scale of these applications were smaller and hence the associated application fee was less. The number of planning applications tends to be linked to uncertainty in the global economic market, interest rate rises and cost of living concerns making investors and individuals more cautious about commencing new development. Planning income fluctuates each year because of such external factors. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities has reported that across the country planning application submissions during the first quarter of 23/24 have dropped by 14% compared to the same period last year. Rugby Borough Council has not been immune from this trend which continued throughout the financial year.	Reduced level of income received during the year.	This revenue stream will be closely monitored.
		(86)	Saving	Expense	Planning	Salaries and Wages	Underspend on salaries and wages resulted from vacancies within the team across most levels. Current vacancies within the team are 1 Principal Planning Officer and 3 Planning Officers	The vacant posts within the Local Planning Authority results in the service being unable to fulfil its statutory duties and provide decisions in a timely manner. This can lead to stifling economic growth and uncertainty with developers and investors. It also exposes the Council to potentially more appeals and expense if performance targets are not achieved.	Active recruitment drives to try and fill vacant posts is ongoing however this has only been partially successful. Roles are currently being readvertised but there is a continued need to rely on agency staff in the interim to ensure statutory services are delivered.
		60	Pressure	Expense	Planning	Agency costs	Agency staff were needed to help address vacancies within the team. This is key to delivering statutory services but also to help the well being of existing staff.	Agency staff that are proficient and experienced enough with the right level of skills in planning are highly sought after and come at a premium cost.	Further vacancies will lead to greater reliance on agency staff. This will be monitored but is rising due to an increase in vacancies.
		115	Pressure	Expense	Planning	Appeal costs	Following the refusal of planning permission the applicant has the right of appeal to the Secretary of State who appoints a Planning Inspector to review the case. The majority of appeals are dealt with by Planning Officers however in complex cases which require legal representation and expert witnesses on matters which the Council does not have the relevant expertise in house e.g. landscape and heritage then these services will need to be procured in order to defend the Council's decision. There have been three major appeals that have required the procurement of legal and or experts in 23/24.	Pressure on the budget	The costs will be closely monitored.
		51	Pressure	Expense	Planning	Payments to other Local Authorities	Rugby Borough Council does not have any in-house ecological nor archaeological expertise. This service is provided by Warwickshire County Council (WCC) through a Service Level Agreement (SLA). Such an agreement has been in place for many years but previously this cost has not had its own cost code which has now been introduced for transparency. The terms of the SLA are under review and the Council have been waiting for many months for WCC to agree the terms and until finalised the 23/24 payment hasn't been made. It is acknowledged that the work associated with the SLA has been undertaken by WCC but as yet no invoice has been received for payment.	Failure to agree a SLA could result in specific services not being provided and Rugby Borough Council failing to undertake its statutory duties.	The SLA will be finalised and signed in the early part of 2024/25 so planning for the 24/25 SLA can commence.

PORTFOLIO	Total Q4 Variance to Budget	Item Variances to budget	Pressure/(Saving)	Expenditure Type	Service Area	Description	Root Cause Analysis - When you have found a material variance you must first determine the root cause of the variance.	Impact - Next, quantify the impact. This involves not only understanding the impact to the current month; also if no changes are made, what the go-forward impact to the business is for both favourable and unfavourable budget variances.	Action - The final part of any analysis should include an action for the business. What can be put in place to mitigate the impact.
		(139)	Saving	Expense	Development Strategy	Staff vacancies	Recruitment to vacant roles has proved challenging for two Senior Planning Officer posts and a Graduate Planning Officer role. Additionally, both the Development Strategy Manager (0.8 FTE) and Principal Planning Officer (0.6 FTE) work part time whereas the salary budget is based on full time roles.	At a certain point during this year there were four vacant roles.	One of the senior posts have now been filled. Another of the posts has been filled by a temporary worker starting in Q1 2024-25 before another round of recruitments is undertaken. The graduate post will be filled by a new starter beginning in Q1 2024-25. Work has commenced with WM Employers to review the grading and benchmarking of all planning officer posts across Growth and Investment due to the failure to recruit to numerous posts on numerous occasions.
		(40)	Saving	Expense	Major Projects and Economic Development	Development Activities	The UKSPF has absorbed a lot of projects that would have ordinarily come out of the development activities budget for example, business programmes with Warwickshire County Council. The Economic Strategy is in its infancy, partly due to not having a full compliment of staff to move it forward. There will be the need to commission and procure evidence as part of development of the Economic Strategy which can be funded from this budget.	UKSPF has been a main focus for the team over the past 2 years. With the projects funded from UKSPF due to be complete in March 2025, capacity will be available shortly to concentrate on the ongoing projects which can be funded from this budget.	To ensure the budget is utilised in future, we are holding a business conference and business events throughout the year which we will be using development activities for. With UKSPF projects ending in March 2025, the Economic Strategy can be completed which will involve commissioning evidence that will need to be funded from the Development Activities budget.
		48	Pressure	Income	Land Charges	Fees and Charges	Uncertainty in the housing market coupled by interest rate rises earlier in the year and current levels will have impacted on the number of people moving house and therefore on the number of searches requested. Wider economic global issues will have also impacted on growth and development and reduced the level of searches received and their associated income.	Pressure on the budget	This revenue stream will be closely monitored during 2024/25.
		45	Pressure	Expense	Town Centre CCTV	Other Agencies	Contribution to Rugby First for managing the CCTV control room for the Town Centre. The costs have increased following high inflation during 2023/24. The inflationary increase that we have seen is built into the contract which states that a CPI uplift will be applied for the period November - March.	Overspends are likely to occur during the year for this contract as we cannot predict exactly what inflation will be at the time of budget setting.	An inflationary increase was included in the 2024/25 budget.
		(183)	Saving	Expense	Town Centre Improvements	Development Activities	The underspend has occurred in 2023/24 because projects which were intended to be funded from this cost centre ended up being funded from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) as this is a time limited fund from government. The Council were required to demonstrate the maximum delivery of spend on projects in Years 1 and 2 of UKSPF to ensure a high proportion of Year 3 money was received in the first quarter of 24/25 as this was another stipulation of the government fund.	This budget can be used to offset the loss of income within the Planning Service.	Following the adoption of the Shop Front Supplementary Planning Document and other studies and masterplans currently in train, it is proposed the 2024/25 budget will be used to supplement a town centre improvement projects by the end of March 2024/25.
Leisure and Wellbeing	257	142	Pressure	Income	Sports and Recreation	Under-achievement of budgeted income	Vacancies across permanent and casual staff have played a part in the income shortfall across On-Track, Play and Recreation and Sports Development.	This has resulted in a pressure on budgeted income.	There is an ongoing recruitment campaign to fill the vacancies within the service. The Service is currently embarking on identifying additional income opportunities. This could include corporate sponsorship and additional grant funding.
		(80)	Saving	Expense	Sports and Recreation	Staff vacancies and under utilisation of casual staff	General recruitment has proved challenging. There are vacant part-time posts within the Play Ranger and On-Track teams yet to be filled.	This has created pressure on the service and reduced income opportunities	There is a recruitment campaign underway to fill vacant posts

PORTFOLIO	Q3 Variance to Budget	Variances to budget	Pressure/(Saving)	Expenditure Type	Service Area	Description	Root Cause Analysis - When you have found a material variance you must first determine the root cause of the variance.	Impact - Next, quantify the impact. This involves not only understanding the impact to the current month; also if no changes are made, what the go-forward impact to the business is for both favourable and unfavourable budget variances.	Action - The final part of any analysis should include an action for the business. What can be put in place to mitigate the impact.
		47	Pressure	Income	Parks & Open Spaces	Income	The budget included £47,000 of external funding, however, this contract has now come to an end and therefore there is no income available to meet the budget.	This has created a pressure against the income budget on the service	The 2024/25 budget has been realigned to reflect the external funding no longer being received.
		95	Pressure	Expense	Parks & Open Spaces	Maintenance, cleaning & repairs	Higher-than-expected levels of maintenance and repairs of play areas partly due to vandalism and equipment needing to be made safe. There have been increased fencing works due to deterioration of adopted infrastructure.	Additional pressure on overall budget.	The service intends to review the arrangements for these activities. This includes embedding in the planning process the use of non-wooden street furniture and infrastructure. This should prolong the life of the asset as well as aiding the Council's sustainability and environmental aspirations.
Operation and Traded Services	806	75	Pressure	Income	Green Waste	Shortfall in income compared to budget	When the budget was set the expectation was that there would be a certain level subscriptions. The expected level has not been realised.	This has led to a negative impact on budget.	The review of all fees and charges including an annual CPI increase was carried out and the cost per subscription will rise for 2024/25 by £5. The service will continue to be promoted to attract new customers.
		(34)	Saving	Expense	Whole Portfolio	Salary vacancies across Portfolio	The portfolio has seen high staff turnover during 2023/24 with several vacancies still left to fill compared to the budgeted FTE's	Increased agency costs and overtime due to Operations and Traded providing frontline services which need to run on a daily basis.	The service is working with HR to recruit to the vacancies.
		385	Pressure	Expense	Whole Portfolio	Agency Staff variance across Portfolio	The high levels of staff sickness, absence and vacancies have necessitated the need to turn to the agency market to ensure that the service continues to operate. There is also a need to use agency staff to cover holiday periods.	Agency staff is usually charged at a premium	The service is working with HR to help manage the sickness and absence levels. The service is currently looking into initiatives to deliver efficiencies across working practices
		337	Pressure	Expense	Domestic Waste Collection/ Recycling	External Contractors	A change in the arrangements for 2023/24 have seen costs rise above the expectations that were set out during the budget setting process. Work is ongoing to understand how the impact of this can be managed.	Current operating practices have led to an impact on running costs in Q3 since the opening of Sherbourne Recycling Facility.	Operational changes have been implemented with immediate effect, and where possible Waste & Recycling vehicles will deposit directly into Sherbourne and disposal sites. Talks are ongoing with Sherbourne to secure any rebates due.
		88	Pressure	Expense	Domestic Waste Collection/ Recycling	Repair and Maintenance of Vehicles including Hire of vehicles	With inflation high, the cost of vehicle repairs, fuel and hire costs have increased in 2023/24. As the service has to continue to function vehicles have been hired to replace those waiting to be repaired.	This has created additional strain on the current budget	The service will work to identify the reasons for the high repair and maintenance costs. Identified aged fleet is included on the capital replacement vehicle schedule.
		(46)	Saving	Income	Domestic Waste Collection/ Recycling	Sale of motor vehicles	6 vehicles have been sold so far during 2023/24 which were below the capital de minimis of £10,000 which results in them being classified as additional income for General Fund Revenue as oppose to a capital receipt.	Additional income	Review fleet to see if there are any other planned disposals
Regulation and Safety	(131)	144	Pressure	Income	Car Parking	Pay & display, season tickets, company leases and Rugby Central lease	Changes to working patterns and visitor numbers to the town centre have reduced. People are working in a hybrid manner and increased online shopping and out of town shopping centres have reduced footfall in the town centre	Reduced income when comparing to pre-covid. Government modelling suggests that current working patterns and shopping habits are unlikely to reverse	In light of current town centre footfall a growth item was approved as part of the 2024/25 budget setting process to reflect income expectations for the new financial year
		(54)	Saving	Income	Regulatory Services	Reimbursement of legal costs	Due to successful court prosecution, a reimbursement of council fees and officer time was awarded. The costs were built up over several years but the total recovery is realised during this financial year.	One-off recovery associated with Brandon Stadium	One-off benefit, no action required
		(48)	Saving	Income	Regulatory Services	Grants	Grants received in relation to air quality work plus reimbursement from Warwickshire County Council for Homes for Ukraine inspections	One-off benefit to the service	No action required
		(32)	Saving	Income	Crematorium	Cremations and Memorial Sales	An additional 68 Cremations were carried out compared to the annual budget. 50% of the additional income is shared with West Northamptonshire Council under the contract arrangement	The level of demand resulted in additional income compared to budget	The budgets have been reviewed and adjusted as part of the 2024/25 budget setting process

		23	Pressure	Expense	Crematorium	Repairs and Maintenance	Essential one-off repairs to the Cremators were needed costing £25,000 plus an increase to the Cremator maintenance contract from January 2024. 50% of the cost is shared with West Northamptonshire Council under the contract arrangement	This has caused a pressure against the budget	The budget has been increased for the new maintenance contract as part of the budget setting process for 2024/25 and the additional repairs were one-off
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PORTFOLIO	Q3 Variance to Budget	Variances to budget	Pressure/(Saving)	Expenditure Type	Service Area	Description	Root Cause Analysis - When you have found a material variance you must first determine the root cause of the variance.	Impact - Next, quantify the impact. This involves not only understanding the impact to the current month; also if no changes are made, what the go-forward impact to the business is for both favourable and unfavourable budget variances.	Action - The final part of any analysis should include an action for the business. What can be put in place to mitigate the impact.
		(19)	Saving	Expense	Crematorium	Utilities	Whilst the gas costs were significantly higher than in 2022/23 (by £50,000), they were not as high as budgeted for 2023/24 resulting in a (£32,000) saving against the increased budget. The cremators are also now working more efficiently due to new ways of working. 50% of the saving is shared with West Northamptonshire Council under the contract arrangement	This has caused an underspend on the service	The gas budget has been reduced by 20% as part of 2024/25 budget setting, as recommended by Corporate Property who deal with the Council's utilities contract
		(182)	Saving	Expense	Whole Portfolio	Staff Vacancies	<p>Regulatory Services - The service have experienced difficulties in recruiting to vacancies throughout the year; the final vacancy (Community Warden) was filled from the end of March.</p> <p>Bereavement Services - The service has had to operate with 3 vacancies throughout the year. At year-end, one vacancy remains (Team Leader) which will be recruited to in 2024/25</p> <p>Safety and Resilience - There are two Senior Safety and Resilience Officer vacancies within the service; one has been filled just before year-end.</p> <p>Licensing - There is a vacant trainee licensing officer post plus a part-time car park officer post has not been replaced</p>	This is causing resilience issues and pressure on the teams, especially when other staff members are on annual leave.	The service are actively trying to recruit to vacancies to ease the pressure on the remaining team members.
Transformation Change Unit	149	105	Pressure	Income	RBC Developments Ltd	Interest Income	A pause with the CDL initiative has led to a planned loan of £9,760,000 not taking place in this financial year	The anticipated interest income associated with the loan will no longer materialise.	Further exploration on how RBC Developments can be utilised, but the target has been removed from the 2024/25 budget.
		(43)	Saving	Expense	RBC Developments Ltd	Administration costs	A pause with the plans for CDL has led to no administration costs been reported for this financial year.	No administration costs for this financial year	Further exploration on how RBC Developments can be utilised, but the tudget has been removed from the 2024/25 budget.
		(84)	Saving	Expense	Transformation Change Unit	Salaries and Wages	Difficulty in recruiting project managers and specialist project staff has resulted in savings in staff costs	The impact was mitigated by the use of consultants.	Consultants will continue to be used until vacancies are filled. The underspend for vacancies will be used to offset the consultancy spend and consultancy spend will be allocated to specific projects as capital recharges where appropriate .
		70	Pressure	Expense	Transformation Change Unit	Consultancy costs	General specialist consultancy provision on matters across the portfolio such as risk assessments and surveys for RAAC because of lack of internal resource due to outstanding vacancies and where consultancy cannot be recapitalised to major projects	Consultancy may be needed if again future recruitment is unsuccessful	Continue to balance consultancy and staff costs
		98	Pressure	Expense	Transformation Change Unit	Capital salary recharges	Delay in the project at Rounds Gardens and delay in the start on site at Biart Place has resulted in less salary costs being recharged to Capital schemes.	No service related impacts however..	The budget for 2024/25 has been adjusted and the service area will continue to work closely with their Finance business partner to provide accurate time recording data for capital schemes.
Corporate Items - Other	(2,053)	(2,723)	Saving	Expense	Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure	Net Cost of Borrowing	Interest rates were budgeted at a prudent and responsible level. Due to inflation remaining high the Bank of England has continued to raise interest rates. The Council's long-term borrowing was already at a low fixed rate and the increase in the Bank rate only affected investment interest.	Due to the level of our cash reserves and delays in the capital programme the Council has benefited through increased interest income and reduced interest expense exposure related to potential borrowing that would have occurred if the capital programme was on schedule.	Review intended use of balances and monitor interest rate expectations
		400	Pressure	Expense	Provision for loss on investments	Investments	The Lothbury Property Fund which the Council has invested in since 2015 is being closed by the fund managers during 2024/25	Further details will be contained in the Treasury Management Annual Report	Provision is being made from the 2023/24 savings to the Council in Net Cost of Borrowing
		(41)	Saving	Expense	Pay Inflation	Pay award 2023/24	At the time of budget setting for 2023/24, the pay award had not been agreed and was either going to be 4% or £1,925 added to all salary grades. The salary budgets that were set on the services included a pay award of 4% and the additional costs required if the pay award was agreed at £1,925 was held centrally. Now the pay award has been agreed, budget can be transferred to the services based on £1,925. The result of this is that £41,000 can be released from this centrally held budget.	Saving can be used to offset the overspends seen within the Portfolio's.	The budget for 2024/25 will see the same approach being taken and depending on the outcome of the 2024/25 pay award, there may be budget available again to offset against any in year pressures

PORTFOLIO	Q3 Variance to Budget	Variances to budget	Pressure/(Saving)	Expenditure Type	Service Area	Description	Root Cause Analysis - When you have found a material variance you must first determine the root cause of the variance.	Impact - Next, quantify the impact. This involves not only understanding the impact to the current month; also if no changes are made, what the go-forward impact to the business is for both favourable and unfavourable budget variances.	Action - The final part of any analysis should include an action for the business. What can be put in place to mitigate the impact.
		(66)	Saving	Expense	Revenue Contribution to Capital	Capital purchases of bins scheme	Less revenue contribution to capital anticipated due to income from developers being used towards bin purchases	Due to income from developers for new properties, less contribution is required from RBC	Review ongoing budget in line with expected developer income
		151	Pressure	Income	Corporate Savings	Savings and Income targets	Anticipated shortfall in digitalisation savings target of £75,400 and shortfall in procurement income target (Pagabo) of £76,000	Reduction in anticipated savings made during 23/24	Work is being done to realise further digitalisation savings in 24/25 and further income is anticipated via the Pagabo framework in 24/25, as new contracts are awarded.

6) Capital variance narrative

PORTFOLIO	Q4 variance	Scheme	Current Budget £000	Total Net Expenditure	Pending Reprofiting Requests £000	Variance £000	Narrative
Communities & Homes	(717)	Lawrence Sheriff Almshouses	100	22	(78)	0	Scheme approved by council in late 2023. This is a grant to fund the project which is being delivered by the Trustees of the Almshouses. To protect the interests of the council, payments of the grant are staged to coincide with completion of key stages of the project.
		Corporate Property Enhancements	225	68	(157)	0	There are plans to refurbish the reception area and fire doors along with other work which has been delayed due to availability of suitably qualified and competent contractors and consultants in a market where demand for such services has increased. A reprofiling request will for the remaining budget will be submitted as part of the 204/25 Outurn Report.
		Housing Acquisition Fund	294	0	(294)	0	This budget relates to the potential purchase of HMO's for use as temporary accommodation to alleviate homelessness. No properties have been sourced for this purpose during 2023/24 as most of the properties that were explored as potential acquisitions are older and will require significant investment and improvement works to make them viable for the intended use. The purchase of a couple of newer properties (with HMO potential) has been explored but issues were highlighted in the Homebuyer reports, resulting in the purchase not progressing. It should be noted that there has been an overall reduction in the need to source temporary accommodation as other measures have been effectively utilised to negate the need for additional temp housing stock, and the revenue costs associated with its management. This has mainly been through the prudent use of the homelessness prevention grant to support applicants to access private rented homes. The sourcing of suitable and appropriate accommodation in this way ensures that the council has discharged its duties in terms of the Homelessness legislation.
		Carbon Management Plan	200	0	0	(200)	Originally this budget was for the solar panels for RAGMAL and QDJC .Leisure & Wellbeing have secured grant funding for the replacement of the solar PV at QEDJC. RAGMAL did not progress due to the roof design and size of system to be installed wasn't cost effective. This fund was then to ensure that match funding is in place for when we apply for grants for such works. However, when the grants become available they open and close within minutes as oversubscribed. By ending the budget we are in effect further disadvantaged in the process which relies the service being ready to deliver resulting projects, particularly as we are gearing up for a potential round of funding in and we are developing proposals for that ref whatever building and solutions it is we have in mind. This budget is more than two years old so cannot be carried forward again.
		Great Central Walkbridge	611	29	(371)	(211)	Consultants alongside WCC have been procured and survey works are under way to identify any capital works required. This funding will be required throughout 2024/25.
		Disabled Facilities Grant	831	825	0	(5)	This is something that cannot be forecast with any degree of accuracy as it is demand led statutory requirement.
		Town Hall Adaptations	78	70	0	(8)	Works completed for town hall refurbishments with a small saving.
		UKSPF - White Good Scheme	62	63	0	1	
Digital & Communications	(6)	ICT Renewal Programme	124	108	0	(16)	
		ICT Refresh Programme - Infrastructure	145	201	40	16	
		ICT Refresh Programme - AV Equipment	18	27	0	9	

PORTFOLIO	Q4 variance	Scheme	Current Budget £000	Total Net Expenditure	Pending Reprofitting Requests £000	Variance £000	Narrative
Digital & Communications	(6)	Digitalisation and Development Programme	72	59	(13)	(0)	£13k carrying forward for ongoing work on digitalisation across the organisation.
		Parks & Grounds Inspection System	15	0	0	(15)	Scheme no longer required as current systems have proven adequate
			2,775	1,473	(873)	(429)	
Finance, Performance, Legal & Governance	(29)	Corporate Asset Management System	29	0	0	(29)	This functionality is not currently needed by PRS and therefore the budget is a saving for 2023/24, Should the functionality be required in the future a new budget will be formally requested.
		Income Management System	30	0	(30)	0	Implementation to start during Q1 of 2024/25 with a plan to go LIVE by the end of Summer 2024.
			59	0	(30)	(29)	
Growth & Investment	(1)	UKSPF - Market Equipment	31	31	0	(0)	
		UKSPF - Town Centre Public Realm Improvements	15	0	(15)	(0)	This budget will be reprofiled to 2024/25 and will be approved as part of an upcoming report to Cabinet
			46	31	(15)	(1)	
Leisure & Wellbeing	4	Preventative Conservation	101	102	0	1	
		Queen's Diamond Jubilee Leisure Centre Project	420	428	0	8	
		Open Spaces Refurbishment - Safety Improvements	89	20	(68)	(0)	Contract awarded to supplier awaiting EA approval
		Open Spaces refurbishment Glaramara Close play area	10	0	0	(10)	Scheme complete; final costs were treated as revenue as were deminimis
		Open Spaces Refurb. Apple Grove/Sorrell Drive	224	229	0	5	Completed, £5k held as retainer for 12 months
		Park Connector Network	167	0	(167)	0	This is the match funding for external funds. Reprofiled as the scheme will start in 2024/25 following tendering process.
		New Bilton Recreation Ground Refurbishment	150	0	(150)	0	Due to needing to consult and tender in Q4, the work is not starting until Q1 of 2024/25 - consultation completed, designs now going to external agency, before coming back for final consultation
		Open Spaces Refurbishment - Charwelton Drive	150	0	(150)	0	Due to needing to consult and tender in Q4, the work is not starting until Q1 of 2024/25 - consultation completed, designs now going to external agency, before coming back for final consultation.
		Alwyn Road Changing Rooms	435	10	(425)	0	Design change, delays with end users' requirements so most of the spend will now be in 2024/25 - project may only be completed 25/26 due to design complications and user requirements
		Athletics Track	17	16	0	(1)	
		UKSPF Capital - Floodlights Project	50	50	0	(0)	
		UKSPF Capital - Bicentenary Project	29	24	(5)	0	The scheme is now complete and the remaining budget will be used for another scheme during 2024/25, funded by UKSPF, to be approved in an upcoming report to Cabinet
		UKSPF Capital - Bandstand Works	19	18	(1)	0	The scheme is now complete and the remaining budget will be used for another scheme during 2024/25, funded by UKSPF, to be approved in an upcoming report to Cabinet
		UKSPF Capital - St. Andrew's Garden Improvements	40	5	(36)	0	Due to the need to procure specialised external support the work will be undertaken in the first quarter of 2024/25.
		UKSPF Capital - Newbold Quarry accessibility	51	0	(51)	0	Due to the need to procure specialised external support the work will be undertaken in the first quarter of 2024/25.
		UKSPF Capital - Caldecott Park Accessibility	30	12	(18)	(0)	The remaining works will be completed in 2024/25
UKSPF Capital - Albert Street Hoarding	36	23	(13)	(0)	The hoarding has been installed; the final works will be completed in 2024/25		
			2,018	937	(1,084)	4	
Operation and Traded Services	86	Route Optimiser system	10	13	0	3	
		Street Furniture	42	29	0	(13)	
		Sherbourne Recycling	861	869	0	9	
		Purchase of Waste Bins	88	93	0	5	
		Purchase of Vehicles	2,757	1,707	(1,132)	82	Delays in Vehicles being manufactured, now expected in April/May. To be reprofiled to 24.25
			3,758	2,712	(1,132)	86	

PORTFOLIO	Q4 variance	Scheme	Current Budget £000	Total Net Expenditure	Pending Reprofiting Requests £000	Variance £000	Narrative
Regulation and Safety	(123)	Safer Streets	208	138	(68)	(2)	Underspend of (£2k) to be returned to grant provider. £68k to be spent in 2024/25 as per grant conditions, on upgrading of the CCTV network.
		Rainsbrook Cemetery preparation	131	114	(17)	0	Remaining budget to be carried forward to 2024/25 to be added to the supplementary budget approved for 2024/25, which is required to complete the building of the cemetery at Rainsbrook.
		Memorial Safety	82	0	(30)	(52)	Needs to go to tender in Q1 2024/25. £30k budget from 23/24 is required for initial backlog of work to be completed.
		Croop Hill Chapel refurbishment	60	0	0	(60)	Report required for a new budget as this is an old scheme- no spend this year.
		Crematorium Memorialisation Project	53	43	0	(10)	The capital scheme is now complete
		Crematorium automatic door upgrade	13	14	0	1	
			547	308	(115)	(123)	
Chief Executive	(9,760)	Caldecott Development Loan	9,760	0	0	(9,760)	Due to a pause on the RBC Developments initiative, the planned loan will not occur during this financial year.
			9,760	0	0	(9,760)	
General Fund Total	(10,540)		18,962	5,461	(3,249)	(10,252)	

Appendix 2 - Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Dashboard - Quarter 4 2023/24

1) Revenue Summary					
Service	Current Budget	Total Income/Expenditure	Pending Supplementary Budget /Virement	Pending Reserve Movement Requests	Total Variance
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Rent income from dwellings	(16,968)	(16,809)	0	0	160
Rent income from land and buildings	(115)	(121)	0	0	(6)
Charges for services	(1,236)	(1,159)	0	0	76
Contributions towards expenditure	(142)	(159)	0	0	(17)
Total Income	(18,461)	(18,248)	0	0	213
Transfer to Housing Repairs Account	4,789	5,317	0	0	528
Supervision & Management	5,827	5,726	0	0	(101)
Rent, rates, taxes and other charges	125	335	0	0	210
Depreciation and impairment	3,120	3,405	0	0	285
Debt management costs	24	0	0	0	(24)
Provision for bad or doubtful debts	66	97	0	0	31
Total Expenditure	13,951	14,879	0	0	928
HRA share of Corporate/Democratic Core Costs	318	318	0	0	0
Net cost of HRA services	(4,192)	(3,051)	0	0	1,141
Interest payable and similar charges	1,104	1,111	0	0	6
Interest and Investment Income	(191)	(1,292)	0	0	(1,100)
Net Operating expenditure	(3,279)	(3,232)	0	0	47
Contributions to (+) / from (-) reserves	49	29	0	0	(20)
Revenue Contributions to Capital Expenditure	3,332	3,305	0	0	(27)
(Surplus) / Deficit for the Year on HRA Services	102	102	0	0	0

2) Reserves & Balances							
Name of reserve / balance	Balance as at 1/04/23	Contribution (to)/from	Balance as at 31/03/24	Forecast contribution (to)/from	Forecast balance as at 31/03/25	Forecast contribution (to)/from	Forecast balance as at 31/03/26
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Housing Revenue Account Balances	(4,085)	0	(4,085)	0	(4,085)	0	(4,085)
HRA Capital Balances	(17,436)	1,938	(15,498)	631	(14,867)	(3,953)	(18,820)
HRA Major Repairs Reserve	(5,061)	(741)	(5,802)	(756)	(6,558)	(412)	(6,970)
Housing Repairs Account	0	(16)	(16)	0	(16)	0	(16)
HRA Climate Change Reserve	(976)	(537)	(1,512)	601	(911)	0	(911)
HRA - Transformation Reserve	0	(77)	(77)	0	(77)	0	(77)
Sheltered Housing Rent Reserve	(358)	(49)	(407)	(49)	(456)	(51)	(507)
Right to buy Capital Receipts	(12,767)	727	(12,040)	2,350	(9,690)	424	(9,266)
	(40,683)	1,245	(39,437)	2,777	(36,660)	(3,992)	(40,652)

3) Capital Summary

Service	Current Budget £000	Total Expenditure £000	Pending Supplementary Budget/ Virement/ Reprofiling £000	Total Variance £000	Narrative
Automated Repairs System	74	95	0	21	The automated scheduling system is software for an integral part of a successful maintenance service and assists with scheduling work and giving more visibility on outstanding work. The pressure is due to price increase impacting on the original budget which was put in place prior to the current financial year.
Bell House Redevelopment	0	0	0	0	
Biart Place - Capital	10,964	2,872	8,092	0	Delays in the planning process & subsequent main contractor award resulted in onsite construction commencing in Dec 23. This has resulted in funds earmarked for this financial year been reprofiled to subsequent years.
Housing Management System	110	88	22	0	Reprofile for phase 2 housing system software and consultancy which will complete next year.
Fire Risk Prevention Works	149	59	0	(90)	The budget allows RBC to carry out any remedial works that are identified from the Fire Risk Assessments carried out throughout the year. New legislation effective in April 2023 meant that individual flat doors had to be inspected, and there was an anticipation that this could generate major works. However, these inspections did not generate the anticipated works and works from the fire risk assessments was not substantial, hence the underspend.
Rewiring	275	143	0	(132)	The rewiring programme is carried out on void properties so the spend is dependent on the number of void properties throughout the year. Secondly, it also covers major works from the Electrical Inspection Condition Reports. The original budget request of £160k was based on 40 rewires per year at an average of £4,000 each. The carry over from 22/23 was requested due to anticipated work from the condition reports, which have not materialised during the year. Therefore there are savings of £132k
Lifeline Renewal Programme	83	97	(14)	(0)	The report from Ark Consultants highlighting significant risk associated with the use of hard wired lifeline units in several of our larger independent living schemes. Because of this, and some older units prone to potential battery failure, we have had to accelerate our programme to swap out these units, replacing them with new units and the issue has now been resolved. All units now also have to be compatible with the upcoming digital switchover. Accelerated spend to be offset against next years budget.
Finlock Gutter Improvements	100	58	0	(42)	All Finlock guttering is eventually being replaced, this will become an obsolete Budget. Budget is spent when required repairs are identified.
Rebuilding Retaining Walls	80	28	52	0	Outturn was as expected as this is a reactive Budget previously spent on a Adhoc basis. Potential works are now being picked up on surveys estate walkabouts and £52k reprofiled to 24/25.
Replacement Footpaths	100	81	19	(0)	Reactive budget which is being spent on an adhoc basis. £19k reprofiled for 24.25
Driveways	50	35	15	0	Reactive Budget with £15k reprofile to 24/25
Fire Risk Prevention works voids	70	80	0	10	Reactive Budget with work being carried out by External Contractors.
Rewiring Unplanned Renewals	100	51	0	(49)	This is a reactive budget. All work that could be completed before year end have been accounted for.
Fire Risk Unplanned Renewals	90	0	0	(90)	Training still has yet to be started so this budget was not spent for 23.24. (External Contractors were used for Voids work as above.)
Roofing unplanned renewals	100	88	12	(0)	After consulting with the Finance Team, significant works have been identified that can now be capitalised, even though they previously did not meet the Capital criteria. As a result, £12,000 is reprofiled to the 2024/2025 budget.
Lesley Souter house new boiler and building managemnt svstem	116	48	68	0	A budget of £116k was approved via urgent decision for 3 new commercial boilers to serve 30 domestic dwellings and the communal areas with heating & hot water due to the old system could fail at any time leaving vulnerable residents without heating & hot water. Design & planning has taken 4 weeks and delivery & installation will take 37 days starting 15/3/24 with to 6/5/24. £48k spend by year end with the balance to be reprofiled to 24/25
Disabled Adaptations	250	185	0	(65)	The budget is driven by recommendations from Occupational Therapists and these vary depending on their assessments of individuals. A saving of £50k was made earlier in the year when it was apparent that no major adaptations such as extensions were going to be recommended, unlike the previous two years.
Kitchen Modifications	1,171	967	204	(0)	Year end figure is lower due to lower tenant uptake than planned. Remaining budget is to be reprofiled to 24/25.
Kitchen Modifications Voids	200	95	0	(105)	Reactive budget spent on an adhoc basis.
Kitchens non voids	56	60	0	4	
Heating Upgrades	155	109	0	(46)	The average cost of a boiler replacement is £2800. This year's works involved finishing off any remaining boilers from 2022/2023 and any that were not due, but became uneconomical and beyond repair. This equated to around 45 replacements
Bathroom Modifications	358	360	0	2	
Bathroom Modifications - voids	100	95	0	(5)	
Bathrooms non voids	60	66	0	6	
Housing Window Replacement	10	0	0	(10)	
Carbon Management Plan (HRA)	2,180	865	1,315	(0)	RBC aims to install external wall insulation on 70 properties and loft insulation top ups to a further properties. 17 of the properties receiving loft insulation top ups will also receive solar PV panels. External wall insulation will complete in April'24 and then loft insulation top ups and solar PV panels work will be done. £1.315m of the budget is to be reprofiled to 24/25 for completion of the work. This is a 2 year scheme as per the grant conditions.
Purchase of Council Houses	8,093	7,785	308	0	Concentration on satisfying the LAHF funding - which has been achieved within the original deadlines. 40 property completions during 2023/24.
Rounds Gardens Capital	1,736	355	1,381	(0)	Spend was less than originally anticipated this year as detailed design has been delayed whilst options and their viability in the changing economic climate for the site are being considered.
Rounds Gardens demolition	3,314	3,053	261	0	The demolition work is now complete, however, final landscaping and site perimeter / security fencing is yet to be completed.
Property Repairs Team Vehicle	86	0	86	0	Vehicle on order awaiting PO approval but will not be delivered before year end so reprofile remaining balance
Overall Total	30,230	17,818	11,821	(591)	

4) Revenue variance narrative

Service	Q4 Variance £000	Subtotal (where applicable)	Description	Root Cause Analysis - When you have found a material variance you must first determine the root cause of the variance.	Impact - Next, quantify the impact. This involves not only understanding the impact to the current month; also if no changes are made, what the go-forward impact to the business is for both favourable and unfavourable budget variances.	Action - The final part of any analysis should include an action for the business. What can be put in place to mitigate the impact.
Supervision & Management - Rent income from dwellings	160		Rental Income	1, There are more major repairs than expected resulting in longer void periods. 2, The current criteria to join the housing waiting list is narrow. 3, The are 40 major voids, 11 hard to let properties and 9 vacant properties at Tanser Court as at 31st March 2024	1, properties are taking longer to turnaround and re-let	1, Currently working with PRS to profile the current workload 2, Housing allocation policy and the letting of properties is currently under review 3, Recruitment to new posts to facilitate a more proactive approach to tenancy and property management (including annual tenancy audits, more regular estate inspections, pre termination visits and closer liaison with assets in respect of tenants wishing to decline property improvements) 4, HABT have piloted working with a local letting agent to let hard to let properties
Supervision & Management - Charges for services	76		Service charges, utilities etc			
Transfer to Housing Repairs Account	528	407	External contractors	The overspend on contractors can be attributed to the three categories listed below: •Working on voids due to volume of major receipts •Specialist contractors, e.g., roofing •Inflation and the cost of materials The PRS service does not have any roofers employed within the service, this is due in part to market conditions and the ability of the service to successfully recruit. As a result of this all roofing works is currently allocated to a contractor. It is worth noting that if there were a directly employed roofing team to undertake the work, the costs would still be high as scaffold costs are increased across the sector, plus the scope of work required would also remain consistent. The benefits of outsourcing the roofing works includes the reduced risk to the council given the high-risk nature of the work, the resilience an external provider can supply and the specialist skills that the local authority does not possess. A further high contractor spend was on fencing works, this can be attributed to the extreme weather events within the Borough over the last 12 months. Given the volume of work reported by tenants' contractors were required to support the direct labour force in the delivery of these services.	PRS are having to rely on external contractors to carry out all roofing work. Additional high spending contractors are for Fencing and Groundworks. PRS will now be using Fusion 21 framework to hire contractors in an attempt to bring down costs.	Measures taken to reduce contractor spend include: •Engaging with a framework to expand the list of contractors available to encourage further competition. •Reducing scope of works conducted on voids to minimise costs, while meeting lettable standard. •Review of tenant and landlord responsibilities for responsive repairs.
		(133)	Major repairs	Due to the volume of major voids that require external contractors to deliver the work a £485k supplementary budget was obtained at the December 23 cabinet meeting. The saving is due to some expected works not being completed before year end.	An excessive number of voids have entered the workstream this current year of which 50% are classed as major voids based upon the complexity of work required.	Measures that have been put in place to help reduce costs on voids include: •Stock condition surveys. •Issuing decorating vouchers for all general rented properties. •Reducing scope of garden works. •Estate walkabouts to highlight potential problem properties. Some of these cost savings will be seen in the form of quicker void turnaround times so that properties are available to let, and to reduce lost rental income. As the measures put in place to reduce the volume of major voids and associated budget pressures are expected to be medium to long term targets, the budget for 2024/25 has been increased to help cover some of the ongoing costs.
		341	Underachieved Income	A challenging budget was set with the expectation to be able to offer more external services. Pressure on the service to deliver in a timely manner for internal contracts, has not currently allowed for the expansion of the service.	Due to the volume of responsive repairs and the scope of works required on the Major voids, the service was unable to expand to offer additional external services. Priority was given to completing repairs within target and returning empty properties as quickly as possible to let.	The service will undertake a review in the next financial year, to understand where if possible, there may be potential capacity to offer additional external services.
		(42)	Staff Salaries	Staff vacancies within the service that is being offset by overtime and agency staff	Recruitment issues have led to increased spend on agency workers	The service has had additional resources approved by Council in November 2023 which has enabled recruitment to commence which is progressing well.

Supervision & Management - Other Costs	(101)	(99)	Gas	Gas price estimates for 2023/24 from our wholesaler ESPO projected that prices could rise by 285% for this financial year. This was in addition to the projected rise in 2022/23 of 33%. According to ESPO energy report the price of gas is now significantly lower due to higher volumes of storage and gas levels being maintained meaning that anticipated panic buying didn't happen as did in the second half of 2022. The average unit price of gas for the council has actually increased by 195% instead of the expected 285%.	Saving in this years accounts	Keep the price of utilities under review
Rent, rates, taxes and other charges	210		Council Tax	There has been a higher number of voids this year compared to the previous year due to major voids (see Rental Income and Service Charges above). Council Tax bills are not issued immediately to the HRA due to the volume of shorter void periods. (this would produce a bill from the tenants vacation date to year end having to be paid by the HRA, only to be refunded back to the HRA once a tenant has occupied a property)	1, properties are taking longer to turnaround and re-let	Work is already underway to reduce voids (see Rental Income and Service Charges above) with periodic monitoring undertaken to understand the cost implications of void properties.
Interest and Investment Income	(1,100)		Net Cost of Borrowing	Interest rates were budgeted at a prudent and responsible level. Due to inflation remaining high the Bank of England has continued to raise interest rates.	Due to the level of our cash reserves and delays in the capital programme the Council has benefited through increased interest income and reduced interest expense exposure related to potential borrowing that would have occurred if the capital programme was on schedule.	Review intended use of balances and monitor interest rate expectations
Revenue Contributions to Capital Expenditure	(27)		Contribution to Capital Scheme	A higher than budgeted contribution to capital expenditure is due to the overall saving achieved within the HRA.		



Rugby Borough Council Corporate Strategy Performance Report

Rugby Borough Council's corporate strategy focuses on four key outcomes: making the borough **environmentally** sustainable by mitigating climate change; ensuring a resilient **economy** that benefits all residents; promoting **health and wellbeing** so residents live healthy, independent lives and the most vulnerable are protected; and maintaining the council as a responsible, effective, and efficient **organisation**. Through these four pillars, the council delivers comprehensive services that support the community's sustainability, prosperity, and health.

Climate Change
and the
Environment



Economy



Health and
Communities



Organisation





CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

The cross-party Climate Emergency Working Group focus on a number of key issues including achieving the objectives of the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan. Through this strategy, the Council has set out a long-term approach to delivering our net zero vision, where "Rugby is an environmentally sustainable place where we work together to reduce and mitigate the effects of climate change, transitioning Rugby to a low carbon place."

Number of fly tipping incidents investigated.

100%

(2023/2024 figures)

68% of the Councils housing stock is covered by an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) of **C** and **above**.



30%

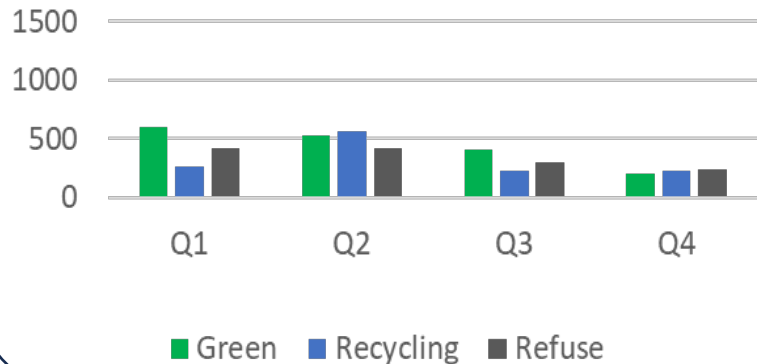
year on year reduction in the amount of waste sent to landfill.

127 trees planted on Rugby Borough Council green space in 2023/24.
(2022/23 – 92)

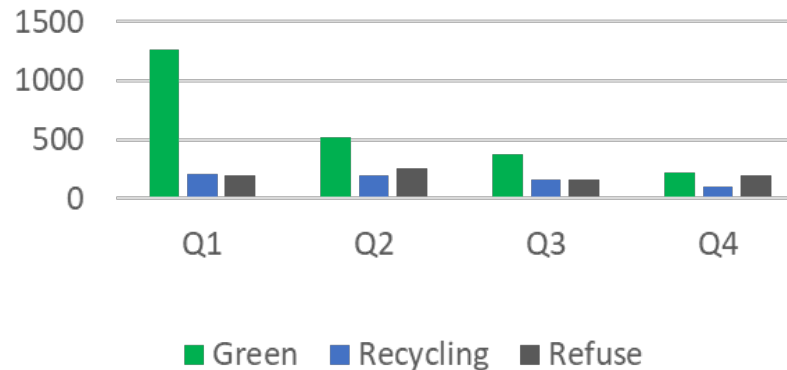


Number of missed Green, Recycling and Refuse bins per quarter.
2022/2023 to 2023/2024

Missed Green, Recycling and Refuse bin collections **2022/2023**



Missed Green, Recycling and Refuse bin collections **2023/2024**



Rugby Borough Council has developed and adopted a Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan – setting out our goals to achieve this by 2030



ECONOMY

We have continued our business support and evolved it this year, moving from supporting local businesses throughout the pandemic to helping them to flourish through recovery. Recognising the town centre's importance as a focal point for the Borough and recognising the need for change to enable it to thrive, we are giving particular attention to its regeneration.

1349 new homes built



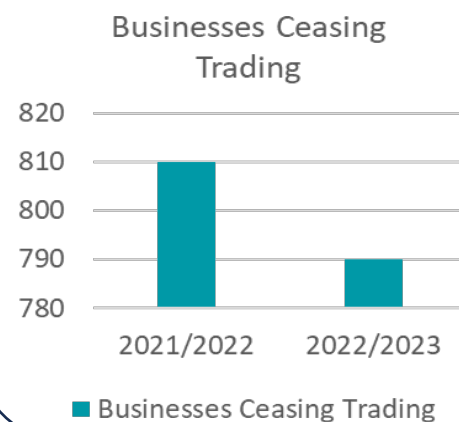
£741,000

The Council received year 2 UK Shared Prosperity Funding

ONS data shows decreasing trend of businesses ceasing trading, down from **810** to

790

(Data for 2022/23 published in Feb 24)



ONS data shows a positive trend of businesses trading in the borough

(Data for 2022/23 published in Feb 24)



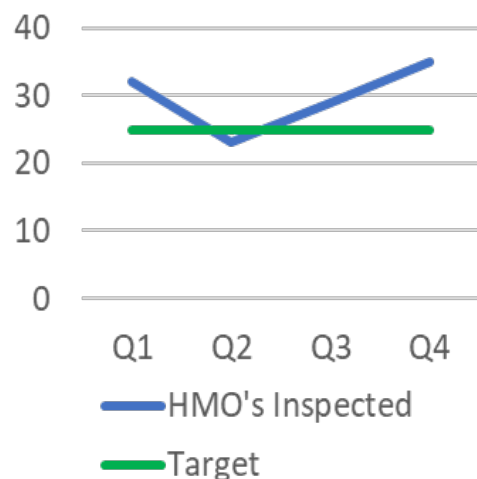
Continued growth and expansion of Rugby Market via specialised market operator, CJ's Events. (planned new stalls and dates for 2024, see CJ's Events Warwickshire website)



HEALTH AND COMMUNITIES

The health and wellbeing of our communities has remained amongst our highest priorities throughout the year. We continue to use the data available to us to understand the needs of our communities and work with them and other partners to ensure that we allocate our limited resources to where they are most needed and in doing so prevent the most vulnerable from falling into crisis.

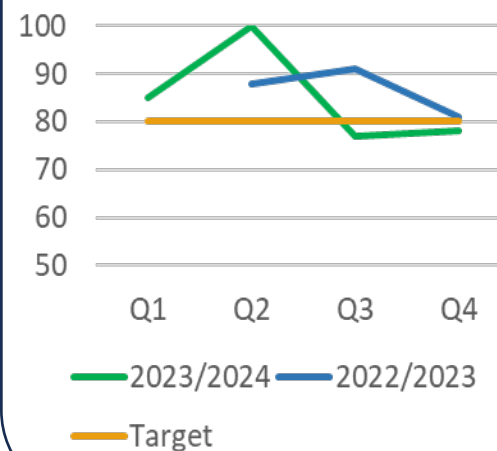
Number of HMO's inspected on a quarterly basis.



100%

of fly tipping incidents investigated over the last 2 reporting periods (2022/2023 – 2023/2024)

Family Weight Management programme in line with target (2022/2023-2023/2024)



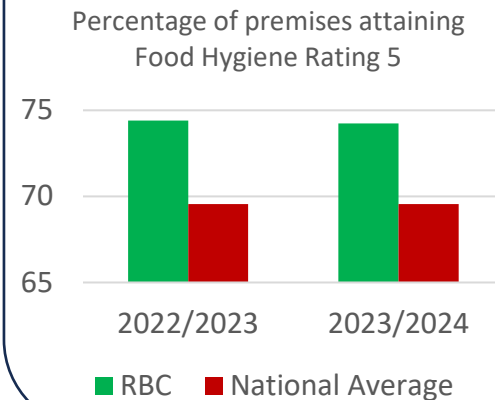
Year on year increase in the number of young people participating in the Swim School Programme.



HEALTH AND COMMUNITIES

40 homes
purchased by the
Housing Revenue
Account during
2023/2024

Premises within the
Borough with a **Food
Hygiene Rating 5**



Percent of planned food inspections completed
over 2022/2023 – 2023/2024

45 New Food Business Registrations in March 2024. New
business made up extra inspections. **All inspections were
completed.**

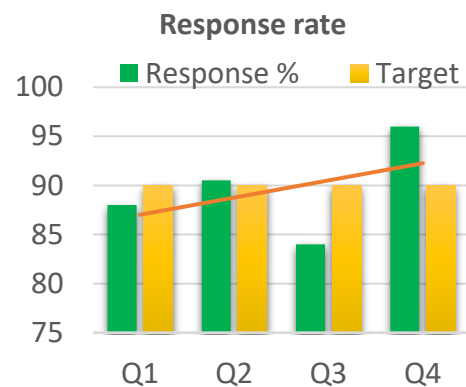




ORGANISATION

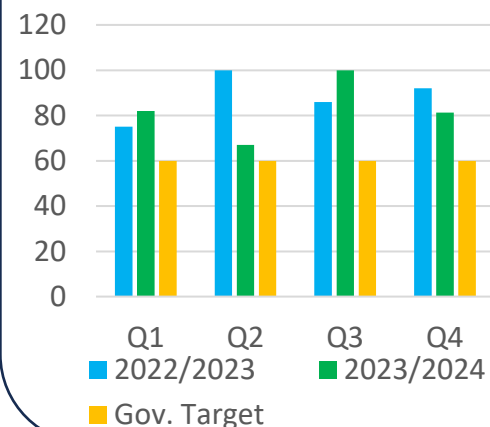
The Council has continued to be a responsible, effective, and efficient organisation - delivering high quality services and innovative solutions while managing public funds responsibly and ensuring good governance. We have revisited many of our ways of working, progressing a transformation programme which fundamentally changes many of the ways in which we do business. We continue to recognise that our staff are our greatest assets and that without them, none of the successes of the past 12 months would have been possible.

Percentage of complaints responded to within the prescribed timeframe

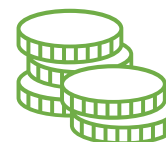


81%

of major planning applications were determined within 13 weeks



92% delivery of Medium-Term Financial Strategy savings targets

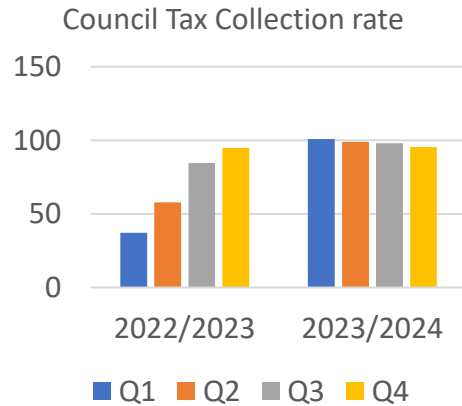


75%

of residents that responded to the annual survey reported "having Trust in the Council"

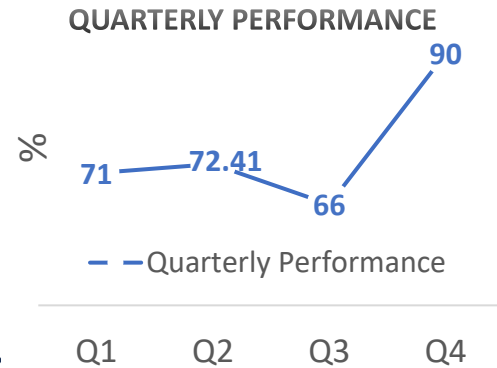
Annual Council tax collection rate.

(From 2022/2023 to 2023/2024)

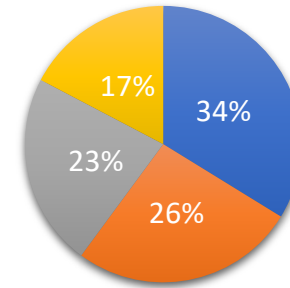


21%

improvement in Freedom of Information (FOI) requests completed within the statutory during 203/24

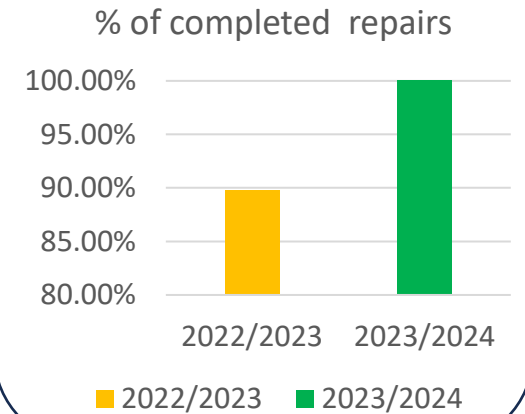


Complaints



Number of complaints received per quarter. (2023/2024)

Property repairs completed as a first-time fix.



AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Report Title:	Appointments to Working Groups 2024/25 – key working groups
Name of Committee:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	1 July 2024
Report Director:	Chief Officer – Legal and Governance
Portfolio:	Finance, Performance, Legal and Governance
Ward Relevance:	N/A
Prior Consultation:	Leader of the Council, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group
Contact Officer:	Claire Waleczek, Democratic and Support Services Manager claire.waleczek@rugby.gov.uk
Public or Private:	Public
Report Subject to Call-In:	Yes
Report En-Bloc:	No
Forward Plan:	Yes
Corporate Priorities:	This report relates to the following priority(ies): <input type="checkbox"/> Rugby is an environmentally sustainable place, where we work together to reduce and mitigate the effects of climate change. (C) <input type="checkbox"/> Rugby has a diverse and resilient economy that benefits and enables opportunities for all residents. (E) <input type="checkbox"/> Residents live healthy, independent lives, with the most vulnerable protected. (HC) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rugby Borough Council is a responsible, effective and efficient organisation. (O) Corporate Strategy 2021-2024 <input type="checkbox"/> This report does not specifically relate to any Council priorities but
Summary:	In order that key working groups can proceed with their work programmes and business, Cabinet is requested to appoint their memberships for 2024/25 as detailed in the report.

Financial Implications:	There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.
Risk Management/Health and Safety Implications:	There are no direct risk management implications arising from this report.
Environmental Implications:	There are no direct environmental implications arising from this report.
Legal Implications:	There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.
Equality and Diversity:	There are no direct equality and diversity implications arising from this report.
Options:	N/A
Recommendation:	<p>(1) The key working groups for the 2024/25 municipal year, as detailed in paragraph 2.2 of the report, be approved;</p> <p>(2) delegated authority be granted to the Chief Officer for Legal and Governance to determine the composition of, and appoint to, the working groups following consultation with political Group Leaders; and</p> <p>(3) members of all working groups note that they represent the views of their Group at meetings and provide regular feedback to them on workstreams.</p>
Reasons for Recommendation:	Key working groups need to be appointed to ensure they can continue with business as soon as possible.

Cabinet - 1 July 2024

Appointments to Working Groups 2024/25 – key working groups

Public Report of the Chief Officer – Legal and Governance

Recommendation

- (1) The key working groups for the 2024/25 municipal year, as detailed in paragraph 2.2 of the report, be approved;
- (2) delegated authority be granted to the Chief Officer for Legal and Governance to determine the composition of, and appoint to, the working groups following consultation with political Group Leaders; and
- (3) members of all working groups note that they represent the views of their Group at meetings and provide regular feedback to them on workstreams.

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 In order that key working groups can proceed with their business and work programmes, Cabinet is requested to re-constitute the following working groups for 2024/25 as detailed in the report.

The remit of all other working groups will be reviewed and a report be submitted to Cabinet on 22 July 2024.

2. KEY WORKING GROUPS FOR 2024/25

- 2.1 It is proposed that the following Working Groups be re-constituted for the 2024/25 municipal year, with the Town Centre Regeneration Working Group and the Rugby First Working Group being merged.

- Asset Management Member Working Group
- Climate Emergency Working Group
- Planning Services Working Group
- Town Centre Regeneration Working Group (including Rugby First business)

3. ROLE OF GROUP REPRESENTATIVES ON WORKING GROUPS

- 3.1 Members are appointed to represent their Group's views and ideas at working groups within their respective terms of reference. It is important, therefore, that Members provide feedback to their relevant Group about working groups on which they sit to ensure all Members are kept informed of progress on workstreams.

Name of Meeting: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 1 July 2024

Subject Matter: Appointment of Working Groups 2024/25 – key working groups

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

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Report Title: Renaming of Biart Place

Name of Committee: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 1 July 2024

Report Director: Chief Officer - Communities and Homes

Portfolio: Communities and Homes

Ward Relevance: Eastlands Ward

Prior Consultation: Ward Members for Eastlands
Avon Park School Pupils
Political group representatives
Senior Spatial Data Officer (Street Naming & Numbering Officer)
Senior Project Manager (Construction)

Contact Officer: Mary Jane Gunn
Communities and Projects Manager
maryjane.gunn@rugby.gov.uk

Public or Private: Public

Report Subject to Call-In: Yes

Report En-Bloc: No

Forward Plan: Yes

Corporate Priorities: This report relates to the following priority(ies):
 Rugby is an environmentally sustainable place, where we work together to reduce and mitigate the effects of climate change. (C)
 Rugby has a diverse and resilient economy that benefits and enables opportunities for all residents. (E)
 Residents live healthy, independent lives, with the most vulnerable protected. (HC)
 Rugby Borough Council is a responsible, effective, and efficient organisation. (O)
[Corporate Strategy 2021-2024](#)
 This report does not specifically relate to any Council priorities but

Summary: The report sets out the proposals for naming the road, formerly known as Biart Place site, as well as

the four apartment blocks within the new development.

The suggested name for the road has been put forward by the local Ward Members for Eastlands, whilst the apartment block names have been suggested by pupils from Avon Park school.

Financial Implications:

There are no financial implications as a result of this report.

Risk Management/Health and Safety Implications:

The early agreement of names for the road and for the blocks will help to ensure that the utilities can be supplied and connected to the site in a timely fashion.

Should the utilities be connected to blocks and a road that have not yet been named then temporary names would have to be used and each new property would have to be updated later. This would be a significant and inefficient use of resource.

There would also be potential delays which could adversely impact on both the completion of the scheme as well as compliance with the Homes England conditions attached to the £6.8M grant.

Environmental Implications:

There are no environmental implications

Legal Implications:

Legislation relating to Street naming is noted in the previously Council approved Street Naming and Numbering Policy.

Equality and Diversity:

There are no equality and diversity implications as a result of this report.

Options:

1. Approve the recommendation.
2. Do not approve the recommendation.

Reconsider the proposals. However, the resulting additional time needed to do this could potentially incur the risk of a delay in the provision and connection of utilities.

Recommendation:

IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL THAT the new road on the site, formerly known as Biart Place, be named Navigation Way and that the four apartment blocks be called:

- Clayton House
- Davenport House
- Sherrard House
- Lindon House

Reasons for Recommendation:

The recommendation presents an opportunity to celebrate links of this new development to the heritage of the town.

This is achieved through its unique association with both the game of rugby and the significance of the building of the railway.

The proposed names are also in keeping with the objectives of the adopted Street Naming and Numbering policy, approved by Council in June 2019, which states that *names that refer to the historic and past heritage of an area will be given preference.*

Cabinet - 1 July 2024

Renaming of Biart Place

Public Report of the Chief Officer – Communities and Homes

Recommendation

IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL THAT the new road on the site, formerly known as Biart Place, be named Navigation Way and that the four apartment blocks be called:

- Clayton House
- Davenport House
- Sherrard House
- Lindon House

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The report proposes a new name for the road in the Biart Place development as well as names for the four new apartment blocks within the development.
- 1.2 The Eastlands Ward Members have suggested that the new road be called *Navigation Way*, in acknowledgement of the history of the building of the railway.
- 1.3 The suggested names for the apartment blocks have been submitted by the pupils of Avon Park, a specialist day school, in Rugby, that meets the needs of a diverse group of pupils who have a range of complex educational needs, communication difficulties and challenging behaviours. The names forwarded for consideration are all linked to the heritage of the town, through its unique association with the game of Rugby.
- 1.4 The main contractor, Wilmott Dixon Construction Ltd (WDC), engaged with the school to identify potential block and road names as part of their wider social value aims for the development scheme
- 1.5 The proposed names for the four apartment blocks are:
 - Clayton House
 - Davenport House
 - Sherrard House
 - Lindon House

1.6 John Clayton, Alfred Davenport and Charles Sherrard were all alumni from Rugby School that went on to play professional Rugby, whilst Richard Lindon was the inventor of the rugby football.

2. Background and rationale

2.1. From its inception, the redevelopment of the former Biart Place site offers the council the opportunity to create a brand-new vibrant community.

2.2 A key part of this is the opportunity to rebrand the site, and in doing so give the road running through the scheme a new name, along with names for the four new apartment blocks.

2.3 Work commenced on site in December 2023, and in September 2024 the main contractor, WDC plans to make the necessary applications to the utility companies to connect the homes. This will require the new place names to be used.

2.4 Utilising the Council's Street Naming and Numbering Policy the Council can consider appropriate new names for the development. Postal addresses are required to obtain Meter Point Administration Numbers (MPAN) numbers for each dwelling.

3.0 Consultation and engagement

3.1 As part of the development project, officers are working with local schools and, in partnership with WDC have a social value offer that includes:

- Work experience placements for local school children with WDC and insights into work in the construction industry
- Site Visits for local schools
- Health and Safety Assemblies
- Community Garden developments in the vicinity of the development

3.2 As part of this work pupils at Avon Park School, a specialist day school, in Rugby, that meets the needs of a diverse group of pupils who have a range of complex educational needs, communication difficulties and challenging behaviours were invited to submit potential new names for the apartment blocks. They suggested names linked to the heritage of the town, through its unique association with the game of Rugby.

3.3 The proposed names for the four apartment blocks:

- Clayton House
- Davenport House
- Sherrard House
- Lindon House

John Clayton, Alfred Davenport and Charles Sherrard were all alumni from Rugby School that went on to play professional Rugby, whilst Richard Lindon was the inventor of the rugby football.

- 3.4 In addition, Eastlands Ward Members were engaged, via Cllr Neil Sandison. He confirmed that they are supportive of the proposed apartment block names suggested by the pupils of Avon Park and would favour the road being named *Navigation Way* in testament to reflect the history of the building of the railway

4.0. Policy and Legal Framework.

- 4.1. The proposed road and apartment names are unique to the borough and align with the requirements of the Rugby Borough Council Street Naming and Numbering Policy 2.0, approved in June 2019.
- 4.2 The Policy states “Names that refer to the historic and past heritage of an area will be given preference”.

5.0. Conclusion

- 5.1. The proposed block and road names have been arrived at through a collaborative process.
- 5.2 The proposed names support the project aim of rebranding the site.

Name of Meeting: Cabinet
Date of Meeting: 1 July 2024
Subject Matter: Renaming of Biart Place
Originating Department: Communities and Homes

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: Bereavement Services Cemetery and Crematorium Regulations Review

Name of Committee: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 1 July 2024

Report Director: Chief Officer – Regulation and Safety

Portfolio: Regulation and Safety

Ward Relevance: All

Prior Consultation: Funeral directors and stonemasons; public consultation ongoing (no comments at time of writing report)

Contact Officer: Lorraine Marley – Bereavement Services Manager
lorraine.marley@rugby.gov.uk

Public or Private: Public

Report Subject to Call-In: Yes

Report En-Bloc: No

Forward Plan: Yes

Corporate Priorities: This report relates to the following priority(ies):
 Rugby is an environmentally sustainable place, where we work together to reduce and mitigate the effects of climate change. (C)
 Rugby has a diverse and resilient economy that benefits and enables opportunities for all residents. (E)
 Residents live healthy, independent lives, with the most vulnerable protected. (HC)
 X Rugby Borough Council is a responsible, effective and efficient organisation. (O)
[Corporate Strategy 2021-2024](#)
 This report does not specifically relate to any Council priorities but

Summary: The Council already has regulations for its cemeteries and crematorium, but a 3000 plot cemetery extension is currently being built at Rainsbrook, and it is appropriate to review the current regulations and also introduce regulation of

stonemasons and funeral directors for quality and safety. The report outlines the need for cemetery regulations for the new cemetery and revised regulations for the Council's other existing cemeteries and Rainsbrook crematorium.

Financial Implications:

The Council can charge burial and cremation fees which are approved annually by Council. The rules and regulations do not directly affect these, but do set the basis for them.

Risk Management/Health and Safety Implications:

It is important that the Council has suitable rules and regulations to ensure the efficient running of Bereavement Services, for quality and safety. The rules and regulations for the cemeteries and crematorium and The Stonemason and Funeral Director Scheme will ensure a robust system is in place to regulate the service and check on work being carried out in the cemeteries, reducing the risks and health and safety implications.

Environmental Implications:

A Climate Change and Environmental Impact Assessment is appended to this report (see Appendix A)

Legal Implications:

The Council is permitted under the Local Government Act 1972 and the Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977 to manage cemeteries and crematoria. The Council has a duty of care to ensure that its cemeteries are legally compliant and safe.

Equality and Diversity:

Equality and Diversity considerations have been taken into account and the proposed recommendations have a positive impact in terms of all religious denominations having access to burials in Rugby. See Appendix B.

Options:

- 1) Recommend to Council the new cemetery and crematorium regulations and the Stonemason and Funeral Director Scheme, allowing use of the new Rainsbrook cemetery and improving the service.
- 2) Reject the new cemetery and crematorium regulations and the Stonemason and Funeral Directors Scheme. This would prevent use of the Rainsbrook cemetery until suitable regulations are adopted.

Recommendation:

IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL THAT:

- 1) the new cemetery regulations, as detailed in Appendix C, be approved;
- 2) the new crematorium regulations, as detailed in Appendix D, be approved;
- 3) the Stonemason and Funeral Directors Scheme, as detailed in Appendix E, be approved; and
- 4) the Chief Officer for Regulation and Safety be given delegated authority for operational updates.

Reasons for Recommendation:

The cemetery regulations have not been updated since 2006 and currently there are limited controls for stonemasons and funeral directors. The new 3000 plot cemetery extension being built and Rainsbrook means now is the appropriate time to review the rules and regulations and ensure they apply to the new cemetery. There is very limited space available in our current cemeteries and there must be regulations in place before any burials can take place in the new Rainsbrook Cemetery.

The Stonemason and Funeral Directors Scheme will ensure there is the right control over any contractor that works within the cemeteries and that they have the correct documentation in place prior to work commencing.

The Bereavement Services Rules and Regulations have not been updated since 2014 and has been updated to reflect changes in the service and details that were not included in the last version.

Cabinet - 1 July 2024

**Bereavement Services Cemetery and Crematorium Regulations
Review**

Public Report of the Chief Officer – Regulation and Safety

Recommendation

IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL THAT:

- 1) the new cemetery regulations, as detailed in Appendix C, be approved;
- 2) the new crematorium regulations, as detailed in Appendix D, be approved;
- 3) the Stonemason and Funeral Directors Scheme, as detailed in Appendix E, be approved; and
- 4) the Chief Officer for Regulation and Safety be given delegated authority for operational updates

Executive Summary

Rugby Borough Council is currently responsible for four cemeteries in the Borough: Watts Lane Cemetery, Whinfield Cemetery, Croop Hill Cemetery and Clifton Road Cemetery.

A new cemetery is currently under construction at Rainsbrook. Phase 1 should be completed August/September 2024.

There is limited space in the current cemeteries and the new cemetery will provide approximately 3000 new burial plots. Before any burials can take place in the cemetery, revised Cemetery Regulations should be in place.

In addition to the regulations to apply to the new cemetery, the cemetery regulations have been reviewed, and the crematorium regulations have also been reviewed.

Alongside the new Cemetery Regulations it is proposed that a Stonemason and Funeral Director Scheme be introduced, where any third party working in Council owned cemeteries will be required to sign up to the scheme and agree to work within the Council's regulations.

Rules and regulations are set in all cemeteries and church yards and help to keep the grounds accessible for burials and allowing the grounds staff to maintain the cemetery to a high standard. Families sign to agree to the regulations at the time of the burial.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.0 The Council conducts approximately 200 burials each year in response to requests from the public. Cemetery regulations are an integral part of the process of the management of the burial sites. The cemetery regulations give guidance to the public, funeral directors, stonemasons and any contractor that may have cause to be visiting or working in the cemeteries. The regulations will provide clarity to all users of the cemeteries and to ensure we have full control in the cemeteries.
- 1.1 The Council's powers of management of its cemeteries are set out in the Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977 (The LACO 1977) and gives the Council as a burial authority wide ranging powers of management e.g. Article 3(1) states that, 'a burial authority may do all such things as they consider necessary or desirable for the proper management, regulation and control of a cemetery.' The use of rules and regulations, rather than policies, is consistent with other local authorities and best practice.
- 1.2 The aim of the regulations is to provide a tranquil and peaceful area for families to remember their loved ones and to ensure clarity on the rules and regulations for the cemeteries, which form the basis of the structure of the management of each site and complying with any Health and Safety obligations and a duty of care.
- 1.3 The cemetery regulations were last reviewed in 2006 (see Background Papers). The revised cemetery regulations (See Appendix C) have been written to enable the successful management of the cemetery. The new regulations have addressed the following issues:
- Improved proactive communication
 - Parking/driving in a cemetery – better access for blue badge holders
 - Closure of cemetery gates – health and safety reasons
 - Fees payable – Rugby residents contribute to cemeteries in their Council Tax – non-residents pay at the point of burial.
 - Graves – full details of what RBC can offer
 - Exhumations
 - Memorials and memorial safety – requirements for a memorial and the safety of all in the cemeteries
 - Transfer of a grave ownership – for families to retain control of a grave.
- 1.4 New regulations have been written to incorporate Watts Lane Cemetery, Whinfield Cemetery, Croop Hill Cemetery, Clifton Road Cemetery and the new Rainsbrook Cemetery.
- 1.6 The crematorium regulations were last reviewed in 2014. The revised crematorium regulations (Appendix D) have addressed the following issues:
- Improved proactive communication
 - Parking issues
 - Use of bicycles in the grounds
 - Fees and charges availability

- No publicity clarification
- Change of times for paperwork
- Coffin covers
- Witness charge times
- Cremation times
- Animal remains
- Recycling of plastic floral tributes
- Biodegradable caskets
- Inspection of Facilities

1.7 The introduction of a Stonemason and Funeral Director Scheme (see Appendix E) is to ensure that all parties involved in the management of a burial are complying with the Council's regulations and to a high standard to protect the health and safety of all visitors and contractors to our cemeteries and crematorium.

- Stonemasons and Funeral Directors will need to ensure they have the correct insurance to work in our cemeteries.
- The Council will be in control of contractors within its cemeteries and crematorium.
- Stonemasons and Funeral Directors must sign to agree to the Council's Rules and Regulations, including its current fees and charges.
- Staff will be aware of the removal/replacement of headstones and will be able to check workmanship.

1.8 The Cemetery Regulations, Crematorium Regulations and the Stonemason and Funeral Director Scheme will run simultaneously in conjunction with each other. Reference has been made to other local authority regulations to ensure they follow best practice.

1.9 Some minor changes in legislation are planned for September 2024 with regard to the crematorium, for example, medical references are being removed. It is, therefore, proposed, that the Chief Officer for Regulation and Safety be given delegated authority for operational updates to the policies.

2. CONCLUSION

2.1 This report seeks approval of the Cemetery Regulations, Crematorium Regulations and the Stonemason and Funeral Director Scheme.

2.2 Burials within the new cemetery will not be able to take place until Cemetery Regulations have been introduced for the new burial site.

2.3 Reference to the Stonemason and Funeral Director Scheme will need to be removed from the Cemetery Regulations if not approved.

2.4 It is proposed that delegated responsibility be given to the Chief Officer for Regulation and Safety to amend the Cemetery Regulations, Crematorium Regulations and the Stonemason and Funeral Directors Scheme as and when required.

Name of Meeting: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 1 July 2024

Subject Matter: Bereavement Services Cemetery and Crematorium Regulations Review

Originating Department: Regulation and Safety

DO ANY BACKGROUND PAPERS APPLY **YES** **NO**

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Doc No	Title of Document and Hyperlink
Appendix F	Cemetery Regulations 2005 https://www.rugby.gov.uk/w/cemetery-regulations?pl_back_url=%2Fsearch%3Fq%3Dcemetery%2Bregulations
Appendix G	Bereavement Services Rules and Regulations 2014 https://www.rugby.gov.uk/documents/4021035/0/Bereavement+Services+Rules+and+Regulations+%281%29.pdf/d34351fe-67b0-afe4-07de-bd6f6953b41e?t=1717163850413

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:
Aftab Razzaq
Chief Officer for Legal and Governance
aftab.razzaq@rugby.gov.uk
01788 533521

Equality Impact Assessment

Service Area	Regulation and Safety
Policy/Service being assessed	Cemetery Regulations (Appendix C) Bereavement Services Rules and Regulations (Appendix D) Stonemason and Funeral Directors Scheme (Appendix E)
Is this a new or existing policy/service? If existing policy/service please state date of last assessment	Cemetery Regulations - existing policy – last reviewed 2005 New Policy for Stonemason and Funeral Directors Scheme Bereavement Services Rules and Regulations – reviewed 2014
EqIA Review Team – List of members	
Date of this assessment	21 st May 2024
Signature of responsible officer (to be signed after the EqIA has been completed)	L Marley

A copy of this Equality Impact Assessment report, including relevant data and information to be forwarded to the Chief Officer for Legal and Governance.

Details of Strategy/ Service/ Policy to be analysed

<u>Stage 1 – Scoping and Defining</u>	
(1) Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the Strategy/Service/Policy (or decision)?	<p>To ensure the Cemeteries remain well maintained, pose no safety risk to either visitors or operatives and are environmentally friendly.</p> <p>To ensure that regulations represent the needs of the public and are clear, precise and informative.</p>
(2) How does it fit with Rugby Borough Council's Corporate priorities and your service area priorities?	<p>The cemetery regulations aim to provide a basis for the service priorities of ensuring we provide a robust, proficient and reactive service to members of the public who have suffered a bereavement, ensuring all families are treated with respect and dignity in the diverse community in Rugby.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“Rugby has a diverse and resilient economy that benefits and enables opportunities for all residents”</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“Rugby Borough Council is a responsible, effective and efficient organisation”</i></p>
(3) What are the expected outcomes you are hoping to achieve?	<p>Provide a tranquil place of reflection for all visitors to Rugby Borough Council cemeteries and be able to provide burials for the future generation.</p> <p>To provide a consistent approach to management of the Crematorium and Cemeteries</p>
(4) Does or will the policy or decision affect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customers • Employees • Wider community or groups 	<p>The decision will affect:</p> <p>Customers – families wishing to reflect on the regulations prior to making a decision on the final resting place for their loved ones.</p> <p>Employees – Have a basis for decisions made within the cemeteries and crematorium</p> <p>Wider Community or groups – the cemeteries and crematorium are for the use of all residents of Rugby</p>

<u>Stage 2 - Information Gathering</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).		
(1) What does the information tell you about those groups identified?	The trend for burial and cremations is as follows: 20% of the population wish to be buried and 80% of the population wish to be cremated and we must meet those needs.		
(2) Have you consulted or involved those groups that are likely to be affected by the strategy/ service/policy you want to implement? If yes, what were their views and how have their views influenced your decision?	The policy has taken into account feedback from members of the public over the last few years, such as complaints from families where members of the public are driving over their loved ones grave and vehicles being left in the way that hinder the daily work in a cemetery. The policy also mirrors other Local Authority cemeteries around the country. The policies have been sent out to some of the local Funeral directors for comments and or possible changes.		
(3) If you have not consulted or engaged with communities that are likely to be affected by the policy or decision, give details about when you intend to carry out consultation or provide reasons for why you feel this is not necessary.	The majority of the feedback from the community has been through verbal communication before, during and after a burial.		
<u>Stage 3 – Analysis of impact</u>			
(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? If yes, identify the groups and how they are affected.	RACE Positive – All races/cultures to be accommodated	DISABILITY Positive - Access to cemeteries will be increased by allowing vehicles displaying valid blue badge parking	GENDER Positive – all genders
	MARRIAGE/CIVIL PARTNERSHIP Positive	AGE Positive – all ages	GENDER REASSIGNMENT Positive – all genders

	RELIGION/BELIEF Positive - All religions to be accommodated (e.g. muslim section at Watts Lane and each grave non denominational until burial takes place.	PREGNANCY MATERNITY N/A	SEXUAL ORIENTATION Positive – all sexual orientations
(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? (b) Are your proposals likely to impact on a carer who looks after older people or people with disabilities? If yes, please explain how?	2a) No charge is payable by families for a child due to the support that families receive from The Children’s Fund. 2b) no impact on carers		
(3) If there is an adverse impact, can this be justified?	N/A		
(4) What actions are going to be taken to reduce or eliminate negative or adverse impact? (This should form part of your action plan under Stage 4.)	N/A		
(5) How does the strategy/service/policy contribute to the promotion of equality? If not, what can be done?	Set of regulations that will ensure the fair and consistent treatment of all parties involved.		
(6) How does the strategy/service/policy promote good relations between groups? If not, what can be done?	Funeral Directors/Stonemasons/Bereavement Services working towards one goal of offering a high quality service to the bereaved families of Rugby, with one set of regulations.		

(7) Are there any obvious barriers to accessing the service? If yes how can they be overcome?	No
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----

<u>Stage 4 – Action Planning, Review and Monitoring</u>																														
<p>If No Further Action is required then go to – Review and Monitoring</p> <p>(1) 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" data-bbox="875 687 2112 917"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="875 687 1120 762">Action</th> <th data-bbox="1120 687 1364 762">Lead Officer</th> <th data-bbox="1364 687 1615 762">Date for completion</th> <th data-bbox="1615 687 1865 762">Resource requirements</th> <th data-bbox="1865 687 2112 762">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																				
Action	Lead Officer	Date for completion	Resource requirements	Comments																										
(2) Review and Monitoring State how and when you will monitor policy and Action Plan	Policy will be reviewed every three years with the Chief Officer having delegated authority to alter any changes.																													

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).’

Rugby Borough Council

Climate Change and Environmental Impact Assessment

CONTEXT

In 2019 the UK Parliament set a commitment in law to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050. Achieving this target will require considerable effort with public bodies, private sector organisations, the third sector and individuals working together to take action. Rugby Borough Council declared a climate emergency in 2019, in doing so committed to:

- To move the Council's operations towards Carbon Neutrality by 2030.
- To establish action to tackle climate change as a key driver of all decision-making.
- To provide community leadership in reducing the impact of Climate Change.
- To take action to mitigate the impact of climate change on a Borough wide basis and beyond, through adaptation.

The Council's Corporate Strategy (2021-2024) [link](#) sets ambitious outcomes in relation to Climate Change. These ambitions must now be progressed through the decisions which the Council makes.

It is therefore important that Rugby Borough Council gives due regard to climate change when making decisions. In the context of the Council's business, Climate Change includes carbon emissions, biodiversity, habitat loss and environmental destruction. When putting forward recommendations for decision, officers must assess how these recommendations are likely to influence our climate change commitments by completing the following Climate Change and Environmental Impact Assessment.

A copy of this Climate Change and Environmental Impact Assessment, including relevant data and information should be forwarded to the Deputy Chief Executive.

If you require help, advice and support to complete the form, please contact Dan Green, Deputy Chief Executive.

SECTION 1: OVERVIEW

Portfolio and Service Area	Regulation and Safety – Bereavement Services
Policy/Service/Change being assessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Cemetery Regulations (Appendix C) b) Bereavement Services Rules and Regulations (Appendix D) c) Stonemason and Funeral Director Scheme (Appendix E)
Is this a new or existing Policy/Service/Change?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Change to existing policy b) Change to existing policy c) New policy
If existing policy/service please state date of last assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) 2006 b) 2014
Ward Specific Impacts	All wards
Summary of assessment Briefly summarise the policy/service/change and potential impacts	The current rules and regulations have been in place since 2014 with no changes or updates. As the new cemetery will be due to open within the grounds of Rainsbrook Crematorium, there have been some adjustments to the existing policy to reflect changes that have been made in the last 10 years.
Completed By	Lorraine Marley
Authorised By	David Burrows
Date of Assessment	June 2024

SECTION 2: IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Climate Change and Environmental Impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner	Timescales
Energy usage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reduced maintenance due to controls on headstones and grave items, better drainage to make graves more stable and less labour required		Lorraine Marley	Sept 2024
Fleet usage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Staff will carry out checks on headstones at the same time as visiting cemeteries for burials – some visits will not require a vehicle (Rainsbrook)		Lorraine Marley	Sep 2024
Sustainable Transport/Travel (customers and staff)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Families will be visiting one site, rather than the current two (church/Rainsbrook and then on to a cemetery) – services to take place at Rainsbrook and then walking to graveside		Lorraine Marley	Sep 2024
Sustainable procurement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Community leadership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Biodiversity and habitats	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Area will be biodiverse with the planting of new trees/bushes/grasses and		Lorraine Marley	Sept 2024

Climate Change and Environmental Impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner	Timescales
				will encourage a variety of animals and plants.			
Adaptation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Impact on other providers/partners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Funeral Directors/Stonemasons to provide a high standard for burials/headstones to a high standard in RBC cemeteries.		Lorraine Marley	Sep 2024

SECTION 3: REVIEW

Where a negative impact is identified, the proposal and/or implementation can be adapted or changed; meaning there is a need for regular review. This review may also be needed to reflect additional data and evidence for a fuller assessment (proportionate to the decision in question). Please state the agreed review timescale for the identified impacts of the policy implementation or service change.

Review date	June 2027
Key points to be considered through review	Parking issues Access to cemetery Changes to legislation Memorial safety
Person responsible for review	Bereavement Services Manager
Authorised by	David Burrows



Cemetery Regulations

April 2024

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2 Definition of Terms

Application	A request made on the Council's prescribed form
The Council	Rugby Borough Council
Cemeteries	Whinfield Cemetery, Watts Lane, Croop Hill, Clifton Road Cemetery and Rainsbrook Cemetery
Cemeteries Service or Office	The Council department responsible for administering and maintaining the Cemetery for full burials and the interment of ashes
Cemeteries Representative	Is any member of staff appointed by Rugby Borough Council to carry out Cemeteries administration or supervision work on behalf of the Council.
Exclusive Right of Burial (EROB)	The legal document which is a lease agreement between the Council and the elected owner's specifying a particular grave, a set period for the lease and a unique reference number
Owner(s)	The named person(s) on an Exclusive Right of Burial and the only person(s) who can approve the opening of a grave for an interment
Transfer of the Exclusive Right of Burial	The act of transferring the Exclusive Right of Burial for the remaining years on the Deed of Grant, when the owner is deceased.
Assignment of the Exclusive Right of Burial	The act of the owner transferring the Exclusive Right of Burial for the remaining years on the Deed of Grant.
Statutory Declaration	A Statutory Declaration is a written statement of fact that is signed before a Commissioner for Oaths.
Interment	The act of burying within a burial or cremated remains plot
Family organised Interment	A burial or cremated remains interment organised by the family directly with the Cemeteries office – the services of a Funeral Director are not required.
Children's Funeral Fund for England	A Government scheme to provide funding for the fees charged for a cremation or burial of a child between the ages of 24 week gestation and 17 years.
Interment plot	An interment plot is a space assigned for cremated remains only (Cremated Remains plot).
Burial plot	A burial plot is assigned for full burials, (Lawn Section Graves and Kerbstone Section graves). Ashes may only be interred in a burial plot where at least one full burial has taken place.

Common Grave	A common grave is a burial plot which has not been purchased and is owned by Rugby Borough Council. No memorial may be placed on this grave.
Memorial Safety Inspection	All memorials will be tested to assess their safety and risk level. The testing will be carried out by an inspector qualified in accordance with NAMM requirements and in line with the recommendations stated in Article 16.1 of The Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977
Stonemasons and Funeral directors Registration Scheme	Stonemasons and Funeral Directors who are Registered with the Council permitting them to undertake works within the Cemeteries after approval. A list of approved Stonemasons and Funeral Directors can be viewed on the Rainsbrook website www.rainsbrookcrematorium.co.uk
Memorial	A memorial is a fixed structure with names of the deceased persons interred in that grave. All memorial installations are subject to an application and approval before installation.
Memorial Application	A request to install a memorial at one of our cemeteries, made on the Council's prescribed application form and received with full non-refundable payment.
Memorabilia	Memorabilia is portable commemorative objects which are not fixed to the main interment plot's memorial. Only authorised memorabilia is permitted in accordance with current our Terms and Conditions.
Selection Fee	A selection fee applies to any newly purchased grave that is not the next in line plot and where the selected grave is positioned where a burial is possible. This cannot be positioned in the middle of an unused row and must have concrete borders already in place.
BRAMM	British Register of Accredited Memorial Masons Scheme
NAMM	National Association of Memorial Masons
Winter times	1 st October to 31 st March
Summer times	1 st April to 30 th September
Open phased area	The section or part of the section of the cemetery that has been opened for burials
Backfill	The backfill of the soil after the placing of the coffin in the grave.
Family backfill	The backfill of the soil is completed by hand by a maximum of four family members after the placing of the coffin in the grave

3. Introduction

3.1 General

3.1.1 The following Cemetery Regulations apply to all burial grounds owned and managed by Rugby Borough Council and include the following sites:

- Rainsbrook Cemetery
- Whinfield Cemetery
- Croop Hill Cemetery
- Watts Lane Cemetery
- Clifton Road Cemetery

3.1.2 The Cemetery Regulations have been formulated to ensure the Cemeteries remain well maintained, pose no safety risk to either visitors or operatives and are environmentally friendly. The Regulations should, therefore, be observed at all times.

3.1.3 The Bereavement Service Manager's decision shall be final in all matters relating to the management of the Cemeteries.

3.1.4 Members of Rugby Borough Council staff and cemetery representatives have the right to work and carry out their duties in an environment free from violence, threatening or abusive behaviour. Any form of abuse, including, but not limited to, verbal, physical and electronic, on any grounds, such as gender, sexual orientation, race, religion or belief, age or disability, will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Should any such behaviour be displayed by any person, they will be required to leave the premises immediately and reported to the police.

3.1.5 Please be aware that these regulations do not apply to Rainsbrook Crematorium and Rainsbrook Gardens of Remembrance. For details of those regulations please refer to Rainsbrook Rules and Regulations, these regulations apply to Rainsbrook Crematorium and Gardens of Remembrance, including the scattering bank, all memorials areas and the ashes section.

3.2 Contact Details

All funeral bookings, general enquiries and comments regarding the Cemeteries should be made by email to rainsbrook@rugby.gov.uk, by telephone on 01788 533715, or by writing to:-

Rainsbrook Cemetery and Crematorium
Ashlawn Road
Rugby
Warwickshire
CV22 5QQ

3.2.1 The Cemeteries Office will be open Monday to Friday 9am to 4.30pm. Any alterations to these times will be published on our website www.rainsbrookcrematorium.co.uk.

3.2.2 The office at Rainsbrook is not open on Saturdays, Sundays or any Public Bank Holidays.

3.3 Opening Times

The Cemeteries are open for visitors every day of the year, 24 hours a day, however, Rugby Borough Council reserves the right to temporarily close public access to the Cemeteries or any part of a cemetery at any time without notice.

4. General Regulations

4.1 General

4.1.1 These regulations are in addition to the provisions presented in the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977, Local Government Act 1972 and any other appropriate law and regulations currently in force.

4.1.2 These regulations supersede any previous regulations in place.

4.1.3 The Cemeteries are places of peace and quiet reflection and visitors to the sites are welcome, but please respect the nature of the sites, the needs of other users and safety factors. No games, sports, riding of bicycles, skateboards, roller blades, scooters or similar are allowed in the burial grounds. No consumption of alcohol or drugs may take place within the burial grounds and anybody under the effects of such substances will not be admitted.

4.1.4 Any person creating a nuisance or a disturbance, such as interfering with a funeral, grave, headstone, flowers, trees etc, will be required to leave the cemetery immediately and may be the subject of subsequent legal action.

4.1.5 Children under the age of 14 are welcome in the cemetery but must be supervised by a responsible adult. It is particularly important that children are not allowed to climb on any monuments, trees or other items within the cemetery.

4.1.6 The planting of trees and shrubs, the erection of fences, railings or ornaments and the placing of gravel or glass items is not permitted in any part of the cemetery, including placing items on trees within the cemetery and all items will be removed immediately.

4.1.7 In accordance with the Local Authorities Cemetery Order 1977 the following can only take place after a written application has been received and approval has been given by Bereavement Services:

- Burials
- Interment of ashes
- Strewing of ashes
- Exhumations
- Installation or fixing of a memorial, kerb edges or benches*
- Adding an inscription to a memorial*
- Renovation of a memorial*
- Removal and/or replacement of a memorial*
- Building of walled graves or vaults

4.1.8 The scattering of ashes in any of our cemeteries is not permitted.

4.1.9 *Please note: please see Section 8 for scheme relating to memorials.

The Council reserves the right to amend these regulations and to deal with any circumstances or contingency not provided for in the regulations as necessary.

4.2 Resident Fees

4.2.1 A copy of the current Fees and Charges is available from Rainsbrook Cemetery and Crematorium Offices, Ashlawn Road, Rugby, CV22 5QQ. They are also published on our website www.rainsbrookcrematorium.co.uk or are available by emailing rainsbrook@rugby.gov.uk.

Fees and charges will be determined by the Council annually and will take effect from 1st April each year. The date of burial will determine the fees applicable.

4.2.2 Fees and charges are payable in advance and the Council does not provide a payment plan service.

4.2.3 There are currently no fees payable by families of children aged from 24 week gestation up to, but not including, 18 years of age. The payment for any burials in this age category will be claimed from the Children's Funeral Fund by the Council.

4.2.4 Where a payment is made by cheque, the cheque should be made payable to Rugby Borough Council.

4.3 Non-residents fees

4.3.1 There are no restrictions on who can be interred within Rugby Borough Council Cemeteries, however, there are additional fees applied for any deceased whose permanent residence is outside the Borough of Rugby.

4.3.2 This policy is justified by the following objective criteria as required by Regulation 30 (3) of The Provision of Service Regulations 2009

- 1) Residents of Rugby are contributing towards the cost of local services and are therefore making a financial contribution towards the cost of the Cemetery Service. Non-residents are not making a contribution in this respect.
- 2) As a Local Authority, Rugby Borough Council must ensure that it can continue to provide a basic level of service to local residents. The additional charge applied to individuals from outside the local area ensures that the Council can continue to maintain appropriate capacity to provide the services required by its own residents.

4.3.3 A resident is defined as somebody who, immediately prior to their death, was a resident of the area, or who lived in the area for over ten years and moved out of the area less than 12 months before their death.

4.3.4 Proof of residency may be requested to support any resident fee claims and where the proof is not provided the non-resident fee will be incurred. All decisions will be final and at the discretion of the Bereavement Services Manager.

4.4 Dogs

4.4.1 Dogs are permitted in all cemeteries when held on a lead. It is the responsibility of the person in control of the dog to ensure that any mess is removed from site. No dogs, other than assistance dogs are permitted in the chapels.

4.4.2 Please respect the area you are visiting and ensure that dogs are not permitted to urinate against any headstones. There is a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) in place in all our cemeteries and failure to comply may result in a Penalty Charge Notice being issued.

4.5 Times

4.5.1 Funerals will normally be permitted on the following days and times:-

Winter: Monday to Friday 9.30am to 2.30pm

Summer: Monday to Friday 9.30am to 3.00pm

Excluding all Public Bank Holidays.

4.5.2 It may be possible to arrange funerals outside of these times subject to additional cost and staff availability. Please contact the Cemeteries office if a time outside of the permitted hours is required.

4.6 Vehicles

4.6.1 Vehicle access is restricted to blue badge holders only at the following cemeteries and a valid blue badge must be displayed in the vehicle at all times whilst parked in the cemetery.

- Rainsbrook Cemetery
- Croop Hill Cemetery
- Watts Lane Cemetery

4.6.2 Vehicles must park in the allocated spaces ONLY.

4.6.3 At all cemeteries vehicles should park in the adjacent car park, where provided. Vehicles should be driven and parked with due consideration for other users. Vehicles are not permitted to drive, or park on the access roads, footpaths, grass or over any planted areas, under any circumstances. Such action will be deemed a nuisance and will be dealt with under the powers of the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order Articles 18 and 19 as cited above.

4.6.4 The Council or any of its employees cannot accept responsibility for the loss or damage to any vehicle or its contents whilst in the Cemetery and vehicles are parked at the owner's risk.

5. Burials

5.1 General

5.1.1 All bookings for a full burial, strewing of cremated remains must be made through the Cemeteries Office.

5.1.2 For Whinfield, Watts Lane, Clifton Road and Croop Hill, each section is divided in accordance with the denomination of the deceased. The majority of the sections at these cemeteries are laid to lawn and no items may be placed on the lawn sections (please see Section 4. Cemeteries for further details.)

5.1.3 Rainsbrook Cemetery grave plots denomination will be determined at the point of burial.

5.1.4 There are some areas available in selected cemeteries for a traditional grave, please ensure your Funeral Director is aware of your requirements. It will be assumed that all burial bookings will be for a lawned grave unless specified otherwise on the Notice for Interment.

5.2 Bookings

5.2.1 The provisional booking should be followed up by the submission of a completed Rugby Borough Council Notice of Interment form by 10.30am, 2 working days in advance of the intended date and time of the funeral. Any exception to this must be agreed in writing by the Bereavement Services Manager. Receipt of the fully and correctly completed Notice of Interment, together with either a Coroners order for Burial or green certificate for Burial or Cremation and the Grant of the Exclusive Right of Burial (when a grave is to be re-opened) will act as confirmation of the provisional booking. For any ashes interment a Notice of Interment, Certificate of Cremation and the Grant of the Exclusive Right of Burial is required.

As much information relating to the funeral as possible must be given to the Council in advance, including number of mourners, motorbike hearse, horse and carriage, jazz band, piper etc.

5.2.2 It is the responsibility of the person making the funeral arrangements to ensure that any memorial on the grave is removed from it as least 2 working days prior to the date and time of the funeral. A Stonemason, registered with NAMM or BRAMM and part of Rugby Borough Council Registration Scheme must be used to undertake the removal of the headstone and the costs incurred are payable by the person making the funeral arrangements.

5.2.3 Failure to comply with any of the above may result in the burial being transferred to a later date when the above can be complied with.

5.2.4 The time appointed for the burial must be punctually observed. The Council reserves the right to delay a late arriving funeral in the event that it impacts on another service. The person making the funeral arrangements will incur an additional fee for any service that arrives more than 15 minutes late.

5.2.5 A full burial interment must not exceed 60 minutes, unless the booking has been made for a graveside service or the service will take place in the cemetery chapel, in which case the service and interment must not exceed 90 minutes. Ashes interments must not exceed 30 minutes. Any service/interment that runs over these times will incur additional fees.

5.2.6 The Council advises families to contact Funeral Directors that are registered with the Council to work in their cemeteries or for those Funeral Directors who are not part of the scheme, the Funeral Director will be required to join before a booking can be taken.

5.3 Allocation of New Burial Plots

5.3.1 Each new grave will be allocated by the next available plot, within an open phased area. This will be determined by the Cemeteries office 2 working days prior to the burial.

5.3.2 If requested at the time of booking the burial, an alternative grave may be available for selection when the next in line grave is not the preferred choice. Selection may be possible only in an open phased area and is subject to approval by the Council. Payment of the selection fee will apply. Burial plots will not be available for selection in areas not currently active.

5.3.3 Reservation of a grave for future use is not possible in any of our cemeteries.

5.4 Interment

5.4.1 All graves will be excavated and prepared for interment by the Council. No other person or company will be allowed to undertake any excavation within the cemetery, except with the express permission of a Chief Officer. The depth of each grave will be determined by the Council in accordance with the provisions of the Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977.

5.4.2 Following the interment, the Council will level the grave and re-turf in the appropriate season. Graves will be turfed between 6 to 12 months after the burial has taken place, dependent on the season, weather, and settling of the grave.

5.4.3 All funerals will be subject to the control of the Council's designated officer, who will meet the cortege and direct it to the Chapel and/or grave as appropriate.

5.4.4 Floral tributes from the funeral will be placed on top of the grave following the backfilling of the grave and will remain in situ for a maximum of 14 days before being cleared by Council Staff.

5.4.5 The Council will not be liable for any loss, damage, theft or vandalism of any item placed onto a grave however caused.

5.4.6 For any interment taking place, it is necessary to place soil or other material excavated from a newly dug grave temporarily onto the adjoining grave space, without prior notice to any other person. Adjacent graves will be fully re-instated to their original appearance once the interment has taken place and the area will be left tidy.

5.5 Size and depth of graves

5.5.1 Subject to the discretion of the Council, all graves will be of such depth to accommodate the following:-

- Burial Sections – up to two coffins and up to six ash caskets (ashes will only be buried in a burial section if at least one full burial has taken place)
- Ashes Sections – two ash caskets
- Children's Section – one coffin

5.5.2 All graves in the Burial sections will be dug to a depth of 6 foot 6 inches, unless for reasons beyond our control, this is not achievable.

5.6 Coffins

5.6.1 Coffins and urns for burial must be made from suitable bio-degradable materials such as wood, wicker, cane, bamboo, wool and cardboard. Metal coffins or caskets will only be accepted if placed within a walled grave or vault.

5.6.2 All coffins must be provided with handles.

5.6.3 The exact size of the coffin, casket or container must be given in writing to the Council as soon as possible after the provisional booking, together with any other pertinent information relating to its size and shape (eg locking bar handles, casket shape, wicker coffin etc. The Council will subsequently add a suitably amount to the given size in order to determine the dimensions of grave to be excavated.

5.6.4 Incorrect measurements are the responsibility of the Funeral Director or the person completing the Notice of Interment form. Please be aware that the coffin or casket size may determine the number of all subsequent interments.

5.6.5 The maximum width of a coffin per grave is 30 inches (including handles). For a coffin that is over this size, two grave spaces must be purchased.

5.6.6 For a full burial interment, coffins needing more than one burial plot space will require the purchase of two burial plots. The decision of the Bereavement Services Manager is final in this respect.

5.6.7 Shrouds may only be used in place of coffins in designated areas and will incur additional interment fees.

5.7 Backfilling

5.7.1 Family members may, at their own risk, backfill the grave, but must adhere to instructions from cemetery staff. For any family backfill, a Declaration must be signed by the applicant for the burial and a Risk Assessment must be completed by the Funeral Director. The Declaration and the Risk Assessment must be received by the Cemeteries Office by 10.30am 2 days prior to the burial.

5.7.2 Without exception, no-one under the age of 18 years old is permitted to backfill. Unless identification is produced, the decision of the cemetery staff is final.

5.7.3 Cemetery staff will commence the backfill of a grave immediately after all mourners have left the cemetery and will be completed on the same day.

5.8 Purchase of Exclusive Right of Burial

5.8.1 Every Interment shall take place either in a purchased or public grave

5.8.2 For a purchased grave, a Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial (the Deed) will be issued to the owner as specified on the Notice of Interment form.

5.8.3 For a public grave Rugby Borough Council will retain the right to say who will be buried in the grave. No memorial rights exist for a public grave, therefore no headstone or memorial can be placed on the grave.

5.8.4 When a grave is purchased, it refers to the Purchase of the Exclusive Right of Burial in a particular grave space and is not the purchase of the land itself, which remains in the ownership of Rugby Borough Council. This means that you do not own the land but have the following rights, during the period stated on the Exclusive Right of Burial:

- Be interred into the grave, if space is available.
- Authorise further interments into the grave, where space is available.
- Apply to erect a memorial headstone (within current restrictions – please see section 8 on memorials.)
- Give permission for additional inscriptions to be made on existing memorials (please see section 8 on memorials.)

5.8.5 The Exclusive Right of Burial for a grave can be purchased for a period of 50 years.

5.8.6 Within 5 years of the lease expiring an Exclusive Right of Burial may be extended, after the relevant fees have been paid.

5.8.7 The Exclusive Right of Burial cannot be purchased in advance of need, i.e. graves cannot be pre-purchased or reserved. The Exclusive Right of Burial can only be transferred to another person via the legal process laid out in the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977.

5.8.8 The Exclusive Right of Burial can be held by a maximum of two people and any issues with the grave can only be discussed with the holder(s) of the Exclusive Right of Burial.

5.8.9 The Exclusive Right of Burial will only be issued after full payment has been received.

5.8.10 The Exclusive Right of Burial should be produced to the Council when a request is made to re-open the grave. The Council reserves the right to refuse to allow an interment into a grave space where the Deed is not produced.

5.8.11 If the Exclusive Right of Burial is lost, the person requesting that the grave be opened, must make a Statutory Declaration under oath, that they have the right to do so. Possession of a grave deed does not in itself give any person the right to have a grave opened, as that right lies only with the person named on the Deed (Please see section 10 on Transfer of Grave Ownership.)

5.9 Children's Section

5.9.1 In both Whinfield Cemetery and Rainsbrook Cemetery we have a dedicated children's section. Each grave will be excavated to a depth which will allow one interment only, however, cremated remains of a child may also be buried in these graves.

5.9.2 For any child under the age of 24 weeks gestation there will be no charge to carry out a burial in an individual plot. For a child aged from 24 week gestation to 17 years of age, any charges will be claimed from The Children's Fund.

5.9.3 Families may place items on a grave in the children's section within the boundary of their grave. No gravel may be placed or fencing erected in the children's section. The Bereavement Services Manager will have the final decision on each boundary.

5.9.4 The name plate on the coffin should display the child's full name and date of death and if applicable the age.

5.9.5 An Exclusive Right of Burial will be issued for an individual burial plot.

5.9.6 Shared graves are available for babies born up to 24 week gestation. For these graves a headstone, ornaments, glass containers, gravel or fencing, although this list is not exhaustive, cannot be placed on the grave.

5.9.7 The cost for a shared grave burial is in accordance with the current fees and charges and will include a memorial placed on the grave with the dates of burials.

6. Exhumations

6.1 No human remains (including cremated remains) may be disturbed or removed from a grave unless a licence from either the Ministry of Justice or a Faculty from the Diocese is obtained. There is no guarantee that an exhumation will be approved. A fee is not applicable for the licence, however, there will be a fee applicable for the exhumation, please enquire at Bereavement Services as detailed in Section 3.1

7. Closed Churchyards

7.1 The Council are responsible for the maintenance and inspection of the grounds, trees and boundaries and are required to undertake statutory inspections and testing of memorials. The Council are currently responsible for the following Closed churchyards:

- St Margarets Church, Wolston
- St Andrews Memorial Gardens
- St Michaels Church, Brownsover, Rugby
- St Oswalds Church, Rugby
- St Mary's Church, Clifton (please note only some of the grounds are closed)
- St John the Baptist, Brinklow, Rugby

8. Memorials

8.1 General

8.1.1 A memorial may only be erected on a burial or cremated remains plot by a Stonemason registered with NAMM, BRAMM and part of the Stonemasons and Funeral Directors Registration scheme and must be in accordance with the current NAMM/BRAMM standards

8.1.2 Memorials may only be erected on a purchased grave and must not exceed the maximum sizes permitted.

8.1.3 Temporary wooden crosses are permitted on a grave for one year or after a memorial has been erected. After which point the wooden cross will be removed. If a family wish to keep the wooden cross they must remove before the anniversary of the burial or prior to the installation of the headstone.

8.2 Application to install a memorial

8.2.1 The owner(s) of the Exclusive Right of Burial may apply to erect a memorial. Memorial application forms can be obtained by emailing rainsbrook@rugby.gov.uk or by calling 01788 533715. Alternatively, applications should be available from all registered Stonemasons. A non-refundable fee is payable at the point of application, please see our current fees and charges.

8.2.2 The memorial application must be signed by the owner(s) of the Exclusive Right of Burial. If the owner is deceased, a transfer of the grave ownership must be completed before a memorial can be erected.

8.2.3 It is recommended that there is a period of one year between a full burial and the erection of a headstone, where there is a bark border.

8.2.4 When the interment has taken place with a concrete border, or is for an ashes plot, a headstone may be placed immediately after the interment has taken place and the memorial application has been approved.

8.2.5 Memorial applications cannot be submitted or approved prior to an interment taking place.

8.3 Inscriptions

8.3.1 The Council reserves the right to refuse permission for a memorial where the Council consider the proposed inscription could cause offence or is deemed unsuitable.

8.4 Memorial Sizes

8.4.1 Below are the details of the maximum dimensions and types of memorials permitted to be placed onto graves where there has been an Exclusive Right of Burial granted.

Clifton Road Cemetery / Watts Lane Cemetery / Whinfield Cemetery / Croop Hill Cemetery

Main Cemetery Area

Description	Height (maximum)	Width (maximum)	Depth (maximum)
Headstone (including any base slab)	5 feet 6 inches	3 feet	1 feet 6 inches
Vase	1 foot 3 inches	1 foot	1 foot
Plaque / Tablet	2 feet	2 feet 6 inches	1 feet 6 inches

Cloverleaf Memorial Garden

Burial space within the Cloverleaf memorial gardens vary depending on the location of the grave. No memorial will be permitted higher than 2 foot 6 inches tall.

Stonemasons wishing to carry out work on a headstone for this area will need to contact Bereavement Services for the maximum size permitted for the grave space.

Whinfield Cemetery

Cremation Sections J and L

Description	Height (maximum)	Width (maximum)	Depth (maximum)
Plaque / Tablet	2 feet	2 feet	2 feet

Cremation Section N

Description	Height (maximum)	Width (maximum)	Depth (maximum)
Plaque / Tablet	2 feet	2 feet	2 feet

Watts Lane Cemetery

Cremation Section P

Description	Height (maximum)	Width (maximum)	Depth (maximum)
Plaque / Tablet	2 feet	2 feet 3 inches	2 feet

Croop Hill Cemetery

Cremation Section V

Description	Height (maximum)	Width (maximum)	Depth (maximum)
Plaque / Tablet	1 foot 6 inches	1 foot 6 inches	3 feet

Rainsbrook Cemetery

Description	Height (maximum)	Width (maximum)	Depth (maximum)
Headstone (including any base slab)	3 feet 6 inches	3 feet	1 foot 6 inches
Vase	1 foot 3 inches	1 foot	1 foot
Plaque / Tablet	2 feet	2 feet 6 inches	1 feet 6 inches

8.5 Memorial Permit

8.5.1 A memorial permit will be issued to your Stonemason upon the memorial application being approved. The memorial permit will be valid for one year from the date of approval. If the permit has expired, a new memorial application will need to be submitted together with the correct memorial application fee.

8.6 Installation

8.6.1 After a memorial permit has been issued to the Stonemason, an appointment must be booked by the Stonemason, with the Cemeteries office prior to the installation taking place.

8.7 Removal

8.7.1 No memorial shall be removed from the Cemeteries without the permission of the Owner(s) of the grave or their representative.

8.7.2 All memorials must be removed before a second interment can take place. It is the responsibility of the owner(s) or their representative to remove the memorial and they do so at their own risk and expense. A memorial that has not been removed may result in second interment not taking place until the headstone has been removed. This may result in additional fees being charged.

8.7.3 The Council reserves the right to remove, without notice, any unauthorized monument, memorial, stone, kerb edging, tree, shrub, plant or item erected in the cemetery in contravention of these regulations or where the Council deem the items a health and safety risk.

8.7.4 The Council may remove a memorial headstone from a grave to allow for an adjacent grave to be excavated. As soon as possible after the funeral has taken place, the headstone will be fully re-instated by the Council. The Council will, where circumstances allow, make reasonable attempts to contact the owner of the Exclusive Right of Burial.

8.8 Memorial Safety

8.8.1 It is the responsibility of the owners of the Exclusive Right of Burial to maintain their memorial in a safe condition and be kept in good repair.

8.8.2 The Council will carry out memorial safety testing in all cemeteries on a rolling programme and has the right to lay down, remove or 'stake and band' any memorial it considers to be unsafe and will make every effort to contact the owners of the headstone to advise them of any action taken.

8.8.3 The owners of the Exclusive Right of Burial shall be responsible for the cost of any repair, laying down or removal of an unsafe memorial. Where possible, the owner(s) of the Exclusive Right of Burial will be contacted prior to any work taking place, however, in the event that the owner(s) cannot be traced, or the immediate work is necessary for safety reasons, work will be carried out on the unsafe memorial without contacting the owner. Families should contact Bereavement Services with any queries.

8.8.4 The Council reserves the right to take any necessary action with a memorial where notification has been sent to the owner of the Exclusive Right of Burial and no repair has taken place.

9. Items placed on a graves

9.1 The Council will not be liable for any loss, damage, theft or vandalism of any item placed onto a grave however caused.

9.2 Cemetery staff may remove articles from a grave that, in their opinion, are likely to cause risk, damage, or offence or which may interfere with the Council's maintenance of the site. Where possible, items will be kept for three months for collection, please contact Bereavement Services to arrange collection.

9.3 The following items are not allowed to be placed on graves and if found will be removed.

- Unauthorised memorials
- Unauthorised kerb edgings
- Artificial grass
- Glass items
- Stone chippings or gravel (unless placed inside an authorized fully kerbed grave)

9.4 Any memorabilia must be placed within the headstone border and not encroach onto the adjoining grave space. Items placed outside of your grave space or on any

lawned section will be removed and will be available for collection from the Cemeteries office within one month of removal.

9.5 The following memorabilia items should not be placed on any grave, although the Council reserves the right to remove other items outside of this list:

- Glass items
- Wind Chimes
- Naked flames
- Alcohol
- Solar lights
- Lanterns
- Fencing
- Gravel

9.6 Disposal of Christmas wreaths is principally the responsibility of the Owner(s) of the Exclusive Right of Burial. However, any Christmas wreaths still in place on 14th January each year will be removed as part of the routine maintenance works.

10. Transfer of Grave Ownership

10.1 The Owner(s) of the Exclusive Right of Burial may transfer or assign the ownership of a grave either during their lifetime, or after their death, to a person of at least 18 years of age and upon payment of the appropriate administration fee.

10.2 Where a grave is owned by two persons, both must sign to agree to the transfer of the ownership. Where one owner is deceased, the ownership will transfer into the ownership of the surviving owner.

10.3 A Transfer of Ownership will be necessary before a burial can take place, where the owner is deceased, unless the burial is for the deceased owner. In this case no transfer is required for the burial to take place.

10.4 The Exclusive Right of Burial forms part of the estate of the deceased owner and can be transferred for the remaining years on the Deed to the entitled person(s) upon production of a Will, Grant of Probate, Letters of Administration or the relevant Statutory Declaration, together with any supporting documentation and the appropriate fee.

11. Repeal of former regulations

11.1 Any locally agreed rules or regulations previously in force in respect of all cemeteries are hereby revoked.



Rainsbrook Rules and Regulations

June 2024



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2. Introduction

2.1 We respect the rights and needs of the individual and have therefore prepared these regulations with a balance that will enable us to manage the Cemeteries and Crematorium effectively and maintain the highest possible standards without placing unnecessary restrictions on individual choices.

2.2 These regulations apply to Rainsbrook Crematorium and the Gardens of Remembrance, including the scattering bank, memorial areas and the ashes section.

2.3 We aim to provide the highest possible standards of care, choice and dignity to those who suffer bereavement and to create and maintain an environment where the bereaved can pay their respects and remember loved ones in the ways they feel most appropriate. To assist with this we request that all visitors to our Cemeteries and Crematorium follow these regulations. Please be aware that the Council reserve the right to change these regulations from time to time and that compliance with any changes is required.

2.4 The Bereavement Services Office is situated at:

Rainsbrook Cemetery & Crematorium
Ashlawn Road
Rugby
CV22 5QQ
Tel: 01788 533715
Email: Rainsbrook@rugby.gov.uk
Web: www.rainsbrookcrematorium.gov.uk

2.5 The office is open from 9 am to 4.30 pm Monday to Friday. The office is closed on Saturdays, Sundays and Public Holidays.

3. General Regulations

3.1 Vehicles

3.1.1 For safety purposes the speed limit within the grounds of our Cemetery and Crematorium is 10 mph.

3.1.2 To maintain the appearance of our Cemeteries and Gardens of Remembrance vehicles must park in the designated car parks only. Vehicles should not be left on any roads, bays reserved for a specific use, grassed areas or where signs state 'no parking' at all times. Parking bays are available in Rainsbrook Cemetery for vehicles displaying a valid blue badge and displayed and used correctly.



3.2 Access

3.2.1 For safety purposes children under 12 years are only allowed in the grounds of the Cemeteries and Crematorium when accompanied by and under the care of a responsible adult.

3.3 Dogs

3.2.2 Dogs must be kept on a short lead and under control at all times within the grounds of the Cemetery and Crematorium. All dog faeces must be removed immediately, failure to do so may lead to prosecution under The Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO). Rainsbrook is an area for families to reflect on the loss of their loved ones and there are set areas for the scattering of ashes. Please do not allow dogs on the areas that indicate they are used for the scattering of ashes.

3.2.3 No animals except assistance dogs are permitted into the Crematorium building.

3.4 Candles

3.4.1 Candles are not permitted in the Rainsbrook building.

3.5 Bicycles

3.5.1 Bicycles should not be ridden on any grass areas or planted areas. Bicycles must not be placed against any memorial, bench, tree or shrub and if laid on the ground must not cause an obstruction. Rainsbrook Cemetery and Crematorium accepts no liability for loss or damage to any bike, moped or bicycle whilst on the premises.

3.6 Fees and charges

3.6.1 The list of fees and charges are on display at the Crematorium and on Rainsbrook Crematorium website (www.rainsbrookcrematoriumon.co.uk) and Rugby Borough Council website (www.rugby.gov.uk). Plans of the cemeteries and crematorium grounds are also available for inspection free of charge. Please contact the office to make an appointment.

3.6.2 Fees for any service must be paid for in advance and no credit facilities are given or offered.

3.7 Smoking

3.7.1 Smoking is strictly prohibited in the Crematorium buildings. Visitors are requested to refrain from smoking in close proximity to the building (within 5 metres



of the building) and where mourners are gathered. All cigarette ends should be disposed of in the bins provided.

3.8 Photography

3.8.1 Rainsbrook do not permit any photographs or video's to be taken within the grounds or buildings, without written permission and with the consent of all parties involved. No person is permitted to fly a drone whilst on Rainsbrook Cemetery and Crematorium land in order to respect the privacy of all visitors to the site.

4. Crematorium Rules and Regulations

4.1 Code of Practice

4.1.1 All cremations at our Crematorium are carried out with strict adherence to the Code of Cremation Practice issued by the Federation of British Cremation Authorities (FBCA) and the Guiding principles of cremation issues by the Institute of Cemetery & Crematorium Management (ICCM) of which Rugby & West Northamptonshire Joint Crematorium Committee is a member. Copies of the Code are available from the Crematorium Office.

4.2 Ceremony Rooms

4.2.1 The Crematorium has two interdenominational Ceremony rooms and the service times permitted are as follows:

The Avon Ceremony room

(Seating Capacity 143 – Service Times 45 minutes each)
(Monday to Friday 9.00 am – 4pm)

The Drayton Ceremony room

(Seating Capacity 53 – Service Times 45 minutes each)
(Monday to Friday 9.30 am – 3.30 pm)

4.2.2 Saturday morning funeral services from 10.00 am (times are allocated by Bereavement Services only)

4.2.3 Both Ceremony rooms are equipped with a music system from which music can be selected from an extensive computerised database. If a piece of music is not on the database it can be requested by the funeral director from the system supplier who can nearly always make it available for your service. These requests should be made no later than 72 hours prior to the service taking place at the crematorium.

4.2.4 The crematorium provides a webcast service which is a live broadcast of a service streamed on the internet via the Obitus website. This service is only viewable to those issued with a username and password, which is provided before the service to the Funeral Director. The applicant for the cremation is the only

person who can request this service. The broadcast can be viewed up to 28 days after the service. Please note that Bereavement Services are unable to disclose the username and password to anyone other than the Funeral Director.

4.2.5 Funeral services can be recorded onto a DVD (audio-visual) CD (audio) disc and USB + Download link. More than one can be ordered and extra copies can be available after the service. Once we have received these, they will be passed to your Funeral Director, who will arrange with you to collect from them. Each Ceremony room has a wall mounted TV screen which can be used for a professionally edited slideshow with up to 50 photographs and have a single photo displayed throughout the service. Please ask your Funeral Director for more information.

4.3 Service Times

4.3.1 Service times are set to allow for a meaningful service to be completed and allow for mourners to enter and leave the Ceremony room within the 45 minute period.

4.3.2 Should any person require a longer service time then an additional 45 minute service time may be booked for an additional charge in accordance with the current fees and charges.

4.3.3 This allows for those who wish for a longer service or if it felt a large number of mourners will attend and 45 minutes is not long enough to properly seat all mourners in the Ceremony room, hold a service and clear the room afterwards. Any service that runs over their 45 minute time slot will be subject to the additional charge as described in the current fees and charges.

4.3.4 No alteration in the time arranged for a service shall be permitted without the prior written consent of the Bereavement Services Manager.

4.3.5 The times may be changed by the Bereavement Services Manager and notification of any permanent changes will be issued to all key stakeholders.

4.3.6 Strict punctuality is required by all persons attending a cremation so as to prevent the interference of one funeral with another. The time arranged for a cremation is that at which the cortege is required to be at the booked Ceremony room's entrance.

4.3.7 It is essential that funerals arrive on time for the smooth operation of the service. Services will not be permitted to start prior to their allocated slot to allow staff time to prepare the room for each funeral.

4.3.8 A funeral arriving late will not be allowed to enter the Ceremony room unless there is a maximum of 40 minutes between the time of its arrival and the time fixed



for the next service in the Ceremony room. Should a funeral arrive late it is the responsibility of the person leading the funeral to ensure the service is curtailed to ensure it finishes at the appropriate booked time. This ensures subsequent funerals will not be delayed.

4.3.9 Except at the discretion of the Bereavement Services Manager, no cremation service shall be allowed on a Sunday, statutory Bank Holiday, or other day appointed for Public Thanksgiving or Mourning.

4.4 Cremation bookings

4.4.1 The days upon which cremation services at Rainsbrook Crematorium take place are Monday to Friday with services held between 9.00 am and 4 pm. Saturday morning funerals are available and service times are allocated by Bereavement Services from 10.00 am.

4.4.2 All initial bookings for a cremation at Rainsbrook Crematorium must first be made to the Administration Office. No booking will be accepted with less than 6 days notice, unless agreed with the Bereavement Services Manager.

4.4.3 Any booking that is made where the family request 'no publicity', the name of the deceased will not appear on the daily schedule or have a flower card in the flower court. Any details of the funeral released on social media will invalidate the 'no publicity' requested.

4.4.4 Please note that the time booked for a service is the time the cortege is due at the Crematorium Ceremony room. In order to avoid disruption to any other funerals we request that you keep to this time. Funeral staff should not enter a chapel more than 10 minutes before an allocated time, unless permission has been granted by office staff, to ensure the deceased from the previous service, has the respect and dignity it deserves. Failure to comply will result in a fine being applied, in accordance with our current fees and charges. A charge, as detailed in the list of fees and charges, may be levied for corteges arriving early or late.

4.5 Paperwork

4.5.1 To ensure that we have sufficient time to make the necessary arrangements for a cremation we request that correctly completed paperwork is delivered to the Crematorium Office by no later than 10.30am, 48 working hours prior to the day of cremation.

4.5.2 All incomplete paperwork will be returned to the Funeral Director to be completed. Paperwork is only deemed delivered to the Crematorium Office if all the paperwork has been fully completed.

4.5.3 All original statutory paperwork received by the Funeral Director should be received within the above deadline.

4.5.4 Please be aware that a charge, as detailed in the list of fees and charges, will be made if the paperwork is delivered after the specified time.

4.6 Medical Referee

4.6.1 Before a cremation can take place, all statutory documents relating to that cremation are checked by a doctor appointed by the Home Office. This doctor is called a Medical Referee and gives the final permission for a cremation to take place. The Medical Referee can refuse to allow a cremation to be carried out without stating the reason in accordance with statutory regulations.

4.6.2 The manager reserves the right to cancel a cremation if the Medical Referee has not given permission for the cremation to take place.

4.7 Inspection of Medical Certificate

4.7.1 If the applicant in the application form for cremation has informed Bereavement Services that he/she would like to inspect the medical certificate (Cremation Form 4) and has given contact telephone numbers to Bereavement Services, then as soon as Bereavement Services receives the medical certificate it shall endeavour to notify the applicant or the person nominated by the applicant using the contact telephone numbers given by the applicant.

4.7.2 The Cremation Form 4 will only be available for inspection for 48 hours after Bereavement Services have notified the applicant or nominated representative, you may:

- (i) inspect the medical certificate at the Administration Office; and
- (ii) make any representations to the Medical Referee about any matter contained in the certificates or the inquiry made by the person who gave the certificate

4.7.3 There may be a fee charged by the Medical Referee for this service.

5. Cremations

5.1 Coffins

5.1.1 All bodies brought to the Crematorium for cremation shall be contained in a suitable coffin. The coffin or suitable container must be clearly marked for identification purposes and include the full name, date of death and age of the deceased.

5.1.2 This is a requirement under the Code of Cremation Practice issued by the Federation of Burial and Cremation Authorities (FBCA) and the Guiding Principles for Burial and Cremation Authorities issued by the Institute of Cemetery and Cremation Management (ICCM).

5.1.3 The coffin must be made of an easily combustible material. Resinous or badly seasoned wood must not be used. No metal of any kind must be used except for the use of nails, pins and screws used in the construction of the coffin. Handles, nameplates or ornaments must be of a combustible nature; hardwood plugs must be used wherever possible. No cross pieces must be attached to the bottom of the coffin. If it is desired to strengthen the bottom of the coffin, strips may be placed lengthways for this purpose. The coffin may only be coated with water based paints or water based varnish. The coffin must be of a material that when placed in a cremator, does not emit smoke, give off toxic gas or leave any retardant smears or drips after final combustion.

5.1.4 The unnecessary use of sawdust, paper or cotton-wool must be avoided and must on no account be put into the coffin. Materials liable to cause smoke or noxious fumes must not be used in or on the coffin. The use of clothing on the body should be in accordance with the industry's code of practice.

5.1.5 Coffin covers can be accepted by Rainsbrook Crematorium and details should be included with the initial booking and on the Notice for Cremation.

5.1.6 We do not accept Pandanus coffins under any circumstances.

5.1.7 These items are a hindrance to the cremation process and will cause the cremation to operate outside of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

5.1.8 The maximum external dimensions permitted for a coffin for cremation are as follows:-

Traditional Coffin: Length 7' (84") Width 3'4" (40") Depth 2'7" (30")

5.1.9 Any coffin received outside of these measurements will not be accepted as these are the maximum sized coffins accepted at Rainsbrook Crematorium.

5.1.10 The maximum weight of a deceased, with the coffin, accepted at Rainsbrook Crematorium is 47 stone. Any coffin received over 47 stone will not be accepted at Rainsbrook Crematorium. The weight of the deceased, plus the coffin weight must be provided for all cremations.

5.2 Procedure

5.2.1 The cremation process shall be undertaken in line with any guidance, codes of practice and requirements of the regulatory bodies that issue or may issue the same in relation to cremation and in compliance with statutory regulations.

5.2.2 A coffin or a body shall not be removed from the Crematorium except for a lawful reason.

5.2.3 All cremations shall be completed within 48 hours of receipt of the coffin at the Crematorium, unless there are any unforeseen circumstances, in which case the maximum time period the coffin will be held is 72 hours, which is in accordance with current industry guidance. Each coffin will be individually cremated. Any coffins not cremated the same day will be held on site at the crematorium in suitable storage.

5.3 Witness Charge

5.3.1 Any person may witness the placing of the coffin into the cremator with permission from the applicant for that cremation. The Avon ceremony room has a viewing window for this purpose. A viewing must be requested at the time of the funeral booking and to ensure the availability of a cremator, witness charges can only be booked for 9am Monday to Friday, or on a Saturday at 10am (additional charges apply).

5.4 Infectious Disease

5.4.1 A body of a person who has died of a dangerous infectious disease should be enclosed in two sealed body bags and placed inside a coffin which will not be reopened for any reason once delivered to the Crematorium. For the purpose of this Rule the term “dangerous infectious disease” includes plague, cholera, smallpox, typhus fever, enteric fever (including typhoid and paratyphoid fevers), scarlet fever and diphtheria, and such other infectious diseases as the appropriate officer may determine from time to time to require such precautions.

5.5 Metal recycling

5.5.1 All metal residues removed after the cremation process shall be suitably stored and transferred to a central organisation for recycling. Any applicant who does not wish for the metal residues to be taken for recycling must inform the Administration Office prior to the cremation process.

5.5.2 Metal residues include nails and screws using in the construction of the coffin and metal implants. Any profits from the recycling of these metals are donated

to national charities as per the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM) recycling scheme.

6. Arrival at Rainsbrook

6.1 All funerals will be met by a member of staff from Bereavement Services. No cremation service will be allowed to proceed unless accompanied by a member of staff. A check of the name plate on the coffin will be made prior to any cremation service being permitted. This is to ensure the correct deceased person is in the correct Ceremony room and forms part of Bereavement Services' procedural checks.

6.2 The person arranging the funeral or his/her representative shall ensure that they have sufficient persons to transfer the coffin from the vehicle to the Ceremony room. In all cases this should be a minimum of 4 persons for the cremation of an adult.

6.3 Bereavement Services staff are able to assist with the transport of the coffin from the hearse to the Ceremony room with prior notice and this will incur a fee. The Council accepts no liability for loss or damage to any person whilst the coffin is transferred from the vehicle to the front of the Ceremony room. The responsibility for this action is that of the funeral director or other person making the funeral arrangements. Rings, jewellery and personal articles on or about the body should be removed prior to the cremation service if required. Once placed into the cremator any valuables will be unrecoverable and the Council shall not be liable to account for such articles after cremation has taken place.

6.4 Except in cases where the deceased has died of a notifiable disease, if requested, the coffin may be opened as part of the service held in the Ceremony room. The coffin lid must be replaced and sealed prior to the coffin being charged into cremator. This allows for further choice for the bereaved and enables the service to be personalised.

6.5 All persons attending a service shall leave the Ceremony room immediately after the conclusion of the service. This ensures there are no delays for the following services.

7. Cremated remains

7.1 The temporary deposit of urns or caskets containing the cremated remains of deceased persons is permitted by the Council for a period not exceeding three months. After the initial three month period, a fee will be charged in accordance with our current fees and charges. Should this payment be in arrears for 21 days the Council reserves the right to dispose of such urns or caskets and the cremated remains therein will be respectfully scattered.

7.2 In the absence of any arrangements for the disposal of cremated remains and at the expiration of one month from the date of cremation, the Council shall give a month's notice to the person who applied for the cremation of its intention to scatter the cremated remains in the Garden of Remembrance.

7.3 The scattering of cremated remains will take place no sooner than 24 hours after the cremation process has been completed. This allows for families to consider options more fully after the cremation date has passed.

7.4 Bereavement Services will give any urn or container, holding the cremated remains of a deceased person to the applicant who made the application for cremation or a person nominated for that purpose by the applicant in which case Bereavement Services will require the applicant's written authority to hand over the urn or container to the nominated person. The cremated remains will be signed for by the person collecting the cremated remains and photographic proof of identification will be required.

7.5 Cremated remains are normally available for collection two days after the cremation has taken place, unless prior notice is given that they are required sooner. A suitable container large enough to hold all the ashes is provided and must always be used for the removal of ashes from the Crematorium. The Bereavement Services Manager shall have the right to decide what is a "suitable" container.

8. Scattering of ashes

8.1 The Gardens of Remembrance at Rainsbrook Crematorium provide a peaceful and tranquil setting to scatter cremated remains and leave floral tributes within a designated area.

8.2 All cremated remains shall be scattered by Bereavement Services and in accordance with the industry recognised best practice standards. Cremated remains shall be scattered evenly over an area of lawn so as not to leave any noticeable trace.

8.3 No scattering of cremated remains will be permitted unless a copy of the Certificate of Cremation, is delivered to the Administration Office and the prescribed fee for the scattering of the cremated remains is paid. Where the cremation took place at Rainsbrook Crematorium no such disposal certificate is required for the scattering of remains in any of the sites administered by Bereavement Services.

8.4 No person shall scatter or inter cremated remains within any part of the Cemeteries or Crematorium grounds without the permission of the Bereavement Services Manager. Any request for the same must be made in writing to the Administration Office. It is unlawful to scatter or inter any remains within the

cemetery or crematorium grounds without first gaining permission from the Council who manage and own the land.

8.5 The interment or scattering of animals is not permitted within any grounds managed by Bereavement Services. Bereavement Services do not hold a licence to dispose of animals and it is illegal to do so without this licence.

8.6 The applicant for the cremation may attend the scattering of cremated remains at a pre booked time and after the appropriate fee has been paid. If required, families may arrange for a short service to be held either by a family member, or a minister of their choice. Details must be submitted in writing to the Administration Office by 10.30 am at least two Working Days prior to the appointment time.

9. Floral tributes

9.1 Each Ceremony room is served by a floral tribute court for the display of floral tributes following a funeral service. Mourners are free to either take the tributes away after the service, or alternatively leave them on display in the floral tribute court.

9.2 Floral tributes left at the Crematorium will remain on display for seven days, if in good condition, or as soon as possible thereafter following public holidays. All floral tributes will then be disposed of. Where possible, the plastic elements of a floral tribute, including wreaths, will be recycled. This may include a request from a florist or member of the public requesting items that they will re-use.

9.3 Please note that unfortunately for practical reasons the crematorium and its staff cannot accept any responsibility for floral tributes left at the Crematorium before, during or after a funeral service.

9.4 Flowers, plants and floral tributes may be placed in the areas specifically provided, namely the Book of Remembrance, floral tribute courts, in the integral vases of the stone memorials, and in the designated vases by the Tree of Life. No plants, flowers, flower vases, glass or other receptacles for plants or flowers or any other items shall be placed in any other part of the crematorium or the gardens, and if they are, they will be removed immediately. Flowers, plants and floral tributes which are left at the Crematorium will be disposed of by Bereavement Services. Any items that can be kept will be stored for a maximum period of three months.

9.5 No floral tributes should be left on the scattering bank as this is a wild flower area. This area is reserved for the scattering of ashes only. Any items placed on the scattering bank will be removed immediately, any non-perishable items will be stored for three months for collection. The gardens are inspected on a regular basis by Bereavement Services' staff and any dead flowers or spent wreaths shall be

removed and disposed of. This ensures the grounds are kept tidy and well maintained.

10. Memorials

10.1 No mementoes, floral tributes, wind chimes or other items are permitted to be left in or on any of the trees or shrubs within the Gardens of Remembrance.

10.2 All memorials in Rainsbrook Gardens of Remembrance will be subject to the current Terms and Conditions listed below:

10.3 The terms and conditions allow you to:

Lay to rest cremated remains in our Gardens of Remembrance at the place specified by us to you and/or place a memorial at the place specified as described overleaf.

1. At the expiry of the lease period, if the agreement is not renewed, we may remove the memorial and this can be collected by the applicant.
2. We agree to maintain the memorial for the period of the lease. However, we do not take responsibility for any damage to it unless it is caused by our negligence.
3. We do not guarantee that the appearance of the memorial gardens will be the same forever, for example paths, trees and other features may change from time to time.
4. CUT FLOWERS ONLY are permitted in the vases that have been provided for general use in the Book of Remembrance Room and at various locations within the Gardens of Remembrance.
5. ARTIFICIAL FLOWERS are ONLY permitted in the vases that form part of an individually purchased memorial. These will be removed if their condition deteriorates. Additional vases or planters are not permitted and will be removed.
6. Christmas wreaths can be placed on the flower court in the area provided.
7. You may not place anything in the Gardens of Remembrance that may offend reasonable taste and decency.
8. Only memorials supplied by us are permitted in the Gardens of Remembrance.
9. Any memorial purchased from us by way of a memorial agreement will not be placed in the Gardens of Remembrance until full payment has been received.
10. The placement of memorabilia such as wind chimes, windmills, candles, solar lights, balloons and other trinkets and all items made from glass or porcelain are not permitted. This is not a definitive list and Rainsbrook Crematorium reserve the right to remove such items, or other unauthorised tributes without prior notice or consultation.

11. If we, at our sole discretion, agree to the early cancellation of this agreement you must pay our reasonable costs and expenses arising from the cancellation.
12. It is the applicant's responsibility to advise Rainsbrook Crematorium, in writing, of any change of address.
13. The inscription on a granite memorial will be guaranteed for a period of 2 years after installation unless damage has been caused to the lettering/design by items placed on the headstone, in which case the lettering is not guaranteed.

11. Interment of Ashes

11.1 All interment of ashes in Rainsbrook Gardens of Remembrance shall be sold as a Granite Memorial Package and the size of the headstone will be a plaque tablet as below:

Description	Height (maximum)	Width (maximum)	Depth (maximum)
Plaque tablet	3.5 inches	18 inches	18 inches

11.2 All ashes plots will be for a maximum of two casket interments and two sets of ashes that can be scattered in the grave.

11.3 Any interment of ashes within the Gardens of Remembrance must be in a biodegradable container. The size of the ashes casket must not exceed the size of the grave and must take into account the number of caskets that will be required to be interred.

12. Inspection of Facilities

12.1 The public can obtain permission to inspect the building when no cremation is taking place, between the hours of 10am and 3pm Monday to Friday. Please contact Bereavement Services for further details and to book an appointment.

13. Repeal of Former Regulations

13.1 Any locally agreed Rules or Regulations previously in force in respect of the Crematorium are hereby revoked.



AND



**STONEMASONS AND
FUNERAL DIRECTORS
REGISTRATION SCHEME**

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2. Definition of Terms & Responsibilities

The Council	Rugby Borough Council
Rainsbrook	Rainsbrook Crematorium and Cemetery
Member / Scheme Member	Any registered participant including any individual or body who has agreed to be bound by this Scheme. This includes their employees and any other person contracted or instructed by them to carry out works as defined in this Registration Scheme.
Cemetery Representative	Any member of staff appointed by the Council or Rainsbrook Crematorium to carry out Cemetery and Crematorium work.
Memorial	A memorial is a permanent, fixed, typically inscribed, structure used to memorialise the person(s) interred. Memorials include memorial headstones, kerb-sets and integrated flower vases.
Regulations	Current version of the Council's and Rainsbrook Crematorium Regulations.
Scheme	Stonemasons and Funeral Directors Registration Scheme.
Bereavement Services Manager	The manager responsible for all Cemeteries and Crematorium.
Graveyards	All closed cemeteries that RBC are responsible for.
NAMM	National Association of Memorial Masons .
BRAMM	British Register of Accredited Memorial Masons.
Exclusive Right of Burial	The legal document that confirms who is the current legal owner of the right to say who will be buried in a named grave.

2.1 All obligations and requirements of this Registration Scheme with which Scheme Members are required to adhere by are outlined below.

2.2 No aspects or obligations of this Scheme may be assigned, subcontracted or transferred to a third party without the written approval of the Bereavement Services Manager. In any event such approval will only be given to those individuals / companies / other bodies that are already Scheme Members as defined above.

3. Introduction

3.1 General

3.1.1 The Stonemasons & Funeral Directors Registration Scheme (referred to as the Scheme), establishes a standard level of workmanship and working practices throughout all of the Cemeteries and graveyards administrated by the Council.

3.1.2 The Scheme is needed to establish a standard level of working practice within all Cemeteries administrated by the Council, including “closed cemeteries” maintained by the Council.

3.1.3 Registration with the Scheme ensures common standards are practiced by Funeral Directors and Stonemasons for

- Burials
- Cremations
- The installation, repair and maintenance of memorials, both new and existing
- Insurance cover, health and safety and administrative requirements

3.1.4 Through the provision of the Scheme, it is the Council’s objective to identify and promote best practice within the industry by all registered participants.

3.2 Aims of the Scheme

3.2.1 The Scheme aims to achieve three primary purposes:

- To ensure the highest standards of workmanship, competence and customer care and promote industry best practice.
- To ensure the safety of those visiting and working within the cemeteries and crematorium and meet all relevant standards.
- To promote partnership, good long-term working relationships, innovation and development initiatives between all registered participants and the Council.

3.2.2 It is considered that working together will assist all Scheme Members to comply with the Regulations.

3.2.3 Registration emphasises the Council’s intent that all work carried out for and on behalf of the deceased and their family/representatives is of the highest standard.

4. Scope & Administration of the Scheme

4.1 General

4.1.1 Any Stonemason or Funeral Director who works, intends to work, or liaises with clients wishing to have work carried out in any of the Council’s Cemeteries and Crematorium is required to be a registered member of the Scheme.

4.1.2 Stonemasons and Funeral Directors who are not Scheme Members are not permitted to work within any Cemetery under the management of the Council or Rainsbrook Crematorium.

4.1.3 All Scheme Members must comply with the current Regulations at all times.

4.1.4 All applicants who wish to be considered for Registration must complete and submit Form A, please see Appendix 1

4.1.5 This Scheme is administered by Bereavement Services who are based at Rainsbrook Crematorium, Ashlawn Road, Rugby, CV22 5QQ.

4.2 Requirements of the Scheme

4.2.1 All Scheme Members are required to adhere to the obligations detailed in the Scheme. These are the minimum acceptable requirements of the Council and may be amended and reviewed by the Council as and when required.

5. Eligibility

5.1 Insurance Requirements

5.1.1 Stonemasons and Funeral Directors applying for registration are required to be insured for Public Liability to the value of Five Million Pounds (£5,000,000) for any one incident. It is mandatory for all Scheme Members to have the below cover when applying for membership

- Public Liability and Employer's Liability cover.

5.1.2 Before or at expiry of their certificate, it will be the Scheme Member's responsibility to update Bereavement Services with written details of their new certificate promptly to ensure on-going membership and maintain permission to work within the Council Cemeteries and Crematorium.

5.2 Workmanship, Materials and Construction

5.2.1 Stonemasons and persons instructed to undertake work on their behalf shall be suitably qualified, experienced and competent to perform all necessary work. All memorial work, including erecting, dismantling and repairing memorials must conform with current industry and statutory Health and Safety requirements, guidelines and standards. The materials used should comply with industry recommendations.

5.2.2 Stonemasons and Funeral Directors carrying out the work must be either registered with the National Association of Memorial Masons (NAMM) or British Register of Accredited Memorial Masons (BRAMM). Details of your registration should be added to the application form.

5.3 Stonemasons

5.3.1 All Scheme Members will guarantee all individual memorials for safety and stability for a minimum period of 10 years. All guarantees issued must include an obligation to repair/replace all joints and materials that may fail during the course of the guarantee.

5.3.2 Scheme Members may not process or submit an application without first ensuring that the applicant is the current holder(s) of the Exclusive Right of Burial for that grave.

5.3.3 Please refer any applicant to Bereavement Services where the applicant is deceased as a Transfer of Ownership is required before any work may commence.

5.3.4 Scheme Members must ensure that all materials used in the construction of memorials comply with industry codes of practice (Section 5.2) and are drawn from legal and sustainable sources.

5.4 Funeral Directors

5.4.1 Scheme Members are responsible for ensuring that they have visited the Cemetery in advance of an interment, where a family has requested a family backfill. The Scheme Member

must carry out a Risk Assessment and provide a copy of this to the family and Bereavement Services. A declaration must be completed by the applicant for a burial where a family backfill has been requested.

5.4.2 Scheme Members must continue to attend the grave-side until the interment and family backfill is completed or such time the family no longer wish to backfill the grave.

5.5 Registration Scheme Compliance

5.5.1 Each Stonemason and Funeral Director joining the Scheme is required to comply with the following:

- Local Authorities Cemeteries Order (1977)
- NAMM Code of Working Practice (Latest Relevant Edition) / BRAMM Blue Book
- Health and Safety at Work Act (1974)
- The Council's Safety Policy and Risk Assessment
- The relevant British Standards, (including BS8415)
- All other relevant statutory requirements

5.5.2 Each Stonemason and Funeral Director can download the Cemetery Regulations from www.rainsbrookcrematorium.co.uk and must comply with the following:

- The Council's Cemetery Regulations
- The Council's Stonemasons and Funeral Directors Registration Scheme
- Bereavement Services Rules and Regulations

6. Procedures

6.1 General

6.1.1 All interments and memorial installations in the Council's Cemeteries by registered participants of the Scheme must fully comply with the Regulations and the procedures outlined below.

6.2 Applications to Carry Out Work Within RBC Cemeteries

6.2.1 Prior to works within the Council's Cemeteries being undertaken, all works to be carried out must be approved by Bereavement Services.

6.2.2 Bereavement Services can be contacted using the details below:

- Email – Rainsbrook@rugby.gov.uk
- Post – Rainsbrook Crematorium, Ashlawn Road, Rugby, CV22 5QQ
- Telephone – 01788 533715

6.3 Memorials

6.3.1 Scheme Members are required to give the Cemeteries Office at least 3 working days' notice, by telephone or email, prior to undertaking any work within one of the Council's Cemeteries, to avoid clashes with burials or other works being undertaken.

6.3.2 Scheme Members are responsible for ensuring that all applications comply with the Regulations.

6.3.3 Scheme Members are required to advise their customers that the Regulations can be viewed and downloaded on www.rugby.gov.uk. This prevents additional distress to the bereaved as a result of applications requiring amendment or rejection.

6.3.4 The Council will hold the Scheme Member submitting an application liable for the content, accuracy and correct completion of all necessary forms and applications.

6.3.5 Memorial Applications must be checked by the Scheme Member before submission to ensure they comply with maximum sizes. Kerbset applications will only be permitted within permitted sections only.

6.3.6 All application fees are non-refundable and therefore the Scheme Member should ensure that an application is not submitted for a memorial that does not comply with the Cemetery Regulations.

6.3.7 No application will be processed until full payment has been received.

6.3.8 Scheme Members agree to rectify at their own expense any works that need to be dismantled as a consequence of the Scheme Member erecting a memorial that does not meet the requirements of the Regulations.

6.4 Interments

6.4.1 The Scheme Member must ensure that a valid copy of the Exclusive Right of Burial accompanies all applications for Interments. If the family are unable to provide a valid copy of the Exclusive Right of Burial, a Statutory Declaration must be made before a Commissioner of Oaths, please see Appendix 2. Non-production of the Exclusive Right of Burial or Statutory Declaration will delay the customer's request being progressed.

6.4.2 The Council will hold the Scheme Member submitting an application, liable for the content, accuracy and correct completion of all necessary forms and applications.

6.4.3 Scheme Members are reminded of the requirement within the Regulations that the exact maximum external coffin or casket sizes must be measured in feet and inches. These exact measurements must be declared on the Notice of Interment form when submitted. No measurement allowances are permitted and inaccurate details on these forms will result in the Failure to Comply procedure being commenced (Please see Section 8).

6.4.4 Scheme Members are required to advise their customers that the Regulations can be viewed and downloaded on www.rugby.gov.uk.

6.4.5 It is the Scheme Members responsibility to ensure they explain to their customer that unless specifically requesting a kerb section (where there is limited availability), the grave will be a lawned grave where no items may be placed on the lawn.

6.4.6 Scheme Members are responsible for advising their customers if their coffin size is outside of the maximum sizes that can be accommodated and if a double plot is therefore required, prior to the burial taking place.

6.5 Memorial Installation or Maintenance

6.5.1 No work on in-situ or new memorials shall be carried out unless the appropriate application has been approved in writing by Bereavement Services. There will be no exceptions to this requirement which must be strictly adhered to.

6.5.2 The Scheme Member will be given a Permit for each memorial application granted which must be available to be produced for inspection when requested by a Cemeteries Representative.

6.5.3 Scheme Members do not need to complete a Memorial Application for in-situ memorials that are being cleaned/maintained, for memorials they installed. However, please give the Bereavement Office notice of this as stipulated in 6.1.1.

6.5.4 It is the responsibility of the Scheme Member to ensure works are undertaken with consideration to adjacent memorials.

6.5.5 Only work instructed by the owner of the Exclusive Right of Burial should be undertaken regarding the cleaning of headstones.

6.5.6 All memorials must comply with BS8415 and the NAMM Recommended Code of Practice.

6.5.7 Scheme Members are not permitted to install any memorials or plaques in Section W of Watts Lane.

6.5.8 Scheme Members must install the memorial within 12 months of the memorial application being approved. Failure to do so will require the submission of a new application and repayment of the fee.

6.5.9 Scheme Members must take pictures of the front and the reverse of the memorial on which they worked and submit these alongside the cut off section of the form to the Cemeteries Office for confirmation of works.

6.6 Memorial Inspections

6.6.1 Bereavement Services will inspect the installation of a memorial after completion. Where work is found to be unacceptable either because it does not conform to the Scheme standards or for any other reason, Bereavement Services will instruct the Scheme Member and Exclusive Right of Burial holder(s) that rectification works are required to meet the Council's standards at the expense of the Scheme Member who installed the memorial.

6.6.2 The Council undertakes its duty to ensure the provision of safe open spaces and Cemeteries through mandatory memorial safety testing. This is undertaken on a cyclic programme, with all memorials tested by trained personnel as outlined in Section 6.3.

6.7 Post Work Inspection

6.7.1 The Council will inspect a memorial following installation or completion of other work. All Scheme Members must inform Bereavement Services after work has been completed within 5 working days of the work taking place. Where work has been identified that does not meet the required Scheme standards, Bereavement Services will instruct the Scheme Member to re-erect the memorial to ensure compliance with the Scheme's standards, the Cemetery Regulations and any other relevant standards (such as BRAMM, NAMM etc).

6.7.2 The costs of dismantling and re-erecting in these circumstances is the responsibility of the Stonemason or Funeral Director. The Council reserves the right to charge a fee (10% of the

application fee) for re-inspection of the memorial where this arises due to the actions of the Scheme Member.

6.7.3 All memorials are subject to mandatory inspections by the Council at least every 5 years to comply with our duty of care, Health and Safety Executive & Ministry of Justice Guidelines and Rugby Borough Council Memorial safety scheme policy and Scheme Members should take this into consideration when issuing their guarantee. Any repairs, replacement of joints or other parts of the memorial considered necessary from the inspection shall be notified to the registered EROB Holder(s) in writing.

6.7.3 All remedial works need to be completed within 28 days of written notification being issued.

6.8 Refusal to Co-operate

6.8.1 If the Scheme Member refuses to co-operate following post-work inspections the Cemeteries Representative may, at their discretion, engage a third party (a qualified Stonemason registered under the Scheme) to perform the work. In these circumstances, whether the work complies or fails to comply with the Scheme standards, the costs incurred by the third party will be the responsibility of the Scheme Member originally installing the memorial.

6.8.2 An invoice will be issued to the Scheme Member refusing to cooperate and recovery action will be undertaken by Rugby Borough Council for failure to make payment. The Scheme Member will also face action under the Disciplinary Procedures (Section 8) of the Scheme.

7. Tendering

7.1 The Council may require the submission of tenders for a range of memorial works, including inspection, repair, removal and replacement of memorials. Scheme Members will be eligible to tender for any such works.

8. Failure to Comply Procedure

8.1 General

8.1.1 To ensure that the Scheme standards are maintained, and Scheme Members are operating in uniformity with these standards, Bereavement Services will operate a 'Failure to comply' procedure which applies to all Scheme Members.

8.2 Stage 1: Breach of the Scheme Standards

8.2.1 Following an investigation by Bereavement Services and a confirmation that a breach of the Scheme standards has occurred; a written warning will be issued by the Bereavement Services Manager. The written warning shall be maintained on the Scheme Member's record for a period of 12 months from the date of issue. If no further breach(es) occur during that period, the warning will be removed from the record.

8.3 Stage 2: Subsequent Breach of the Scheme Standards or failure to Rectify Stage 1 Breach

8.3.1 Throughout the 12 month period following a Stage 1 Breach (Section 8.1), another breach of the Scheme standards is committed, or the original Stage 1 breach is not rectified to the satisfaction of the Service Manager, this will result in the issue of a Final Written Warning. A Final Written Warning shall be maintained on the Stonemason's or Funeral Director's record for a period of 18 months, from the date of the 2nd breach. If no further breaches occur during that period the warning will then be removed from the record.

8.4 Gross Misconduct

8.4.1 Certain circumstances shall be considered Gross Misconduct and will not be subject to the above stages of the Failure to comply procedure. The Bereavement Services Manager will decide, at their discretion, whether or not an incident constitutes Gross Misconduct. Examples include unsafe working practices or undertaking actions which directly, indirectly, or has the potential to bring the reputation of the Council into disrepute. Please see section 8.4 for actions taken for Gross Misconduct

8.5 Exclusion from Registration Scheme

8.5.1 Members found guilty of Gross Misconduct or committing a further breach of the Scheme standards within the 18 month term, as described in Stage 2 (Section 8.2) will be removed from the Scheme. The Scheme Member will be precluded from applying for re-registration and from carrying out any work within the Council's Cemeteries for a period of 2 years from the date of expulsion. In instances of exclusion for Gross Misconduct the Service Manager, at their discretion, may consider advising other local authorities or industry registration schemes of the circumstances.

8.6 Re-registration following an Exclusion

8.6.1 A Scheme Member committing any breach of the Scheme Standards, or an act of Gross Misconduct, during the 18 month period following the re-registration, following expulsion, may be excluded from Registration for a further period at the discretion of the Service Manager.

8.6.2 Any persons wishing to re-register must disclose the previous exclusion on their application. Failure to disclose this information will result in immediate expulsion from membership and will not be permitted to re-apply for 2 years.

8.6.3 The Bereavement Services Manager reserves the right to refuse re-registration onto the scheme.

8.7 Disciplinary Procedure Appeal

8.7.1 A Stonemason or Funeral Director not satisfied with the decision made under this Failure to Comply Procedures is entitled to appeal. An appeal may only be made in writing and must be submitted within 14 days from the date of the decision letter that notified the Stonemason or Funeral Director. An appeal must clearly state the reasons for the appeal and only these reasons will be admissible at the appeal hearing. Appeals will be heard by the Chief Officer responsible for Cemeteries.

9. Payments

9.1 All Memorial Applications must be paid in full prior to the process of the application.

9.2 Payment may be made by:

- Cheque (payable to Rugby Borough Council)
- Cash (payable at Rainsbrook Crematorium)
- Debit/Credit card payment – either in person or over the telephone (01788 533715)

9.3 All payments are non-refundable.

9.4 All Funeral Directors may request a monthly invoice for any cremation or burial they book with Rainsbrook Crematorium and Rugby Borough Council. Each invoice issued MUST be paid by

the date given on each invoice. Failure to make payment by the date supplied will result in the facility to pay by invoice being withdrawn.

9.5 In the case where invoice facility has been withdrawn a payment MUST be made at the point of the funeral booking and any further charges incurred MUST be paid prior to the service.

9.6 It is the responsibility of the Funeral Director to ensure that you comply with the timescales of each service booked and failure to do so will result in additional charges as per the current fees and charges. The Bereavement Services Managers decision is final where charges apply for late arrival/overrun of service time.

10. Review of Scheme and Modifications

10.1 Scheme Members and the Council may jointly review the rules, requirements and performance of the Scheme on a periodic basis. The Scheme rules will be reviewed every 24 months. Scheme Members will be notified in writing of any modification to the scheme. The Council reserves the right to ask all Scheme Members to re-register following a major review of the Scheme.

11. Further Reading

- Rugby Borough Council website – www.rugby.gov.uk
- Rainsbrook Crematorium website – www.rainsbrookcrematorium.co.uk
- Managing the safety of Burial Ground Memorials – Ministry of Justice
- British Standard BS8415
 - Rugby Borough Council website – www.rugby.gov.uk

Appendix 1

Stonemason and Funeral Directors Registration Scheme

Form A – Scheme Registration Application

I declare that I have read and understood the Stonemason and Funeral Director Registration Scheme requirements and the Council's current Cemetery Regulations and declare that I will comply with the Council's Cemeteries Regulations and the above named Registration Scheme requirements.

Please complete all sections in full, forms with omissions will be returned.

Company Name:	
Address:	
Telephone:	Email:
Stonemason's - Public Liability and Employer's Liability (where applicable) Cover Please confirm that current details of your Public Liability insurance and Employer's Liability (where applicable have been provided to: (please tick) NAMM <input type="checkbox"/> BRAMM <input type="checkbox"/> NAMM Associate membership number and a copy of my current certificate is attached BRAMM Associate membership number and a copy of my current certificate is attached	
Funeral Director's – Public Liability and Employer's Liability Cover Please confirm that the company you represent holds the above cover. I confirm that are the holders of the above Liability cover.	
As an authorised person of the above stated company, I agree to adhere to all Rules, Bye-Laws, Cemetery Regulations, Health and Safety Requirements, Insurance Liabilities, Installation and Maintenance Specifications, Inspection procedures and all other requirements as laid down by this Scheme. I agree to inform Rainsbrook Cemetery and Crematorium of any changes to the above within 2 weeks. I have not been excluded from the Stonemason and Funeral Director Registration Scheme or I have previously been excluded from the Stonemason and Funeral Director Registration Scheme	
Signed:	
Print Name:Dated:	

**Rugby Borough Council
Bereavement Services
Rainsbrook Cemetery and Crematorium
Rugby, CV22 5QQ**

STATUTORY DECLARATION

Application to erect a new headstone or add a new inscription

I (*Full name*)

of (*Address*)

do solemnly and sincerely declare that I, purchased the Exclusive Right of Burial/became the owner of the Exclusive Right of Burial when it was transferred to me on, described in the Plan as Section No Grant in the Cemetery,

AND THAT

I, am unable to produce the grave deeds to prove the ownership of the grave because

.....
.....
.....
.....

To the best of my knowledge and belief had never assigned the benefits of the grave rights to any other person or specified any reservation of the grave for any particular person.

I hereby declare that I will indemnify Rugby Borough Council against all actions, proceedings, demands, costs and expenses of any nature whatsoever should it be subsequently proved my claim as aforesaid is unfounded and that I have no title to exercise the rights in this grave.

I make this solemn declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true, and by virtue of "The Statutory Declaration Act, 1835"

Signed

.....

Declared at

.....

in the

.....

this day of 20

Before me (*name*).....

Signature

Please apply business stamp as authentication.

NB – This Declaration to be made before a Magistrate or a Commissioner for Oaths



AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Report Title: Parking improvements – new ticket machines, RingGo extension and trials

Name of Committee: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 1 July 2024

Report Director: Chief Officer – Regulation and Safety

Portfolio: Regulation and Safety

Ward Relevance: All

Prior Consultation: None

Contact Officer: Zulfeqar Rahman, Licensing and Parking Manger
zulfeqar.rahman@rugby.gov.uk

Public or Private: Public

Report Subject to Call-In: Yes

Report En-Bloc: No

Forward Plan: Yes

Corporate Priorities: This report relates to the following priority(ies):
 X Rugby is an environmentally sustainable place, where we work together to reduce and mitigate the effects of climate change. (C)
 (E) Economy
 (HC) Health and Communities
 (O) Organisation
Rugby has a diverse and resilient economy that benefits and enables opportunities for all residents.
(E)
 X Residents live healthy, independent lives, with the most vulnerable protected. (HC)
 X Rugby Borough Council is a responsible, effective and efficient organisation. (O)
[Corporate Strategy 2021-2024](#)

Summary: The Council is continuously reviewing the effectiveness of its town centre parking to meet strategic and customer needs. The current 27 ticket machines only take coins and have reliability issues so need to be replaced, and it is proposed a phased approach is used. The RingGo app has been very successful, but the trial is due to end in July 2024. This report proposes to extend that trial. In addition, more flexibility is required to meet customer needs

and trial innovation and the report also proposes to allow trials.

Financial Implications:

The financial implications of the purchase of new ticket machines are detailed in the report. In summary the recommended capital scheme will require an £88,000 investment and on an ongoing basis the revenue costs of the service will increase by £7,000.

Extending the app contract is free of charge from RingGo for the Council. However, for users a charge of 20p is made by RingGo. It is proposed this charge is removed and funded within existing budgets. RingGo payments now are approximately 44% of transactions and offer alternative payments if ticket machines are not working, and so failure to extend the trial might result in reduced income. Trials might also result in some financial risk, but this will be monitored and limited.

Risk Management/Health and Safety Implications:

Risk management / health and safety implications have been considered within the report and will be considered during any trial.

Environmental Implications:

An Environmental Impact Assessment has been carried out and can be seen at Appendix 2.

Legal Implications:

Rugby Borough Council is permitted to provide parking because of section 32 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 for the relieving or prevention of congestion due to traffic. The extension of the app falls within the terms of the current contract. Extension of the delegated powers if agreed can be incorporated into the Council's Constitution when reviewed.

Equality and Diversity:

An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out at Appendix 3. The majority of car parks have at least 2 ticket machines to allow payment even if a machine has a temporary fault. For those who choose not to use the cashless facility, cash can be used via Pay & Display machines, or by phone or at local shops by RingGo.

Options:

1. To recommend to Council to approve the purchase of new ticket machines, extension of cashless parking at pay and display car parks across the Borough using RingGo for a further 12 months to meet increasing customer demand and permit trials to

improve flexibility and ability to react to new innovations and customer requests.

2. Members could decide to not authorise the purchase of new machines, extension or the delegated authority for trials, which could significantly impact on the suitability of the service to the public and might result in financial loss, and the inability to react to changing customer needs.

Recommendation:

1. A one-off supplementary revenue budget of £7,000 be approved for 2024/25 for management software and data costs to be funded from the budget stability reserve;
2. On a permanent basis the budget will be considered during the budget setting process;
3. The extension of cashless parking at pay and display car parks for a further 12 months, using RingGo as an additional method to paying by cash, with the Council paying the additional 20p charge, be approved;
4. Delegated authority be given to the Chief Officer for Legal & Governance to enter into any necessary legal agreements;
5. Delegated authority be given to the Chief Officer for Regulation and Safety to approve trials in the car parks e.g. extending the opening hours of the John Barford Car Park; and

IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL THAT -

6. The purchase of the ticket machines be added to the general fund capital programme and a supplementary capital budget of £88,000 to be funded from borrowing be approved.

Reasons for Recommendation:

The current coin only ticket machines are becoming unreliable and to improve payment options, replacement of 15 with card only payment is proposed. Extension of the RingGo contract allows for the continuation of a service that enables residents and visitors to pay for parking without being dependent on Pay & Display machines or on having correct change and is showing increased

demand. Trials allow the council to try new ideas quickly as strategic needs and customer needs change.

Parking improvements – new ticket machines, RingGo extension and trials

Public Report of the Chief Officer – Regulation and Safety

Recommendation:

- (1) A one-off supplementary revenue budget of £7,000 be approved for 2024/25 for management software and data costs to be funded from the budget stability reserve;
- (2) On a permanent basis the budget will be considered during the budget setting process;
- (3) The extension of cashless parking at pay and display car parks for a further 12 months, using RingGo as an additional method to paying by cash, with the Council paying the additional 20p charge, be approved;
- (4) Delegated authority be given to the Chief Officer for Legal & Governance to enter into any necessary legal agreements;
- (5) Delegated authority be given to the Chief Officer for Regulation and Safety to approve trials in the car parks e.g. extending the opening hours of the John Barford Car Park; and

IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL THAT –

- (6) The purchase of the ticket machines be added to the general fund capital programme and a supplementary capital budget of £88,000 to be funded from borrowing be approved.

Executive Summary

This report seeks to (1) consider the replacement of the current coin only ticket machines with new ticket machines; (2) approve the extension of the cashless parking trial using the RingGo app at Council pay and display car parks for a further 12 months; and (3) give delegated authority for parking trials to allow flexible adaptations to strategic needs and customers needs.

The current 27 ticket machines are coin only. They are unreliable, difficult to maintain and the manufacturer has declared them obsolete. A way forward needs to be identified to resolve this.

The extension of the RingGo app is to allow further evidence gathering to determine if an app is suitable long-term for the Council, to allow cashless

payments for customer choice and to continue to provide a single app for the majority of parking in the town centre. An improvement to the trial of removing the additional 20p charge for customers will allow customers the same charge for parking irrespective of how paid.

Clear delegated authority for trials, with governance, will allow quick decisions on new initiatives and customer requests, e.g. changing the opening hours of the John Barford car park.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Town centre parking is a key service provided by the council supporting visitors, residents, town centre employees, town centre businesses and council employees.
- 1.2 In order to meet these objectives, it is important to regularly review how they are operated and used, short-term, mid-term and long-term.
- 1.3 The Town Centre Regeneration Working Group has been tasked with looking at the long-term and are currently involved in commissioning a Parking Strategy.
- 1.4 However, flexibility and planning are needed to meet current and developing demands.
- 1.5 Current operational priorities that officers are working on include:
 - Cashless payment options including apps and or card payments
 - Flexible trials e.g. later opening of the John Barford car park when Rugby Theatre has a production
 - Parking charges (these are regulated by Warwickshire County Council as the highway authority, but there is still significant opportunity to revise the charges)
 - Park Mark (a national recognition scheme for good car parks <https://parkmark.co.uk/>)
 - Pay and display (as used at the moment) and pay on foot (where a barrier is used and you pay on exit) – pay on foot can make longer stays easier, but requires additional equipment and a person to be available to deal with any barrier failures within minutes, so are common in shopping centres with security.
 - Parking charges for other car parks, e.g. parks.
 - Staff parking
- 1.6 The Parking Strategy will provide the long-term direction of town centre car parking, and will influence many of these priorities.
- 1.7 Further reports will be sent to Cabinet as workstreams are completed. Officers are aware of the sensitivity of parking issues and so will consult with customers, town centre businesses and relevant Councillors before reports are presented.

- 1.8 The purpose of this report to seek approval of 3 of these priorities which require immediate action – replacing the ticket machines, extension of the RingGo app trial and authority for flexible trials.

2. Replacement of the ticket machines

- 2.1 The Council operates 10 town centre car parks. The majority have either 2 ticket machines or a single machine with another machine close to it. This allowed resilience if the machines failed. In total the council has 27 operational ticket machines, but also 2 in place which do not work.
- 2.2 All the machines were provided by a manufacturer which no longer exists, and the newest machines are now 8 years old. All the machines are now obsolete, and so parts and maintenance will become increasingly difficult.
- 2.3 Coin machines are less popular now because they need complex mechanisms for identifying coins, storing them in different cash boxes, need work if coins change, and also need regular cash collection, which requires strict safety and audit controls. The machines operate in harsh conditions and so the more complex they are, e.g. coin, note and card payments, the less reliable they are. Coins are less popular post-COVID and they also limit altering parking tariffs, e.g. many of the tariffs are currently multiples of £1, with £1 being common, so if increased by 15% 3 coins would be needed rather than 1, making it less convenient.
- 2.4 A new Parking Strategy is planned and the Town Centre Regeneration Strategy means that the future of some car parks is unclear.
- 2.5 Most local authorities are now moving to card only machines. The main reasons being increased reliability, lower cost ticket machines, lower cost maintenance, and better convenience for customers. It is thought that all drivers need a credit or debit card to operate their vehicles, and if they do not, prepaid cards are available easily which allow cash top-ups, e.g. the Post Office Travel Money Card.
- 2.6 Initial informal surveys with a limited number of customers, interested parties and Councillors has shown support for card only machines, but some have mentioned they still want coin machines. Ideally, before full introduction of card only ticket machines, officers would recommend any decision to be supported by more detailed surveys with customers, and interested parties, e.g. town centre businesses, and charities and not for profit organisations such as Citizens Advice, Age UK, and Clockwise Credit Union.
- 2.7 Appendix 1 is a summary of the main options Cabinet could consider in determining the recommendation to Council.
- 2.8 In order to support Councillors, officers are of the view that option 2 replacing 50% of the machines with card only payment is the best compromise. It will provide ticket machines that can be used easily, at lowest cost, highest reliability, and will allow 50% of the machines to continue to use coins. It will also limit expenditure until the new Parking Strategy determines future need for ticket machines. However, the coin machines will increasingly become more unreliable and so a further report will be sent to Cabinet to consider

replacement of the remaining machines with card only machines, if identified as required by the adopted Parking Strategy, and officers will also conduct more detailed research with customers and interested parties on their views to inform the decision.

- 2.9 Should Option 2 be approved, there would be capital costs of £88,000 for the new ticket machines. This would be included in the GF capital programme and funded from borrowing. MRP and borrowing costs of an average £13,000 per annum are shown in Table 1.
- 2.10 Option 6 Replacement of 50% or 100% of ticket machines with coin, bank note and card payment, and option 7 Replacement of 50% or 100% with coin only machines, are not considered to be realistic options and so have not been included in Table 1.
- 2.11 Any contract involving card payments will also require a credit card payment provider and alteration of the current cash collection contract. Typical fees are estimated at 5%.
- 2.12 Replacement of the ticket machines is unlikely to provide further income, but is required to meet continuing customer demand for parking.
- 2.13 It is proposed that maintenance will be within the current budget, but if it appears that a service contract will be better value for money, a further report requesting a revenue budget will be requested, if required.
- 2.14 It is expected that with new machines they will require management software and SIM card contracts for mobile data. Estimated cost £7,000.
- 2.15 Officers have contacted a number of suppliers to determine the types of machine available and to obtain estimated costs. Estimated costs are indicated in Table 1.

Table 1: Scheme Cost Summary

Capital Costs

	Option 1 (current position)	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
	29-coin machines+ RingGo	(15 card machines + 14 existing coin machines + RingGo)	(29 card machines + RingGo)	(15 card and coin + 14 existing coin machines + RingGo)	(29 card and coin + RingGo)
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Machine costs	-	60	116	75	145
Installation costs	-	20	39	20	39
10% contingency	-	8	16	10	19
Total	-	88	171	105	203
Average MRP and potential borrowing costs (for information only)	-	13	26	16	31

Revenue Costs

	Option 1 (current position)	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
	29-coin machines+ RingGo	(15 card machines + 14 existing coin machines + RingGo)	(29 card machines + RingGo)	(15 card and coin + 14 existing coin machines + RingGo)	(29 card and coin + RingGo)
Transaction Expenditure	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Cash collection (Note 1)	15	11	-	12	11
RingGo fees (Note 2)	25	12	17	12	12
Card fee at 5% (Note 3)	-	7	12	6	7
Management software	-	5	5	5	5
Mobile data costs	-	2	4	2	4
Total Transaction Expenditure	40	37	38	37	39
Pay and Display Income					
Coin	(201)	(142)	-	(160)	(142)
RingGo	(155)	(72)	(107)	(72)	(72)
Card	-	(142)	(249)	(124)	(142)
Total Income (Note 4)	(356)	(356)	(356)	(356)	(356)
Net cash flow	(316)	(319)	(318)	(319)	(317)

¹ Based on £15,000 paid in 2023/24 for cash collection for 29 ticket machines; this is anticipated to reduce in Options 2 to 5 if cash usage reduces.

² Subject to the recommendation in this report being approved, Rugby Borough Council will be charged 20p per transaction by RingGo (rather than the customer, as in the existing contract) (for 2023/24 there were 127,000 transactions)

³ 5% fees for card transactions based on the anticipated level of income from card usage in Options 2 to

⁴ Income is based on (£356,000) Pay and Display income received in 2023/24. It is not anticipated that the demand will change based on the introduction of new machines and payment methods.

3. Extension of the RingGo trial

- 3.1 Council approved in 2022 a 2-year trial of the RingGo app. Apps have become very popular with motorists and post-COVID government advice was for councils to introduce cashless payment options.
- 3.2 RingGo was chosen because it was already being successfully used by Warwickshire County Council and so allowed customers to easily pay for the majority of parking using a single app in the town centre. In total there are around 2060 spaces in the town centre with Rugby Borough Council operating 10 car parks with a total of 1008 and Warwickshire County Council about 234, therefore, RingGo can be used in approximately 60% of spaces. The app is also now used locally by North Warwickshire, Warwick, Nuneaton and Bedworth, and Stratford upon Avon councils. Customers locally have a raised expectations of a digital solution through an app, and for that app to be RingGo, and can be confident that if they park in our car park or on street, they will not

have to worry about different payment options, improving confidence and reducing driving around looking for spaces.

- 3.3 The 2-year contract started in July 2022, but also included an option for extension for a further 2 years, if required.
- 3.4 The current contract ends 25th July 2024 and the proposal is that it is extended a further year to (1) continue to provide a popular cashless option and (2) be considered strategically as part of the Car Park Strategy.
- 3.5 There has been some criticism of the app, notably regarding digital exclusion and the 20p (30p if also opt for the optional reminder text), but the app has increased choice, cash is still the main payment method and as a trial it was intended that if an app was approved for long-term use the charge would be included in a single tariff structure, so the same cost however paid.
- 3.6 Previously customers could only pay by coin. Now, RingGo allows many more options. The current payment options are:
 - Pay by coins (official Council payment system) – each car park has usually 2 available machines, so even if one is not available, a second or third is usually available.
 - Pay by app – as a convenient option using RingGo.
 - Pay by any phone using a credit or debit card – provided by RingGo.
 - Pay by debit or credit card, or cash (coin or notes) at a PayPoint location - provided by RingGo, currently 5 shops in the town centre and encourages visiting more shops when visiting the town centre.
- 3.7 RingGo is also proving to be very popular with our customers:
 - In 2022-2023 RingGo income was £49,270, which was 17% of the total pay and display income.
 - In 2023-2024 RingGo income was £154,760, which was 44% of the total pay and display income.
 - In 2023-2024 sessions were extended 3,910 times. The app allows convenient extension of stays, which is more time for the customer in the town centre. Previously customers would have to return to the car park, and might have decided not to stay longer.
 - The most popular car parks for using the app are Railway Terrace, North Street and the John Barford.
- 3.8 Overall, the RingGo app is having a positive impact on customer choice, ease of visiting the town centre, encouraging visiting other retailers, and ease of staying for longer periods. The Council is already the main supplier of parking in the town centre. The app is having a positive impact on the town centre and the economy.
- 3.9 An extension of 1 year is proposed, and it is anticipated that it will have greater success.

- 3.10 However, due to the criticism and confusion caused by the 20p charge paid directly by customers for each transaction, and because this also applies to the other RingGo linked services, e.g. pay by phone, pay by card and cash at Pay Points, it is proposed that the 20p charge be incorporated into the existing charge structure. That will mean that customers will pay the same charge for their parking, however they pay.
- 3.11 In 2023 there were 124,371 RingGo transactions. While 44% of customers using RingGo suggests they are prepared to pay the 20p for convenience, it is possible that removing the separate 20p charge will encourage more use, at least in the short term until card payment options are also available. Based on the number of transactions in 2023/24, the expected reduction in income would be approximately £25,000.
- 3.12 Council approved a revised budget for the income from Pay and Display for 2024/25 of (£336,000). Improved Pay and Display income in 2023/24 of (£356,000) was an achievement of (£20,000) more than income than predicted. It is reasonable to expect this to occur this year. Therefore, it is anticipated that the 20p charge to Rugby Borough Council instead of to the customer can largely be mitigated by this overachievement. It is therefore anticipated that existing income budgets are still achievable, however, this budget will be monitored and any significant risk of not being achieved within budget will be reported to Council.
- 3.13 To ensure our customers get the best service and opportunity to use a choice of payments methods, if the trial is approved, officers will produce a strategic communications package including improvement of signs at the ticket machines showing all the ways to pay, how and where, a map showing PayPoint locations, and clear information about additional charges not covered (e.g. the optional 10p text advising when the ticket is about to expire), removal of any RingGo items that might confuse customers (e.g. ticket machine covers), press releases, use of social media, staff completing targeted campaigns in the car parks to advise customers, and poster campaigns in the town centre.

4. Trials to support parking objectives and the town centre

- 4.1 The Chief Officer Regulation and Safety has delegated authority under the Council's Constitution to manage operational issues regarding car parking.
- 4.2 However, it is less clear when it involves issues such as opening time of the John Barford car park, which are set by Council due to the cost implications long-term.
- 4.3 Requests have been made e.g. for extended opening of the John Barford car park for Rugby Theatre when they have productions, but also for trials of reduced cost parking or free parking (e.g. one low use car park free at weekends; reduced cost parking for Benn Hall events).
- 4.4 It is important that these requests, and also initiatives identified by the Licensing and Parking Team, can occur quickly and flexibly, before any long-term decision is made by Council.

- 4.5 It is, therefore, proposed, that the Chief Officer Regulation and Safety is given delegated authority, working with other key partners e.g. Legal and Finance, to carry out trials to meet corporate objectives and support the town centre.
- 4.6 The trials will be recorded and delegated decisions produced giving details of costs and benefits to provide governance.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 The town centre Council owned car parks are a key asset in supporting the town centre. It is important that the car parks meet customer needs and town centre improvement objectives and that officers have flexibility to ensure that new initiatives can be trialled to better support the town centre and the services provided by the Council.
- 5.2 The purchase of new ticket machines, the extension of the RingGo app trial during the production of the Car Parking Strategy, and delegated authority for trials will significantly improve the Council's ability to ensure car parking remains fit for purpose.

Name of Meeting: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 1 July 2024

Subject Matter: Parking improvements – new ticket machines, RingGo extension and trials

Originating Department: Regulation and Safety

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

Potential options for replacement of Town Centre car park ticket machines

Option	Opportunities	Risks
1. No replacement of existing machines	As machines become unusable, customers will need to use alternative payment systems such as RingGo.	Machines obsolete and becoming more unreliable. Customers have expressed they want a choice, with 60% still using coins. Decreased income as machines fail and customers do not pay. Customers will eventually have to use the app only or payment options provided by the app supplier (e.g. RingGo offers telephone by card, cash or card at PayPoint) which has a risk of digital exclusion and currently includes an extra 20p charge due to it being a trial.
2. Replacement of 50% of ticket machines with card only payment machines	Improved reliability. Customer choice as half of machines will still take coins, with most car parks having 2 machines, one with coins and one with card. Minimises financial risk if Parking Strategy identifies alternative uses or different parking models. Card only machines likely to be more reliable, lower maintenance and reduced cash collection risks. Removed machines can be used for spare parts.	Reputation as coin only machines become more unreliable. At some point all the coin machines will need removing or replacing. Cash collection and risks with that remain. For the card payment machines typical handling charges are 5% (but that is similar to cash collection).
3. Replacement of 50% of ticket machines with coin and card payment ticket machines	Customer choice as all machines will still take coins, with most car parks having 2	Cash collection and risks with that remain.

	<p>machines, one with coins and one with coins and card.</p> <p>Minimises financial risk if Parking Strategy identifies alternative uses or different parking models.</p> <p>Removed machines can be used for spare parts.</p>	<p>For the card payment machines typical handling charges are 5% (but that is similar to cash collection).</p> <p>Likely to be less reliable than card only machines, causing reputation damage.</p>
4. Replacement of 100% of ticket machines with card only payment machines	<p>Lower purchase cost per machine.</p> <p>Reduced maintenance per machine.</p> <p>Higher reliability.</p> <p>All customers have access to cards or can access them easily.</p> <p>Consistent with many other local authorities, e.g. Warwick, who have used this model successfully for many years.</p> <p>No cash collection costs or health and safety risks.</p>	<p>60% of customers still using coins.</p> <p>Reduced customer choice.</p> <p>High total purchase cost if Parking Strategy identifies not needed.</p>
5. Replacement of 100% of ticket machines with coin and card payment ticket machines	<p>Intermediate costs per machine.</p> <p>Improved customer choice, and coin only similar to what is established local practice.</p>	<p>Potential for reduced reliability, reputational damage and lost income.</p> <p>High total purchase cost if Parking Strategy identifies not needed.</p>
6. Replacement of 50% or 100% of ticket machines with coin, bank note and card payment	<p>Highest cost per machine.</p> <p>Greatest choice for customers.</p>	<p>Significant risk of maintenance issues and failures due to the environment the machines operate in.</p> <p>Highest cost maintenance contract likely to be needed to ensure rapid repairs.</p> <p>This type of machine tends to be used in protected environments.</p> <p>Because of these this is not considered a realistic option.</p>

<p>7. Replacement of 50% or 100% with coin only machines</p>	<p>Established means of payment locally and still popular with customers.</p>	<p>Potential for continued complaints about reliability. Limited choice for customers. Limits the ability to increase current charges which have not changed since 2009. Similar cost to a ticket machine with coin and card payments. Because of these this is not considered a realistic option.</p>
--------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Rugby Borough Council

Climate Change and Environmental Impact Assessment

CONTEXT

In 2019 the UK Parliament set a commitment in law to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050. Achieving this target will require considerable effort with public bodies, private sector organisations, the third sector and individuals working together to take action. Rugby Borough Council declared a climate emergency in 2019, in doing so committed to:

- To move the Council's operations towards Carbon Neutrality by 2030.
- To establish action to tackle climate change as a key driver of all decision-making.
- To provide community leadership in reducing the impact of Climate Change.
- To take action to mitigate the impact of climate change on a Borough wide basis and beyond, through adaptation.

The Council's Corporate Strategy (2021-2024) [link](#) sets ambitious outcomes in relation to Climate Change. These ambitions must now be progressed through the decisions which the Council makes.

It is therefore important that Rugby Borough Council gives due regard to climate change when making decisions. In the context of the Council's business, Climate Change includes carbon emissions, biodiversity, habitat loss and environmental destruction. When putting forward recommendations for decision, officers must assess how these recommendations are likely to influence our climate change commitments by completing the following Climate Change and Environmental Impact Assessment.

A copy of this Climate Change and Environmental Impact Assessment, including relevant data and information should be forwarded to the Deputy Chief Executive.

If you require help, advice and support to complete the form, please contact Dan Green, Deputy Chief Executive.

SECTION 1: OVERVIEW

Portfolio and Service Area	Regulation and Safety – Licensing and Parking
Policy/Service/Change being assessed	New ticket machines, cashless payment via RingGo app extension for 12 months and delegated authority for trials.
Is this a new or existing Policy/Service/Change?	Extension of existing service.
If existing policy/service please state date of last assessment	2022
Ward Specific Impacts	Town Centre wards, but also surrounding wards vehicles travel to and from.
Summary of assessment Briefly summarise the policy/service/change and potential impacts	The new ticket machines are needed as current machines obsolete, but will provide new cashless option which will be easier than using an app. The app extension will continue to result in reduced idling and unnecessary driving, reducing congestion and air pollution. However, it is recognised that traffic is likely to remain at current levels or increase, without additional work on sustainable transport options.
Completed By	Emma Payne
Authorised By	Zulfeqar Rahman
Date of Assessment	9 th April 2024

SECTION 2: IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Climate Change and Environmental Impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner	Timescales
Energy usage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	New ticket machines will be mainly powered by solar, with mains backup. App for existing mobile phones. Energy use could increase for vehicle use, but as electric vehicles become more popular, carbon fuel use is likely to reduce and sustainable fuel use increase resulting in no overall impact on energy use, but a reduction in carbon and increase in sustainable energy use.			
Fleet usage	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Sustainable Transport/Travel (customers and staff)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	While the app will help find parking spaces easier and trails can be used to manage demand, parking has an impact and demand might increase. This has to be balanced with economic need for the town centre. Work is also carried out the			

Climate Change and Environmental Impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner	Timescales
				Warwickshire County Council on more sustainable transport and more sustainable fuel vehicles are likely to be parking as electric vehicle use increases.			
Sustainable procurement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Community leadership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Biodiversity and habitats	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Adaptation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Impact on other providers/partners	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				

SECTION 3: REVIEW

Where a negative impact is identified, the proposal and/or implementation can be adapted or changed; meaning there is a need for regular review. This review may also be needed to reflect additional data and evidence for a fuller assessment (proportionate to the decision in question). Please state the agreed review timescale for the identified impacts of the policy implementation or service change.

Review date	June 2025
Key points to be considered through review	Impact of app and trials on reducing climate change.
Person responsible for review	Zulfeqar Rahman, Licensing and Parking Manager
Authorised by	David Burrows, Chief Officer Regulation and Safety

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:
Aftab Razzaq
Chief Officer for Legal and Governance
aftab.razzaq@rugby.gov.uk
01788 533521

Equality Impact Assessment

Service Area	Regulation and Safety – Licensing and Safety Team
Policy/Service being assessed	New ticket machines, cashless payment via RingGo app extension for 12 months and delegated authority for trials.
Is this a new or existing policy/service?	Existing.
If existing policy/service please state date of last assessment	2020.
EqIA Review Team – List of members	Emma Payne, Licensing Officer; Zulfeqar Rahman, Licensing and Parking Manager
Date of this assessment	9th April 2024
Signature of responsible officer (to be signed after the EqIA has been completed)	Z Rahman Zulfeqar Rahman, Licensing and Parking Manager

A copy of this Equality Impact Assessment report, including relevant data and information to be forwarded to the Chief Officer for Legal and Governance.

Details of Strategy/ Service/ Policy to be analysed

<u>Stage 1 – Scoping and Defining</u>	
(1) Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the Strategy/Service/Policy (or decision)?	Will continue to have a positive impact on equalities, all motorists who need to pay to use car parks will have more choice in method of payment; and trials will allow quick response to any issues including customers needs and specialist customer needs.
(2) How does it fit with Rugby Borough Council's Corporate priorities and your service area priorities?	Residents live healthy, independent lives, with the most vulnerable protected. Rugby has a diverse and resilient economy that benefits and enables opportunities for all residents.
(3) What are the expected outcomes you are hoping to achieve?	The option for customers to use an app and other payment options, giving more convenience and choice to customers; trials will allow quicker responses to demand and initiatives including issues relating to equality and diversity.
(4) Does or will the policy or decision affect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customers • Employees • Wider community or groups 	All listed
<u>Stage 2 - Information Gathering</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).
(1) What does the information tell you about those groups identified?	Survey was carried out prior to the grant of the first trial in 2022 which showed 51% of responders wanted a cashless option available. In 2023/2024, 56% of users paid for parking sessions via Pay & Display machines, 44% paid for parking sessions via RingGo. Customers have asked for trials such as opening car parks longer, which could have disabled parking closer to the venue, so a trial could for example make disabled parking more accessible to specific venues such as Rugby Theatre.

<p>(2) Have you consulted or involved those groups that are likely to be affected by the strategy/ service/policy you want to implement? If yes, what were their views and how have their views influenced your decision?</p>	<p>Public survey was undertaken prior to the 24-month initial trial, figures now show RingGo is being well-utilised by motorists therefore we wish to continue being able to provide this service. Requests for trials are becoming common.</p>		
<p>(3) If you have not consulted or engaged with communities that are likely to be affected by the policy or decision, give details about when you intend to carry out consultation or provide reasons for why you feel this is not necessary.</p>	<p>N/A.</p>		
<p><u>Stage 3 – Analysis of impact</u></p>			
<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>	<p>RACE</p>	<p>DISABILITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide recognition for users with visual impairments. • provide SMS and App options for users with hearing impairments. • improve access to parking for parents/carers needing to supervise others whilst paying for their parking • Blue badge holders continue to receive free parking 	<p>GENDER</p>

	MARRIAGE/CIVIL PARTNERSHIP	AGE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> While not exclusively an age issue, access to SMART phones (digital exclusion) does limit use of the app, but new card payment ticket machines and other RingGo options are available increasing choice, and coin machines continue to be available, so overall the risk is low. 	GENDER REASSIGNMENT
	RELIGION/BELIEF	PREGNANCY MATERNITY	SEXUAL ORIENTATION
<p>(2) <u>Cross cutting themes</u></p> <p>(a) Are your proposals likely to impact on social inequalities e.g. child poverty, geographically disadvantaged communities? If yes, please explain how?</p> <p>(b) Are your proposals likely to impact on a carer who looks after older people or people with disabilities? If yes, please explain how?</p>	<p>No</p> <p>Yes, will give users an extra option of how payment is made.</p>		
<p>(3) If there is an adverse impact, can this be justified?</p>	<p>N/A</p>		

(4) What actions are going to be taken to reduce or eliminate negative or adverse impact? (This should form part of your action plan under Stage 4.)	Cash payment will remain an option, and new card payment ticket machines and RingGo are additional services.
(5) How does the strategy/service/policy contribute to the promotion of equality? If not, what can be done?	The new ticket machines and the RingGo service will continue to promote equality by offering all residents and visitors to the borough an extra choice of payment method, motorists will no longer need to ensure they have the correct change for the parking machine. And those with disabilities will be offered additional support via RingGo as detailed above. There are also further benefits for motorists including the convenience of not having to walk to or queue at a pay & display machine.
(6) How does the strategy/service/policy promote good relations between groups? If not, what can be done?	All motorists who must pay for parking will continue to have additional methods of payment available to them.
(7) Are there any obvious barriers to accessing the service? If yes how can they be overcome?	None, the continuation of this service will eliminate the previous 'cash-only' barrier and will support those with disabilities such as visual/hearing impairments.

Stage 4 – Action Planning, Review and Monitoring

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<p>If No Further Action is required then go to – Review and Monitoring</p> <p>(1) 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" data-bbox="875 347 2107 579"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="875 347 1120 427">Action</th> <th data-bbox="1120 347 1364 427">Lead Officer</th> <th data-bbox="1364 347 1615 427">Date for completion</th> <th data-bbox="1615 347 1865 427">Resource requirements</th> <th data-bbox="1865 347 2107 427">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																				
Action	Lead Officer	Date for completion	Resource requirements	Comments																										
<p>(2) Review and Monitoring State how and when you will monitor policy and Action Plan</p>	<p>Extension is for 12 months, service will be monitored throughout.</p>																													

Please annotate your policy with the following statement:

An Equality Impact Assessment on this policy was undertaken on 9th May 2024 and will be reviewed at the end of the 12 month contract extension.

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Report Title: Councillors' Allowances 2023/24

Name of Committee: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 1 July 2024

Report Director: Chief Officer - Finance and Performance

Portfolio: Finance and Performance

Ward Relevance: N/A

Prior Consultation: N/A

Contact Officer: Lisa Marshall, Lead Accountant,
lisa.marshall@rugby.gov.uk

Public or Private: Public

Report Subject to Call-In: Yes

Report En-Bloc: Yes

Forward Plan: Yes

Corporate Priorities: This report relates to the following priority(ies):
 Rugby is an environmentally sustainable place, where we work together to reduce and mitigate the effects of climate change. (C)
 Rugby has a diverse and resilient economy that benefits and enables opportunities for all residents. (E)
 Residents live healthy, independent lives, with the most vulnerable protected. (HC)
 Rugby Borough Council is a responsible, effective and efficient organisation. (O)
[Corporate Strategy 2021-2024](#)
 This report does not specifically relate to any Council priorities but

(C) Climate
(E) Economy
(HC) Health and Communities
(O) Organisation

Summary: The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 require each local authority to publish details of allowances paid to each councillor for the previous financial year. The report details allowances claimed for 2023/24 financial year.

Financial Implications:	<p>The maximum amounts able to be claimed by councillors for basic allowance, special responsibility allowance and travel and subsistence are stipulated in the Members' Allowance Scheme.</p> <p>There are no financial implications as a result of this report.</p>
Risk Management Implications:	All claims made by councillors are rigorously checked for accuracy and compliance with the Council's Members' Allowance Scheme.
Environmental Implications:	N/A
Legal Implications:	The Members' Allowance Scheme is required to comply with the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003.
Equality and Diversity:	N/A
Options:	N/A
Recommendation:	The allowances and expenses claimed by councillors for 2023/24, as detailed at Appendix 1 to the report, be noted.
Reasons for Recommendation:	To satisfy the legislative requirement to publish the list of allowances claimed by councillors.

Cabinet - 1 July 2024

Councillors Allowances 2023/24

Public Report of the Chief Officer - Finance and Performance

Recommendation

The allowances and expenses claimed by Councillors for 2023/24, as detailed at Appendix 1 to the report, be noted.

1. Executive Summary

The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 require each local authority to publish details of allowances and expenses paid to each councillor for the previous financial year.

The required information for 2023/24 financial year is shown in Appendix 1. A list of details of all Special Responsibility Allowances for this financial year is attached in Appendix 2.

2. Allowances and Expenses Paid

The amounts paid to councillors include basic allowance and special responsibility allowance (if applicable).

Councillors can also claim travel and subsistence allowances for meetings and conferences as determined by the Council. However, these amounts may vary as:

- i) Some councillors prefer not to claim these allowances
- ii) They are often dependent on the frequency of journeys a councillor undertakes; and
- iii) They are dependent on how far councillors have to travel from their homes to the Town Hall

3. Conclusion

Councillors Allowances and Expenses for 2023/24 can be seen for each councillor, in Appendix 1.

Name of Meeting: Cabinet
Date of Meeting: 1 July 2024
Subject Matter: Councillors Allowances 2023/24
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

Councillors Allowances 2023/24

Appendix 1

Councillor Surname	Councillor Forename	Ward	Start Date (where became a Councillor mid-year)	Leaving Date (where ceased being a Councillor mid-year)	Basic Allowance £	Special Responsibility Allowance £	Conference Fees £	Mobile Phones £	Subsistence £	Travel £	Total £
A'Barrow	Julie	Bilton			7,708.20	4,498.20					12,206.40
Allanach	Glenda	Rokeby & Overslade		09/05/2023	797.88						797.88
Barnett	Robert	Benn			6,900.08						6,900.08
Bennett	Jonathan	Dunsmore	18/12/2023		2,217.14						2,217.14
Brown	Barbara	New Bilton			7,708.20						7,708.20
Crane	Emma	Leam Valley		09/05/2023	797.88	664.92					1,462.80
Daly	Adam	Hillmorton			7,708.20	5,594.75					13,302.95
Douglas	Timothy	Paddox			7,708.20						7,708.20
Dumbleton	Carie-Anne	Rokeby & Overslade			7,708.20						7,708.20
Eccleson	Peter	Dunsmore		09/05/2023	797.88	398.94					1,196.82
Edwards	Samuel	Eastlands			7,708.20						7,708.20
Ellis	James	Newbold & Brownsover		09/05/2023	797.88						797.88
Garcia Maures	Belinda	Revel & Binley Woods			7,708.20						7,708.20
Gillias	Anthony	Revel & Binley Woods			7,708.20	4,498.20					12,206.40
Harrington	Richard	Benn			7,708.20						7,708.20
Hassell	Evelyn	Clifton, Newton & Churchover			7,708.20						7,708.20
Karadiar	Senthil	Coton & Boughton			6,900.08						6,900.08
Keeling	Dale	Leam Valley			6,900.08						6,900.08
Keeling	John	Dunsmore			6,900.08						6,900.08
Lawrence	Kathryn	Hillmorton		09/05/2023	797.88	664.92					1,462.80
Lawrence	Toby	Bilton			7,708.20						7,708.20
Lewis	William	Rokeby & Overslade			7,708.20						7,708.20
Livesey	Alison	Coton & Boughton			7,708.20						7,708.20
Lowe	Sebastian	Coton & Boughton		09/05/2023	797.88	1,511.11		62.90			2,371.89
Mahoney	Thomas	Benn		09/05/2023	797.88						797.88
Maoudis	Rebecca	Wolvey & Shilton			7,708.20						7,708.20
Mckenzie	Isabelle	Rokeby & Overslade			6,900.08						6,900.08
Mistry	Ish	New Bilton			7,708.20	3,356.85					11,065.05
Moran	Michael	Admirals & Cawston			7,708.20	2,798.63					10,506.83
New	Noreen	Paddox			7,708.20						7,708.20
O'Rourke	Margaret	Benn			7,708.20	2,261.31					9,969.51
Parker	Lisa	Bilton			7,708.20						7,708.20
Picker	Ian	Hillmorton			7,502.04	6,423.60	1,190.90		28.00	250.80	15,395.34
Poole	Derek	Wolston & The Lawfords			7,708.20	13,543.76	1,190.90	125.81	10.00	359.70	22,938.37
Rabin	Wayne	Newbold & Brownsover			7,708.20						7,708.20
Robbins	Carolyn	Coton & Boughton			7,708.20	6,423.60				63.92	14,195.72
Roberts	Deepah	Dunsmore		05/11/2023	4,603.51						4,603.51

Roberts	Howard	Dunsmore		05/11/2023	4,603.51	828.85					5,432.36
Robinson	Louise	Admirals & Cawston	09/05/2023		6,900.08						6,900.08
Roodhouse	Susan	Eastlands			7,708.20						7,708.20
Roodhouse	Jerry	Paddox			7,708.20	1,152.48			63.92		8,924.60
Russell	Luke	Hillmorton	09/05/2023		6,900.08						6,900.08
Sandison	Neil	Eastlands			7,708.20				63.92		7,772.12
Sayani	Noorjahan	Newbold & Brownsover	09/05/2023		6,900.08						6,900.08
Simpson-Vince	Jill	Dunsmore	18/12/2023		2,217.14						2,217.14
Slinger	John	New Bilton			7,708.20		1,137.90		306.22		9,152.32
Srivastava	Ramesh	Newbold & Brownsover			7,708.20						7,708.20
Timms	Heather	Revel & Binley Woods			7,708.20	82.95					7,791.15
Ward	Simon	Wolston & The Lawfords			7,708.20						7,708.20
Watson-Merret	Carolyn	Admirals & Cawston			7,708.20	6,301.32			42.20		14,051.72
Williams	Mark	Admirals & Cawston		09/05/2023	797.88						797.88
Willis	Timothy	Wolston & The Lawfords			7,708.20	5,677.70			63.92		13,449.82
Total					321,681.22	66,682.09	3,519.70	188.71	38.00	1,214.60	393,324.32

Independents

Councillor Surname	Councillor Forename	Committee	Start Date (where became a Councillor mid-year)	Leaving Date (where ceased being a Councillor mid-year)	Special Responsibility Allowance £	Mileage -Casual £	Travel £	Subsistence £	Total £
Dudfield	Paul	Audit & Ethics			3,712.80				3,712.80
Eves	John	Audit & Ethics			1,583.04	25.20	25.20	1.00	1,634.44
Shackley	Paul	Shareholder			1,547.00				1,547.00
Total					6,842.84	25.20	25.20	1.00	6,894.24

SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCES

2023/24 – with effect from 18 May 2023

Special responsibility	Name of Councillor
Mayor	Cllr Maggie O'Rourke
Leader of the Council and Chair of Cabinet (plus Change and Transformation and Regulation and Safety portfolios)	Cllr Derek Poole
Deputy Leader of the Council (plus Growth and Investment portfolio)	Cllr Ian Picker
Cabinet Members/portfolio holders:	
Leisure and Wellbeing Communities, Homes, Digital and Communications	Cllr Adam Daly Cllr Tim Willis
Finance, Performance, Legal and Governance	Cllr Carolyn Robbins
Operations and Traded Services	Cllr Carolyn Watson-Merret
Licensing and Safety Committee Chair	Cllr Julie A'Barrow
Planning Committee Chair	Cllr Tony Gillias
Scrutiny Committee Chair	Cllr Ish Mistry
Appeals Committee Chair	No appointment
Grievance Committee Chair	No appointment
Opposition Group Leader (Labour)	Cllr Michael Moran
Opposition Group Leader (Lib Dem)	Cllr Jerry Roodhouse
Audit and Ethics Committee Chair	Mr Paul Dudfield
Audit and Ethics Committee Vice-Chair	Mr John Eves
Shareholders Committee Chair	Mr Paul Shackley