

MINUTES OF COUNCIL

14 DECEMBER 2022

PRESENT:

The Mayor (Councillor Ms Watson-Merret), Councillors Mrs Allanach, Mrs A'Barrow, Mrs Brown, Mrs Crane, Daly, Douglas, Edwards, Ellis, Mrs Garcia, Gillias, Harrington, Mrs Hassell, Miss Lawrence, Lawrence, Lewis, Ms Livesey, Lowe, Mahoney, Mistry, Moran, Mrs New, Mrs O'Rourke, Mrs Parker, Picker, Poole, Rabin, Ms Robbins, Mrs Roberts, Roberts, Roodhouse, Mrs Roodhouse, Sandison, Slinger, Srivastava, Ward and Willis.

50. SUSPENSION OF COUNCIL STANDING ORDERS

Due to the lengthy agenda and the number of motions and possible amendments, it was moved by the Mayor, seconded by the Deputy Mayor and

RESOLVED THAT – paragraphs 13.6 (g) and (h) of Part 3A of the Council Standing Orders be suspended.

51. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence from the meeting were received from Councillors Miss Dumbleton, Eccleson, Ms Maoudis, Mrs Timms and Dr Williams.

52. MINUTES

The minutes of the ordinary meeting held on 23 November 2022 were approved and signed by the Mayor.

53. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Item 7(b) of Part 1 – Review of RBC Support for the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) in Rugby – Councillor Ms Robbins (non-pecuniary interest as defined by the Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors by virtue of being a trustee of Brownsover Community Association).

Item 7(a) of Part 1 - Adoption of the Brinklow Neighbourhood Development Plan and Decision Statement – Councillor Gillias (non-pecuniary interest as defined by the Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors by virtue of being a Ward Councillor).

Item 7(b) of Part 1 – Review of RBC Support for the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) in Rugby – Councillor Rabin (non-pecuniary interest as defined by the Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors by virtue of being a director of Help Good Grow(Rugby)).

Item 6(a)(1) of Part 1 – Rugby Town Regeneration Strategy - Councillor Roodhouse (non-pecuniary interest as defined by the Council’s Code of Conduct for Councillors by virtue of being a Warwickshire County Councillor).

Item 7(b) of Part 1 - Review of RBC Support for the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) in Rugby – Councillors Poole and Willis (non-pecuniary interests as defined by the Council’s Code of Conduct for Councillors by virtue of being members of Long Lawford Community Association).

Item 7(b) of Part 1 - Review of RBC Support for the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) in Rugby – Councillor Ward (non-pecuniary interest as defined by the Council’s Code of Conduct for Councillors by virtue of being a member of Long Lawford Community Association and Chair of Lawford United Football Club).

Item 7(b) of Part 1 - Review of RBC Support for the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) in Rugby – Councillor Mrs Brown (non-pecuniary interest as defined by the Council’s Code of Conduct for Councillors by virtue of being Chair of Brownsover Community Association).

Item 5 (Question ?) – Councillor Ms Livesey (non-pecuniary interest as defined by the Council’s Code of Conduct for Councillors by virtue of a Ukrainian refugee living with her and her family).

Item 7(b) of Part 1 - Review of RBC Support for the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) in Rugby – Councillor Lewis (non-pecuniary interest as defined by the Council’s Code of Conduct for Councillors by virtue of being Chair of Hillside and Rokeby Association and Chair of Rugby Bareboards Trust).

Councillors Mrs Parker and Rabin left the meeting during agenda item 7(d) by virtue of being named as nominees as directors of Rugby First and took no part in the voting and discussion thereon.

54. MAYOR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

(a) The Mayor was delighted to attend the Rugby Open art exhibition at the Art Gallery and Museum as part of the judging panel last month. The local exhibition has been held since 2000 and involves artists submitting examples of their artwork to be judged by a panel, including industry experts, who then take those selected works forward into a group exhibition. There were approximately 500 entrants from all age groups this year and the Mayor had been particularly impressed with the standard of entries submitted by school art groups. The Mayor congratulated all of those who had entered the Open and had also won awards.

(b) The Mayor recently attended the annual charity event arranged by the Friends of St Cross to raise vital funds to support the hospital and community services in Rugby, helping to improve patient experience and to bring services to the town. The event was very well attended and helps to support the work of the Friends.

55. QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 10

The following questions were received in accordance with the Council's Constitution and had been circulated to all Members prior to the meeting and published on the Council's website.

A. Councillor Roodhouse asked the Operations and Traded Services Portfolio Holder, Councillor Miss Lawrence:

"In reply to my question on voids at Council on 23 November 2022, it was stated that the average number was 33 properties and had been this number for 6 months although the trend is increasing. Could the portfolio holder state how fast this trend is increasing and by how many per month?"

Councillor Miss Lawrence, Operations and Traded Services Portfolio Holder, provided the following response:

"The trend has shown a small rise with an average of 34 void properties at the beginning of December. Following the pandemic, the service noticed there were more people moving, perhaps because they were unable to during the pandemic, this inflated the average number of void properties being managed at the time.

It is difficult to predict the number of voids, however the team continues to monitor the numbers closely in order to ensure resources are distributed effectively."

B. Councillor Ms Livesey asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Lowe:

"What communications either written or oral has the Leader or any other portfolio holder or officer of the council had with Severn Trent since 28th September about sewage in the River Avon?"

Councillor Lowe, Leader of the Council, provided the following response:

"At Council on 28th September 2022 Councillor Ms Livesey raised a Notice of Motion regarding river quality and the recommendation that letters should be sent to the Chair and Chief Executive of Severn Trent was agreed.

Letters were sent on 4th November 2022 and have been made available to all Members in SharePoint via one of the regular communications briefings. However, to date no responses have been received. Officers will be writing again requesting a response.

Borough Council officers have recently met with Severn Trent Project Managers in November 2022 with regards the Green Recovery Programme and Bathing Rivers projects currently being delivered by Severn Trent.

The preliminary discussion outlined Severn Trent's aspiration to create over 2,500 jobs in the Midlands with unique trials acting as a blueprint to help shape the future of the water industry. The Green Recovery Programme is a direct effort to support the country's green economic recovery from the pandemic and Rugby Borough Council has been engaged as a key stakeholder.

The Bathing River project seeks to create safe bathing stretches of river across the region with improvements to the river infrastructure within the borough whereby there are currently three monitoring locations. The River Bathing project has identified additional potential scope within Rugby and has engaged with the council for preliminary discussions.

The project seeks to establish information on river use, developing a water quality monitoring programme and developing an app to give the public live updates on water quality. The proposed infrastructure in Rugby would enable water quality improvements within the River Avon and River Leam as the project seeks to significantly reduce the frequency and volume of spills at 25 storm overflows."

C. Councillor Ms Livesey asked the Communities, Homes, Digital and Communications Portfolio Holder, Councillor Mrs Crane:

"How many Ukrainian refugees in Rugby are expected to become homeless, and what steps are being taken by the borough council to prevent that, in partnership, where necessary, with the county council and other borough councils and partner organisations?"

Councillor Mrs Crane, Communities, Homes, Digital and Communications Portfolio Holder, provided the following response:

This question is almost identical to the question that was asked by Councillor Srivastava to Council on 23 November 2022. Here was my response:

"11 Ukrainian citizens have approached the Council for housing advice. I am happy to confirm that all have been dealt with via housing advice and follow ups to prevent their needing to progress a homelessness application.

County wide, the district, borough and County councils are working together to prevent homelessness for this cohort. Hosted by North Warwickshire Council, securing funding from the county, a project is in place that actively reaches out to sponsors and guests to understand the potential of homelessness arising within the cohort, and to put in place early remedies and advice. This is separate to the PHIL project which covers just Rugby, Stratford and North Warwickshire. In addition, the district and borough housing advice teams are on hand to support through the usual routes."

Councillor Ms Livesey then stated that the previous question referred to Ukrainian refugees who had presented as homeless as at 23 November. She asked that the Portfolio Holder provide a response on how many were

expected to present as homeless in view of the six month deadline for placements with families expiring. The Portfolio Holder agreed to provide a written response to Councillor Ms Livesey but assured her that work was ongoing with partners on the matter.

D. Councillor Ms Livesey asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Lowe:

“What conversations have taken place with Severn Trent to ensure that the borough is included in its recently announced 10-year project to help communities alleviate poverty through the provision of skills and a focus on young people who are NEET. If no discussions have yet taken place what plans are there to engage with Severn Trent to ensure Rugby does not miss out on this opportunity?”

Councillor Lowe, Leader of the Council, provided the following response:

“The delivery of training and development opportunities for young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) is provided by Warwickshire County Council (WCC) in partnership with a range of education providers, private companies and charities such as The Prince’s Trust.

The scheme referred to above was launched by Severn Trent and is a 10 year project, with Birmingham being the first authority to use the scheme.

The Council will continue to work with WCC and wider partners including Rugby College to explore opportunities for Rugby residents to benefit from any training that can be provided for young people.

Councillors will already be aware that the Council is also implementing a pilot of the BEAM project, supporting the homeless and those at risk of homelessness into training and employment.”

E. Councillor Srivastava asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Lowe:

“Councils are being asked to undertake local assessment of homes that are affected by damp and mould issues and details any actions that need to be taken to remedy these issues following the tragic death of two-year-old Awaab Ishak.

May I ask the Leader of this Council how many assessments have taken place this year and how many properties in Rugby have mould or damp issues?”

Councillor Lowe, Leader of the Council, provided the following response:

“With regards to the private rented sector we have large numbers of rented properties and no formal scheme for identifying them. There is no national

registration or licensing scheme. We do have a Private Rented Sector Charter to support tenants and landlords, but we work mainly reactively although we are currently looking at a proactive scheme. Updated damp and mould advice is available on our web site at

https://www.rugby.gov.uk/info/20077/private_rented_accommodation/154/health_and_safety_in_private_rented_accommodation/5

Our reactive work comes from various requests for service from our internal teams, such as the Housing Advice & Benefits Team, as well as complaints from Councillors and direct from the tenant or tenant representatives. From 1 January 2021 to 12 December 2021 the Council received and investigated 165 service requests for advice and action on housing issues, 34 of those resulted in further enforcement actions on damp and mould.

In terms of our own housing stock, we encourage any tenants that are concerned about potential mould or condensation in their homes to contact us so that we can arrange an inspection to ascertain the potential cause and provide appropriate advice and remediation. The causes can be varied, and only in the last few days, we found one reported case where the issue turned out to be a consequence of a leak in the washing machine in the flat above.

181 such inspections have taken place during 2022 in respect of 268 issues recorded (this includes duplication where more than one report was made per property).

A squad has been set up to pro-actively visit our properties to assess the potential for condensation and mould. The priority will be to visit those homes that are most vulnerable to the effects of cold – those with the lowest Energy Performance Certificates and those where tenants are known to be potentially financially vulnerable with paying their rent. In addition, our Independent Living co-ordinators are reaching out and visiting residents living in our independent living schemes to identify any potential issues with mould and condensation, as well as provide advice and signposting for additional support to those that may need it.

It should also be noted that our contractors, officers and surveyors visit properties daily, for example for managing repairs, offering support in respect of tenancy sustainment and gas servicing. Any issues identified, in respect of condensation and mould will routinely be reported back to the property repairs team for follow up.”

F. Councillor Sandison asked the Growth and Investment Portfolio Holder, Councillor Picker and Leader of the Council, Councillor Lowe:

In light of the Secretary of State Michael Gove’s recent press statement:

- 1/ set no maximum mandatory house building requirements for LPAs
- 2/ An end to long term land banking
- 3/ A focus on “Brownfield sites

What impact do the Portfolio Holder and Leader of the Council think this will have on this Cabinet's recent decision to move forward with a full review of the adopted local plan?

Councillor Picker, Growth and Investment Portfolio Holder and Councillor Lowe, Leader of the Council, provided the following response:

"The Secretary of State issued a written statement to Parliament on Tuesday 6 December <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2022-12-06/hcws415> following his letter to MPs and press release of 5 December. The written statement outlines a number of proposed changes to national policy and guidance. It is understood that the government intends to consult on these changes through publishing an NPPF prospectus before Christmas. The proposed changes are likely to include alterations to the government's standard method for calculating local housing need.

Notwithstanding the government's proposals to make changes to national planning policy, the council remains subject to Regulation 10A of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 which requires a review of a local plan to be completed within five years of its adoption. The review must determine whether or not the plan needs updating. The government's Planning Practice Guidance advises that "Most plans are likely to require updating in whole or in part at least every 5 years.". In determining whether an update is necessary, paragraph 33 NPPF states that councils "should take into account changing circumstances affecting the area, or any relevant changes in national policy" and "Relevant strategic policies will need updating at least once every five years if their applicable local housing need figure has changed significantly; and they are likely to require earlier review if local housing need is expected to change significantly in the near future."

The Cabinet report identifies a number of changes that contribute to the recommendation to proceed with a full plan update. These include the Council's declaration of a climate emergency, the passing into law of the Environment Act 2021, evidence of increased future need for employment land in particular for the B8 Use Class, and updated evidence on future housing need through the Warwickshire Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment. The report also highlights the need to update our planning for community facilities and sustainable transport.

These circumstances continue to apply despite the government's written statement.

The Leader's foreword in the Town Centre Regeneration Strategy, also on the agenda this evening, sets out the Council's ambition to deliver more housing on brownfield sites in the town centre which will reduce reliance on green belt sites for housing.

The Cabinet report highlights the risk, under current government policy, that five years after its adoption a plan could be viewed as 'out of date' with the government's standard method then used as the council's housing requirement for the purposes of assessing the adequacy of the council's five year housing land supply. At present the standard method number is *lower* than the housing requirement in the adopted local plan, but that could change in future. The Secretary of State's written statement could herald changes to that policy, but we do not yet know the detail of what will be proposed. It is important to note that the Secretary of State's statement to Parliament stated "We will end the obligation on local authorities to maintain a rolling five-year supply of land for housing where their plans are up-to-date.". This emphasises the continued importance the government places on local plans being up-to-date.

Overall, it will be important for the Council to monitor closely and engage with forthcoming changes to government planning policy and the progress of The Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill. However, the circumstances that led Cabinet to decide to proceed with a full update of the local plan remain."

Councillor Sandison then asked the Portfolio Holder if, based on the Secretary of State's responses, if the Council was rushing into a review of the Local Plan. The Portfolio Holder stated that he would speak on this matter at item 7(b) on the agenda.

G. Councillor Harrington asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Lowe:

"Does this Council have a list of unlicensed HMOs and if the answer is no will this council make this a priority going forward?"

Councillor Lowe, Leader of the Council, provided the following response:

"Not every HMO requires a licence, a licence is only required if renting out a large HMO in England or Wales. A property is defined as a large HMO if all of the following apply:

- it is rented to 5 or more people who form more than 1 household
- some or all tenants share toilet, bathroom or kitchen facilities
- at least 1 tenant pays rent (or their employer pays it for them)

It is therefore important to make a legal distinction between licensable and unlicensed HMOs. Under the legislation only larger HMOs are required to have a licence and if they do not it is an offence.

Any list of unlicensed HMOs would be for those we identified which needed a licence but did not have one and would be the subject of regulatory action to ensure they are licensed or prosecuted. Such action is taken immediately, and the property is identified within the Council's internal controls and record keeping.

It is a priority of this Council to exercise its enforcement powers in respect of unlicensed HMOs and this will continue.”

Councillor Harrington then asked the Leader of the Council how planning decisions could be made if there was no list of unlicensed HMOs. The Leader of the Council stated that it was for this reason that a review of the Local Plan was required, to ensure a policy relating to HMOs was included. The Leader agreed there were issues with regard to HMOs but the Council required a policy and powers to be able to deal with the matter.

H. Councillor Slinger asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Lowe:

“In light of recent scrutiny of the procurement of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) during the Covid-19 pandemic, can the Leader of the Council provide a statement that sets out:

- a) an audit of the procurement, including recipients of contracts, sums paid, dates of payment, dates of delivery; and
- b) an assessment of value for money, efficacy of PPE procured, and the decision-making process used for said procurement?”

Councillor Lowe, Leader of the Council, provided the following response:

“During the Covid-19 pandemic our teams were on the front line dealing with the crisis; including infectious disease control, patrols of our open spaces, supporting the Police, acting as Covid Marshalls, supporting Public Health and the NHS with Covid testing and vaccine rollout and door to door vaccination campaigns, providing on site Covid safety guidance and advice to businesses, whilst continuing to provide critical services to our residents such as waste collections, food bank management, delivery of food to vulnerable people, cremations and burials, and council house repairs. The overarching priority was the protection of our staff and the public, therefore ensuring an adequate supply of PPE was available to maintain business continuity and continue our key worker service provision was a necessity. This included working with local authority colleagues across the county to ensure the supply of PPE to staff who required it.

During 2022/23 an audit of the Covid-19 PPE procurement will be built into the audit plan and will reported to Audit and Ethics Committee.

It should also be noted that the Council is participating in the Covid-19 Inquiry which has been set up to examine the UK’s response to and impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and it is expected this will include the procurement of PPE.”

I. Councillor Slinger asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Lowe:

“When does the Council anticipate that the Scrutiny Committee will respond to three Notices of Motion tabled by me at the meeting of Full Council on 28 September, relating to agenda items 8 f) provision of gypsy and traveller sites, g) business hubs, and h) a survey of young people?”

Councillor Lowe, Leader of the Council, provided the following response:

Scrutiny Committee will consider these notices of motion at its next meeting on 30 January 2023.”

Councillor Slinger then asked the Leader of the Council to confirm that all proposers of notices of motion would be kept informed of progress on them and if four months was an average time for a notice of motion to be considered. The Leader of the Council informed Councillor Slinger that it was for the Chair of Scrutiny Committee of Group members on the Committee to inform on progress of notices of motion rather than himself. With regard to the timescale for consideration of notices of motion, the Leader advised that the only available meeting of Scrutiny Committee on 14 November 2022 had been dedicated to the cost of living crisis as a priority matter.

56. REPORT OF CABINET – DECEMBER 2022

(a) Rugby Town Centre Regeneration Strategy

Councillor Picker proposed the recommendation of Cabinet as printed in the report.

Councillor Roodhouse moved and Councillor Sandison seconded the following amendment:

“To ensure transparency and governance of this strategy as stated in paragraph 4.46 of the town centre strategy, IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL THAT -

(1) a cross party levelling up Board be established to develop the work streams as outlined in order to progress the strategy; and

(2) the Board reports back concerning the work streams at appendix 1 to Cabinet and Council in early spring 2023

Councillor Mrs O’Rourke proposed and Councillor Mistry seconded a friendly amendment to recommendation (1) above:

“(1) a cross party levelling up Board be established to develop the viability of work streams as outlined in order to progress the strategy”

Councillor Roodhouse accepted the friendly amendment.

Further to debate, the Mayor declared the revised amendment lost.

(b) Local Plan Review

Councillor Picker proposed the recommendation of Cabinet as printer in the report.

Councillor Roodhouse proposed and Councillor Mrs O'Rourke then seconded the following amendment:

“IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL THAT -

- (1) a partial review of the Local Plan be undertaken that seeks to protect the Green Belt as a priority;
- (2) Planning Services Working Party prepares a report for Council as to what is included in the scope of the partial review; and
- (3) further reports be presented after further analysis by Icenis is undertaken outlining the funding required and the timeline to deliver the review focussing on Rugby Borough housing needs which also takes account of recent statements by the Secretary of State.”

Further to debate, the Mayor put the amendment to the vote and declared it lost.

RESOLVED THAT – the report be confirmed and adopted.

57. REPORTS OF OFFICERS

(a) Adoption of the Brinklow Neighbourhood Development Plan and Decision Statement

Council considered the report of the report of the Chief Officer for Growth and Investment (Part 1 - agenda item 7(a)) concerning the adoption of the Brinklow Neighbourhood Development Plan and Decision Statement.

RESOLVED THAT –

- (1) the Brinklow Neighbourhood Development Plan be adopted in accordance with section 38A(4)(a) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended);
- (2) the decision notice required under regulation 19 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) be approved (draft notice included in Appendix 2); and

- (3) both the Brinklow Neighbourhood Development Plan and the decision notice be published on the Council's website and publicised, and any required notifications be issued.

(b) Review of RBC Support for the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) in Rugby

Council considered the report of the Chief Officer – Communities and Homes (Part 1 – agenda item 7(b)) concerning a review of the support provided by the Council to the voluntary and community sector in Rugby.

RESOLVED THAT –

- (1) the grant to the Rugby Foodbank be increased to £8,000 for 2023/24;
- (2) community association funding for 2023/24 remain at £45,000 (see community association listed in table 1) with an inflationary increase for 2024/25 linked to the consumer price index;
- (3) the Council enters into a funding agreement with WCAVA for two years, with an option to extend this arrangement for another 2 years. For 2023/24 this will be £39,600, and subject to inflationary increases each year linked to the consumer price index;
- (4) the Council enters into a funding agreement with CAB two years, with an option to extend this arrangement for another 2 years. For 2023/24 this will be £60,000 if co-location in the Town Hall is achievable, rising to £73,000 if co-location cannot be achieved, and subject to inflationary increases each year linked to the consumer price index;
- (5) the community grants for 2023/24 be replaced by an allocation of £15,000, to support potential projects that may help the Council to achieve its aims and where funding cannot be secured from an alternative funding source (see 3.4);
- (6) delegated authority be given to the Chief Officer Communities and Homes to:
 - develop the required grant funding agreements with the community associations, BRANCAB and WCAVA
 - develop the criteria for the £15,000 reserve, in consultation with the Grants working Party
 - progress the project to co-locate BRANCAB at the Town Hall.

(c) Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2023/24

Council considered the report of the Chief Officer – Communities and Homes (Part 1 – agenda item 7(c)) concerning the Council's Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2023/24.

RESOLVED THAT – the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2022/2023 be adopted as the Council's Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2023/2024.

(d) Appointments to Outside Bodies – Rugby First

Council considered the report of the Chief Officer – Legal and Governance (Part 1 – agenda item 7(d)) concerning the appointment of directors to Rugby First.

Councillor Roodhouse proposed and Councillor Mahoney seconded that the item be deferred.

The Mayor put the amendment to the vote and declared it carried.

RESOLVED THAT - this item be deferred.

(e) Update of Council's Constitution

Council considered the report of the Chief Officer – Legal and Governance (Part 1 – agenda item 7(e)) concerning proposed updates to the Constitution relating to questions pursuant to Standing Order 10 and notices of motion.

Councillor Ms Robbins proposed and Councillor ?? seconded the recommendation as set out in the report.

Councillor Roodhouse proposed and Councillor Mahoney seconded that the item be deferred pending discussion at the next Group Leaders' meeting.

Further to debate, the Mayor put the amendment to the vote and declared it lost.

Following a vote on the substantive motion, the Mayor adjourned the meeting following a query relating to the voting process and Standing Orders.

Upon the meeting be reconvened and in light on the concerns of some Members regarding the voting process relating to those who may have not been present at the start of the debate, the Mayor proposed and Councillor Poole seconded that the item be deferred to a future meeting of Council.

The Mayor put the motion to the vote and declared it carried.

RESOLVED THAT - the item be deferred to a future meeting of Council.

(f) Review of Garden Waste Services

Council considered the report of the Chief Officer – Operations and Traded Services (Part 1 – agenda item 7(f)) concerning a proposed review of garden waste services.

RESOLVED THAT - a cross party working group be established to review the Garden Waste Service with a focus on efficiency, cost and customer service and the results be reported to Council in February.

58. NOTICES OF MOTION PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 11

Council considered the following Motions, notice of which had been given pursuant to Standing Order 11.

(a) Councillor Gillias moved and Councillor Lowe seconded the motion as set out below.

“This council recognises the importance of the sporting heritage within the borough, not only in respect to the game of rugby, but also to other long established and well supported sports associated with Brandon Stadium. We therefore request that, following the overwhelming public desire to reopen Brandon Stadium, this council explores options available to bring Brandon Stadium back into use and any likely public advantages to the local and wider communities, should this be achievable.”

Further to debate, the Mayor put the motion to the vote and declared it carried.

(b) Councillor Ms Livesey moved and Councillor Harrington seconded the motion as set out below.

“Rugby is one of the fastest growing towns in the country with over 11,000 homes expected to be built in the next 10-15 years. Each of these homes will require a water supply. Climate change is already manifesting itself in different ways in the UK. We are seeing prolonged periods of dry weather and increasing temperatures in the summer and heavy downpours in Autumn and Winter which fall on to baked ground and runs off rather than soaks in.

In addition to this, nearby towns including Northampton, are also seeing an increase in house building and are likely to be competing with Rugby for water from the same source. Modern lifestyles use more water – dishwashers, automatic washing machines showering every day, washing cars and watering lawns all contribute to the increased use of something we have previously taken for granted.

It is beyond dispute that the planned increase in housebuilding in the borough and further afield will add to the pressure on the water supply and to the difficulties faced by householders and our local farmers, businesses, schools and hospitals during periods of drought and even after rain starts to fall. The growing impact of climate change will only add to this problem.

The Labour group therefore calls on the Portfolio Holder for Communities Homes and Digital Communications to begin discussions with Severn Trent to find out what steps they are taking to ensure that the security of the water supply for Rugby is assured over the medium to long term, and to report back to full council at the April meeting.”

Further to debate, the Mayor put the motion to the voted and declared it lost.

(c) Councillor Moran moved and Councillor Slinger seconded the motion as set out below.

“Everybody in the Borough wants to be proud of our town centre. It should be our beating heart economically, socially, and culturally. At the moment it is struggling, and our town centre businesses are facing huge challenges due to the unprecedented financial crisis we ~~they~~ are currently facing. In addition, Rugby Borough Council has a substantial financial investment in a service Level Agreement to Rugby First as well (as the large contributions made by local businesses).

We believe that it’s time for change. We know that Local stakeholders believe it’s time to do things differently in order to support the wishes of Rugby council taxpayers and local independent businesses and see our town centre prosper.

The Rugby Borough has grown significantly over the last ten years, and we believe with the right support Rugby Town Centre can grow and thrive again. In order to do that we need to engage all major stakeholders on a cross party apolitical basis.

We know from feedback that we have received from local stakeholders that they believe things need to change as well.

We therefore call on this council to put in place a cross-sector partnership which will bring a range of knowledge, skills and resources to respond to the key challenges to rebuild Rugby Town Centre as part of a constructive Forum for change, as part of a constructive Forum for change.

The Forum would set out the strategic vision for the town, identify resources, build community partnerships and provide scrutiny for the delivery and review of the following,

- *SLA with Rugby First*
- *Review Rugby First Accounts to ensure that this Council, Rugby Residents and local business financial investments are adding value*
- *Review the Rugby First business plan and constitution*
- *Develop a Memorandum of Understanding for Rugby First going forward or AN Other appropriate body*
- *Determine the exact level of central government funding secured for Rugby town centre (and wider Borough) since 2019*

- *Ascertain through surveys the current level of trade amongst local businesses within the town centre (and repeat this survey on a regular basis)*

The forum membership should include Town Centre Councillors, Local Businesses, Borough and County Council Officers, Rugby School, Police, community centres, churches and charities amongst others.”

Further to debate, the Mayor put the motion to the vote and declared it lost.

59. CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence.

60. COMMON SEAL

It was moved by the Mayor, seconded by the Deputy Mayor and

RESOLVED THAT - the Common Seal be affixed to the various orders, deeds and documents to be made or entered into for carrying into effect the several decisions, matters and things approved by the Council and more particularly set out in the reports adopted at this meeting.

61. MOTION TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC UNDER SECTION 100(A)(4) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

RESOLVED THAT - under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of information defined in paragraphs 2 and 3 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

62. PRIVATE REPORT OF CABINET – 5 DECEMBER 2022

RESOLVED THAT – the report be confirmed and adopted.

63. PRIVATE REPORTS OF OFFICERS

(a) Review of the Preventing Homelessness Improving Lives (PHIL) project

Council considered the private report of the Chief Officer for Communities and Homes (Part 2 – agenda item 1(a)) concerning a review of the PHIL project.

RESOLVED THAT – as a consequence of homelessness prevention activities being successfully integrated into the business-as-usual work of the Housing Advice & Benefits Team:

- (1) the p.h.i.l. project be discontinued from 1 April 2023;
- (2) a supplementary revenue budget be approved for the potential redundancy costs of £28,690;
- (3) the operating surplus as at 31 March 2023 be split between Rugby Borough Council, North Warwickshire Borough Council and Stratford upon Avon District Council after the deduction of any redundancy costs incurred as a result of the co-ordinator post; and
- (4) delegated authority be given to the Chief Officer for Communities and Homes to implement the discontinuation of the project and such authority shall include any resulting redundancies as detailed within this report, in the event that redeployment opportunities for the affected staff are not realised.

(b) Estates and Project Management Team: Role Changes

Council considered the private report of the Chief Executive (Part 2 – agenda item 1(b)) concerning a restructure of the Council’s Estates and Project Management team.

RESOLVED THAT –

- (1) the change from a fixed term Construction Project Manager to a permanent Project Manager role be approved;
- (2) the change of the permanent Construction Project Manager to a permanent Senior Project Manager be approved;
- (3) an additional cost and staff budget for the permanent project manager for the 2025 to 2026 year and onwards be approved: and,
- (4) delegated authority be granted to the Chief Executive to implement the changes.

(c) Review of Trade Waste Services

Council considered the private report of the Chief Officer – Operations and Traded Services (Part 2 – agenda item 1(c)) together with a supplementary report concerning a review of the trade waste service.

RESOLVED THAT – the proposal to increase Trade Waste fees from 1 April 2023, as detailed in the report, be approved.

MAYOR