

Additional Agenda Item

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Report Title:	Return to Full Council meetings in the Council Chamber
Name of Committee:	Council
Date of Meeting:	17 November 2021
Report Director:	Chief Officer - Legal and Governance
Portfolio:	Finance, Performance, Legal and Governance
Ward Relevance:	None
Prior Consultation:	Group Leaders, Leadership Team, Health & Safety Officers.
Contact Officer:	Aftab Razzaq, Chief Officer - Legal & Governance
Public or Private:	Public
Report Subject to Call-In:	No
Report En-Bloc:	No
Forward Plan:	No
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:	This report considers whether Full Council meetings should continue to be held at the Benn Hall or should move to the Council Chamber, subject to the mitigation measures set out in the Risk Assessment.
Financial Implications:	No material financial implications.

Risk Management/Health and Safety Implications:	Detailed within the report and within the Risk Assessment set out at Appendix 1.
Environmental Implications:	Detailed within the Climate Change and Environmental Impact Assessment set out at Appendix 3.
Legal Implications:	Detailed within the report.
Equality and Diversity:	The Council has duly considered its equality duties in accordance with section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. Detailed within the Equalities Impact Assessment set out at Appendix 2.
Options:	Detailed within section 10 of the report.
Recommendation:	To approve a return to the Council Chamber in accordance with one of the options detailed within section 10 of the report.
Reasons for Recommendation:	To ensure there is a clear decision and safe process to support any return to Full Council meetings in the Council Chamber.

Council - 17 November 2021

Return to Full Council meetings in the Council Chamber

Public Report of the Chief Officer - Legal and Governance

Recommendation

To approve a return to the Council Chamber in accordance with one of the options detailed within section 10 of the report.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic there have been no Full Council meetings in the Council Chamber. Initially, meetings took place remotely and, following legislative changes requiring face to face meetings to resume, a decision was made for meetings to take place in the Benn Hall.
- 1.2. The continuing easing of restrictions has brought forward this report which considers the present arrangements and whether a return to the Council Chamber should take place for Full Council meetings. All other meetings (Cabinet and committees) currently take place in the Council Chamber.
- 1.3. This report sets out two options for Members to consider in relation to Full Council meetings.
- 1.4. The physical presence of officers within the Town Hall is a separate operational matter which is driven by business need and the delivery of critical services. This report focuses on Member attendance in the Council Chamber and is not intended to change the operational procedures currently in place for officers.

2. CURRENT GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE

- 2.1. The easing of restrictions through the legislative framework does not set an automatic default position whereby such restrictions may be ignored. As Members will be aware the risks relating to COVID-19 remain irrespective of the changes that have been made to legislation and guidance in recent months.
- 2.2. The various changes have simply passed the direct responsibility of managing such risks to both the public and organisations.
- 2.3. These risks are considered regularly in relation to both officer attendance at the Town Hall as part of the Council's day to day operational matters and, within the context of this report, in relation to Member attendance at the Town Hall for Full Council meetings in the Council Chamber.

- 2.4. The current Government guidance for workplace activities is available on the Government website (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-covid-19/offices-factories-and-labs>)
- 2.5. The guidance states that employers, by law, must protect workers and others from risks to their health and safety. This includes risks from COVID-19 which is a workplace hazard. This must be managed in the same way as other workplace hazards and includes completing a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks of COVID-19 in the workplace and identifying control measures to manage that risk.
- 2.6. In addition, the guidance from the HSE (<https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/roadmap-further-guidance.htm>) sets out that there is a continuing obligation to manage the risks and update risks assessments.

3. COUNCIL'S GUIDANCE AND MEASURES

- 3.1. Following the relaxation of restrictions on 19 July 2021, the Council undertook an evaluation of the ongoing risks to employees, Members and visitors to the Town Hall together with current data and decided that there would be no changes to the current working arrangements for employees, namely:
 - 3.1.1. Continuing to work from home whenever possible.
 - 3.1.2. Continuing to wear a face covering in shared areas when attending the Town Hall or Council buildings.
 - 3.1.3. Continuing to maintain social distancing from others and observe capacity limits on shared areas.
 - 3.1.4. Sign in to the workplace and sign out when leaving for track and trace in the event of a positive case.
 - 3.1.5. No external meetings being allowed, unless they are both essential and hosted by an RBC officer.
 - 3.1.6. Following any measures set out in covid-secure risk assessments.
 - 3.1.7. Public access to the Town Hall would continue to be limited, with face-to-face service by appointment or in urgent situations only.
 - 3.1.8. Customers continuing to be asked to wear face coverings and observe social distancing.
 - 3.1.9. No access to the foyer during opening times.
 - 3.1.10. More frequent cleaning of work areas.

- 3.2. Members were also notified that:
- 3.2.1. All meetings with officers should be held virtually with the exception of Council, Cabinet and committee meetings which would be held in person.
 - 3.2.2. The continuation of wearing face coverings in Council buildings when attending committee meetings (unless exempt).
 - 3.2.3. Members should only attend meetings in person if: (1) they are a member of the Committee; (2) they have been nominated as a substitute for that particular meeting; or (3) they are attending in their capacity as Ward Councillor for public speaking at Planning Committee.
 - 3.2.4. Members must sign in at the Newbold Road entrance to the Town Hall when attending committee meetings in the building and sign out when they leave for track and trace in the event of a positive case. Members should continue to arrive at the allocated staggered arrival times for all meetings and to avoid passing through the foyer area.
 - 3.2.5. Meetings with external organisations would not be permitted in the Town Hall.
- 3.3. The decisions on workplace measures remain subject to review taking into account factors such as government guidance, local case rates, mental health and wellbeing.

4. RISKS AND MITIGATION MEASURES FOR MEETINGS IN COUNCIL CHAMBER

- 4.1. The Council has a full COVID-19 risk assessment which includes risks and mitigation measures required for meetings to be held in the Town Hall. The return of Council meetings to the Council Chamber would currently conflict with the Council's own COVID-19 risk assessment:

4.1.1. Workstations and work surfaces

- 4.1.1.1. 2m distance cannot be maintained when Council Chamber is full. All practical mitigation measures (screens for officers and the Chair, hand sanitiser station at entrance to Chamber, wipes available during meeting) have been put into place for other committee meetings with smaller attendance. However, due to the layout of the Chamber it is not possible to provide screens between each seat and row.

4.1.2. Office Meetings – face to face meetings should be avoided

4.1.2.1. Legally, all Council, Cabinet and Committee meetings have to be held in person. Meeting spaces should be large enough to enable social distancing. This is not possible for full Council meetings.

4.1.3. Additional measures for high-risk environments

4.1.3.1. Any Member or officer attending meetings without adequate measures in place would require an additional personal risk assessment to determine if any additional measures can be put in place for them.

4.2. During the latter part of September, the risks relating to the transmission of COVID-19 were very clear. This included two positive cases within Members being reported within a 24-hour period.

4.3. In addition, prior to the Full Council in September, two Members self-isolated as result of a positive case within their household. This meeting also resulted in various officers being notified via the track and trace app of contact with a positive case.

4.4. As we continue within the winter period there is the clear potential that there will be positive cases both amongst Members and officers that attend Full Council.

4.5. All of these factors increase both the risks to attendees but also the wider risk management that the Council is required to take into consideration. The failure to take due matters into consideration is a breach of the Council's Health and Safety duties, with potentially severe consequences for officers.

4.6. The proposed options detailed within the report and the attached risk assessment put forward mitigation measures whereby the potential risk would be decreased.

5. DETAILS RELATING TO MEMBERS

5.1. As part of the Council's risk management and in the absence of a meeting without social distancing; it is important that the Member demographic is considered.

5.2. It is clear that older age groups and individuals with underlying health issues provide a higher risk in the effects of COVID. Such risks are minimised through vaccination but cannot be ruled out in their entirety.

5.3. The age group of Members is from 30s to 70s.

5.4. At present the Council is unaware whether all Members have been vaccinated. This information can only be provided on a voluntary basis.

- 5.5. In the absence of such information, it can be concluded that certain Members do fall within the higher risk category and therefore this must be reflected within the Council's risk assessment and the overall decision as to whether meetings should return to the Council Chamber. It may also be appropriate for personal individual risk assessments to be undertaken for some Members.

6. DETAILS RELATING TO OFFICERS/HR MATTERS

- 6.1. It is important that when considering the various options that the risks to officers are also considered.
- 6.2. Any attendance at Full Council meetings within the Council Chamber also has a potential risk to officers.
- 6.3. It should be recognised that certain officers may fall within the Clinically Extremely Vulnerable or Clinically Vulnerable category and be at a higher level of risk. Those officers themselves may feel that they are being exposed to unnecessary risk and refuse to attend any such meetings. This will in effect then become a HR matter and consideration would be given to personal Covid-19 risk assessment. In addition, the Council must keep in mind its obligations as an employer in keeping its employees safe under the relevant Health & Safety legislation. A mitigation measure would be for such officers to attend remotely; however, this will potentially give rise to logistical and practical issues within the meeting.
- 6.4. Preliminary and secondary testing has been undertaken for hybrid meetings, with officers attending the chamber meeting virtually. These tests have been successful, but there remains some technical issues which require a manual workaround by the Chair. This has also not been tested in a formal meeting and has not been tested during a live stream.

7. EQUALITY MATTERS

- 7.1. It should also be recognised that all officers and members have individual circumstances. For example, certain Members and officers will fall within the Clinically Extremely Vulnerable or Clinically Vulnerable category or live in a household with a person falling within these categories.
- 7.2. In addition, the pandemic has also increased the number of individuals suffering from mental health. A Member or officer who is reluctant to return to the Council Chamber, due to their individual circumstances, will potentially give rise to increased anxiety and impact on their mental wellbeing.
- 7.3. If, as a result of the main risk assessment or arising from an individual risk assessment, Members aren't able to attend Full Council, then this will impact on their democratic right to represent their constituents, which may give rise to potential legal implications.

- 7.4. Further, certain officers are required to be physically present at meeting to facilitate the livestream and hybrid meeting set ups. If these officers aren't able to attend due to household circumstances then this will also have an impact on the functioning of Full Council meetings.
- 7.5. It is important that these matters are duly considered, and an Equality Impact Assessment is attached at Appendix 2.

8. LEGAL RISKS

- 8.1. This report provides an overview of the various measures that are in place in respect of council meetings. As set out within the recommendations, any return to the Council Chamber would be a significant deviation from the Council protocols and as such would increase the level of risks relating to COVID-19 transmission.
- 8.2. The position as to whether such a deviation and increase of risks would give rise to a potential future claim remains unclear. Potential claims would relate to the Council breaching its statutory obligations relating to duty of care and overall health and safety of the workforce.
- 8.3. A significant point that must be duly considered relates to a COVID-19 fatality. Any claims within this area, which are based upon a breach of the Health and Safety Act 1974, would potentially fall within the area of corporate manslaughter and, importantly, give rise to personal liability to both senior officers within the Leadership Team and the Members as decision makers.
- 8.4. Such claim would be extremely difficult to establish, but nevertheless it cannot be ruled out, especially given there is no case law within this area.

9. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 9.1. If a decision was made to return to the Council Chamber this would include attendance of both officers and Members in the region of 50 to 60.
- 9.2. All attendees would not be able to socially distance and this would remove the standard controls in place and therefore puts the risk rating at 20 which would be deemed as an unacceptable risk.
- 9.3. The reason for the very likely occurrence score is that the current ONS statistics are showing 1 in 60 people in the UK have COVID. Therefore, it is likely that one person in the meeting would have Covid and given the high transmission rates of Delta variant of Covid in enclosed spaces transmission in this setting is likely.
- 9.4. A revised risk assessment is attached at Appendix 1 with additional mitigation measures. These include the following:
 - 9.4.1. Members, officers and public should avoid sharing physical resources during meetings.

- 9.4.2. Hand sanitiser is provided in meeting rooms, on entry to the Council Chamber and on entry to the public gallery.
 - 9.4.3. Members, officers and public must wear face coverings during the meeting as 2m social distancing is not possible. Face coverings are not required if a person can provide a medical exemption.
 - 9.4.4. Ensure Council Chamber is adequately ventilated including opening windows and doors where safe.
 - 9.4.5. Members and officers must not attend the Town Hall if they have tested positive for Covid-19, if they have been in close contact with someone with Covid-19 in the previous 14 days or if they have Covid-19 symptoms.
 - 9.4.6. Number of officers within Council Chamber to be kept to minimum. Where necessary, officers can wait in committee rooms until their part of the meeting.
 - 9.4.7. Number of members of the public admitted to public gallery is limited and places must be booked in advance.
 - 9.4.8. Members, officers and public must should not attend the Town Hall unless they have been vaccinated or have a negative LFT taken no more than 24 hours prior to the meeting.
 - 9.4.9. Any meetings of Full Council in the Chamber are kept to the minimum duration possible.
 - 9.4.10. Where Members or officers need to meet before or after the Full Council meeting, such meetings follow the appropriate Covid-19 safety measures and are kept to the minimum attendance and duration possible.
 - 9.4.11. Persons who fall within the Clinically Extremely Vulnerable or Clinically Vulnerable categories or who have previously been shielding should not attend the Town Hall.
 - 9.4.12. Members and officers should bring individual refreshments (in leak proof containers) to Full Council meetings and communal refreshments should not be provided. Hot drinks and food are not permitted in the Council Chamber.
- 9.5. The above measures result in a score of 15 which will fall within an improved amber rating.
- 9.6. The measure in respect of vaccination status or a negative LFT is in accordance with event management across the country. Any organisation/event organiser has the ability to make such a request as this falls within the overriding objective within the Health and Safety Act which is detailed within the report.

- 9.7. It should also be noted that the wearing of face coverings and covid status/vaccination status are mitigation measures. They should not be considered 100% preventative measures and are less effective than good social distancing.

10. OFFICER RECOMMENDATION /OPTIONS

- 10.1. Case rates within Rugby remain high and up to date data can be found here: <https://coventry-city-council.github.io/covid-19/dashboard/>.
- 10.2. Whilst case rates are not quite as important due to the impact of vaccine, it still shows that the virus remains in circulation within the borough.
- 10.3. It should also be noted that the COVID-19 booster programme continues to be rolled out and this will have a positive impact in terms of decreasing risks and the protecting both officers and members as they become eligible for the booster.
- 10.4. The various options for consideration by members are as follows. *The Director of Public Health has been informed of the proposed below options and any feedback will be provided verbally.*

10.4.1. OPTION 1: FULL COUNCIL MEETINGS REMAIN IN THE BENN HALL UNTIL APRIL 2022 AND WILL BE SUBJECT TO A MONTHLY REVIEW

- 10.4.1.1. Due to conflict with the Council's current risk assessment and the ongoing risks to both officers and Members, meetings of Full Council remain in the Benn Hall until April next year.
- 10.4.1.2. This proposal is subject to the continued review which remains ongoing in relation to the various procedures and risk assessments within the Town Hall. If any material changes arise then a further report would be circulated to members for consideration.

10.4.2. OPTION 2: AN IMMEDIATE RETURN TO FULL COUNCIL MEETINGS WITHIN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER AND THE ADDITIONAL CONTROL MEASURES AS DETAILED WITHIN THE REVISED RISK ASSESSMENT (APPENDIX 2) ARE PUT IN PLACE.

- 10.4.2.1. As set out within the report the mitigation control measures do not remove the risks to the Council. This is detailed within the attached risk assessment within Appendix 1. Given these highlighted risks it is key that the legal and equality implications within this report are duly considered.

Name of Meeting: Council

Date of Meeting: 17 November 2021

Subject Matter: Return to Full Council meetings in the Council Chamber

Originating Department: Legal and Governance

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

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Doc No	Title of Document and Hyperlink
1	RBC Covid Secure RA Rev M

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



DO NOT REMOVE FROM FILE

COVID SECURE RISK ASSESSMENT FOR

Full Council Meetings in Council Chamber

Reference Number: **RBC/**

Preface

The advice and guidance in this risk assessment template is based upon the well-published and communicated advice from the Government and Public Health England/ Scotland/ Wales. The information and links to the guidance published was correct at the date of publishing. You should check for the latest information updates. **There are no guarantees that following these guidelines will prevent the exposure to, or the spread of, the Coronavirus Covid-19.**

Some decisions will be very difficult during the Pandemic with potential life critical situations. You will be balancing these also against the disruption to business and commercial consequences of taking an approach that is too cautious.

Bear in mind the general principle in health and safety law that no-one should be injured or made ill as a consequence of the work they do. If you cannot do an operation safely, you should not do it at all.

However, as a pandemic develops, this general principle will be tested. Always examining consequences against 'Concept': Your organisation is bound to avoid exposing people to unnecessary risks?

The general principles of risk assessment should guide you through each difficult decision and remind you to evaluate and balance the risks against appropriate control measures. The mantra to guide you through difficult decisions should be "would it have been reasonably practicable to have done more. Remember also to personalise, so far as reasonably practicable, your procedures to your specific workers and those affected by your operations.

Follow all relevant guidance and risk assess carefully including any derogations which imply an exemption from or relaxation of a rule or law, in this case it will be invaluable to be able to point to a written risk assessment or similar document, showing that you have grappled with the issues and sought to balance them, taking into account factors on both sides before reaching a professional informed decision that you will keep under review. Should you be called to review in criminal law, you may need to prove that you have conducted a balancing exercise through specialist health and safety having gained legal advice.

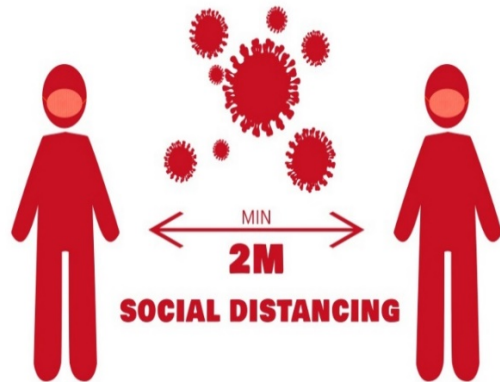
Develop your plans, having taking consideration of the demographics and vulnerabilities of your staff and those impacted by your operations, specific to that work environment.

Monitor and review to consider the changing nature of the contagion and your control measures.

REMEMBER THE CODE

Do not touch your eyes, nose, and mouth unless you have washed and sanitised your hands

- Stay at home as much as possible
- Work at home if you can
- Limit contact with other people
- Keep your distance if you go out (2m apart where possible)
- Wash your hands regularly
- If you or anyone in your household has symptoms, you all need to self-isolate



<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england>

CATCH IT

Germs spread easily. Always carry tissues and use them to catch your cough or sneeze.



BIN IT

Germs can live for several hours on tissues. Dispose of your tissue as soon as possible.




KILL IT

Hands can transfer germs to every surface you touch. Clean your hands as soon as you can.



RUGBY BOROUGH COUNCIL
HEALTH AND SAFETY RISK ASSESSMENT FORM *(The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, 1999)*

REFERENCE:

Service Area: Legal & Governance		Section/Department: Democratic Services					
Name and Description of Task: Meetings of Full Council held in the Council Chamber of the Town Hall Meetings will be attended by all Members, officers and members of the public. Other officers, e.g. Superintendents, will also be in the building on duty. All seating in the main body of the Council Chamber is likely to be used for Members and officers. The public gallery will also be in use with socially distanced seating provided for a limited number of members of the public. Numbers: Max 42 Members Max 12 officers (all officers are not necessarily required to remain in the Council Chamber throughout the meeting) Max 14 members of the public (to be kept under review in line with government guidance) Max 2 Superintendents Note: Levels/specifications should be entered in the control measures to provide evidence of good practise. When referring to other documents clearly identify what they are for and where they can be found. Please describe the activity so that the reader can visualise the content				Diagram/Photo N/A			
Date of Assessment: 15 November 2021		Names and Job Titles of Assessors: Aftab Razzaq, Chief Officer – Legal & Governance					
Information Gathered From: Managers/Employees/Suppliers/Manufacturers/Specialist Knowledge/Trade Associations/Similar Good Practise in Other Organizations							
What are the hazards and how might they be harmful	Who might be harmed and how many	Current Control Measures	Risk Rating (with existing control measures) LXS=	Recommended Improved Control Measures	Modified Risk Rating (with improved control measures) L X S =	Actions Required	Action Ref. No.

<p>Spreading/catching an infectious disease/virus at the venue due to people being symptomatic or asymptomatic.</p> <p>Arriving, using, and leaving the workplace can expose people to respiratory and also contact transmission which can cause serious or fatal consequences.</p>	<p>Members/officers/ public</p>	<p>RBC Policy and Procedures.</p> <p>All required PPE to be supplied and worn as identified.</p> <p>Access to hand sanitiser, anti-bacterial wipes or water and soap.</p> <p>Supply and use of additional PPE if and when identified or required by new or expanded guidance or instruction.</p> <p>Ensure that any confirmed case of infection is properly recorded and reported.</p>	<p>3x5 15</p>	<p>Members will be given staggered arrival times.</p> <p>An attendance register will be completed by Members.</p> <p>Contact details will be taken from any public attending the meeting. This will be held for 21 days.</p> <p>All to enter/exit the building via their designated entrances/exits.</p> <p>All to wear face coverings when transiting through the building corridors/stairways.</p> <p>Members and public to keep all clothing, bags and personal items with them.</p> <p>Maintain a minimum 2-metre separation between people.</p> <p>All must wash/gel their hands immediately when entering the building.</p> <p>A strict cleaning regime has been introduced to ensure all hard surfaces are cleaned and disinfected thoroughly by a dedicated and competent cleaner.</p>	<p>2x5 10</p>	<p>None</p>	
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<p>When moving around the workplace transmission can be made by respiration of the droplets and contact with surfaces such as door handles/plates and then the face (mouth, nose, and eyes) causing minor/no symptoms to serious and possibly fatal consequences.</p>	<p>Members/officers/ public</p>	<p>RBC Policy and Procedures.</p> <p>All required PPE to be supplied and worn as identified.</p> <p>Access to hand sanitiser, anti-bacterial wipes or water and soap.</p> <p>Supply and use of additional PPE if and when identified or required by new or expanded guidance or instruction.</p> <p>Ensure that any confirmed case of infection is properly recorded and reported.</p>	<p>4x5 20</p>	<p>One-way systems are in place in certain parts of the building.</p> <p>All to wear face coverings when transiting through the building corridors/stairways.</p> <p>Direction of travel in corridors is marked.</p> <p>Lift access is restricted for those with specific conditions or need only.</p> <p>Reduced lift capacity and clear marking is installed.</p> <p>Hand sanitiser is provided in lifts.</p> <p>There is restricted access to certain areas.</p> <p>Use of stairs is actively encouraged.</p>	<p>2x5 10</p>	<p>None.</p>	
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<p>When attending face to face Full Council meetings in the Council Chamber the virus can be transmitted.</p> <p>The transmission of COVID-19 is thought to occur mainly through respiratory droplets generated by coughing and sneezing, and through contact with contaminated surfaces. The predominant modes of transmission are assumed to be droplet and contact.</p>	<p>Members/officers/ public</p>	<p>RBC Policy and Procedures – note these cannot be complied with in their entirety as it is not possible to accommodate 2m social distancing in the Council Chamber for a Full Council meeting if all Members and officers are present.</p>	<p>4x5 20</p>	<p>Members, officers and public should avoid sharing physical resources during meetings.</p> <p>Hand sanitiser is provided in meeting rooms, on entry to the Council Chamber and on entry to the public gallery.</p> <p>Members, officers and public must wear face coverings during the meeting as 2m social distancing is not possible. Face coverings are not required if a person can provide a medical exemption.</p> <p>Ensure Council Chamber is adequately ventilated including opening windows and doors where safe.</p> <p>Members and officers must not attend the Town Hall if they have tested positive for Covid-19, if they have been in close contact with someone with Covid-19 in the previous 14 days or if they have Covid-19 symptoms.</p> <p>Number of officers within Council Chamber to be kept to minimum. Where necessary, officers can wait in committee rooms until their part of the meeting.</p> <p>Number of members of the public admitted to public gallery is limited and places must be booked in advance.</p>	<p>3x5 15</p>	<p>Member briefing to set out Covid-19 safety requirements prior to first Full Council meeting in the Council Chamber.</p> <p>Update website pages to set out any requirements for members of the public attending Full Council meetings in the Council Chamber prior to first Full Council meeting in the Council Chamber.</p>	<p>1</p> <p>2</p>
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				<p>Members, officers and public must should not attend the Town Hall unless they have been vaccinated or have a negative LFT taken no more than 24 hours prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Any meetings of Full Council in the Chamber are kept to the minimum duration possible.</p> <p>Where Members or officers need to meet before or after the Full Council meeting, such meetings follow the appropriate Covid-19 safety measures and are kept to the minimum attendance and duration possible.</p> <p>Persons who fall within the Clinically Extremely Vulnerable or Clinically Vulnerable categories or who have previously been shielding should not attend the Town Hall.</p> <p>Members and officers should bring individual refreshments (in leak proof containers) to Full Council meetings and communal refreshments should not be provided. Hot drinks and food are not permitted in the Council Chamber.</p>			
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REVIEW DATE:

15 December 2021

Document Audit Date	Auditors Name	Outcome	Auditors signature
		SATISFACTORY / SEE ATTACHED REPORT	

REGISTER OF PERSONS

Risk Assessment _____


This is to confirm that the person(s) named below has read, fully understands and will cooperate with the contents and information relevant to the risk assessment.

Name	Job role	Signature	Date	Comments

Risk Assessment Action Plan

REFERENCE: e.g. RBC/ES/WSU/HM/001

Service Area: Legal & Governance	Section/Department: Democratic Services
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<p>Name and Description of Task:</p> <p>Meetings of Full Council held in the Council Chamber of the Town Hall Meetings will be attended by all Members, officers and members of the public. Other officers, e.g. Superintendents, will also be in the building on duty. All seating in the main body of the Council Chamber is likely to be used for Members and officers. The public gallery will also be in use with socially distanced seating provided for a limited number of members of the public.</p> <p>Numbers: Max 42 Members Max 12 officers (all officers are not necessarily required to remain in the Council Chamber throughout the meeting) Max 14 members of the public (to be kept under review in line with government guidance) Max 2 Superintendents</p> <p>Please describe the activity so that the reader can visualise the content</p>	<p>Diagram/Photo</p> <p>N/A</p> 
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Date of Assessment: 15 November 2021	Names and Job Titles of Assessors: Aftab Razzaq, Chief Officer – Legal & Governance
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Action Reference	Hazard Keyword	Recommended Action	Person Responsible	Target completion Date	Completed
1	Covid – 19 Infection/transmission	Member briefing to set out Covid-19 safety requirements prior to first Full Council meeting in the Council Chamber.	Aftab Razzaq, Chief Officer – Legal & Governance	Prior to first Full Council meeting in the Council Chamber	
2	Covid – 19 Infection/transmission	Update website pages to set out any requirements for members of the public attending Full Council meetings in the Council Chamber prior to first Full Council meeting in the Council Chamber.	Aftab Razzaq, Chief Officer – Legal & Governance	Prior to first Full Council meeting in the Council Chamber	

GUIDANCE/REFERENCE NOTES

RISK RATING MATRIX		
Rating	Likelihood	Severity
0	Zero to very low	No injury or illness
1	Very unlikely	First aid injury or illness
2	Unlikely	Minor injury or illness
3	Likely	“7 day” injury or illness
4	Very likely	Major injury or illness
5	Almost certain	Fatality, disabling injury, etc.

PERSONNEL AFFECTED? - KEY					
Public Stewards	P S	Young People Volunteers Lone Workers	YP V LW	Contractors Employees Maintenance	C E M
New/Expectant Mothers	NEM				

Control Measures (see specific hierarchy of controls for specific subjects)

People – Training, Supervision, Expertise, Knowledge, Monitoring
 Procedures – Safety policy, Site rules, Safe working Practises, etc.
 Equipment – Test certificates, Inspection regime, Maintenance schedules, PУWER Assessment, etc.
 Environment – Location based features, Noise levels

RED	> 16	Unacceptable risk level. Overall improvements required as a matter of urgency.
AMBER	11 - 15	Improvements required within one month.
GREEN	< 10	High Standard. Maintain and improve where possible.

Hazard Keywords to Help

Access
 Adverse weather
 Asbestos
 Computer use
 Confined spaces
 Construction
 Contact with hot/cold surfaces
 Cutting/grinding
 Demolition
 Drowning
 Dust

Electricity

Explosion (air, steam, compressed gases, reaction)
 Exposure to the elements
 Falls and falling objects (persons from height, materials/objects from height)
 Fire and explosion
 Hand tools
 Hazardous substances (dust, fume, vapour, gas, liquid, biological agents, hygiene)

Housekeeping

Inexperienced employees
 Ionising radiation
 Late night working
 Lighting
 Lone working
 Machinery
 Manual handling
 Materials storage
 Mechanical handling
 Mental health problems
 Noise/vibration
 Open tanks/vessels

Pressurised systems
Radon gas
Slips, trips and falls

Stress
Transport
Unsafe system of work

Violence or aggression

RISK ASSESSMENT FORM GUIDANCE NOTES

Ser	Box	Guidance note
1.	Service Area	Business Transformation. Customer and Information Services. Environmental Services. Housing. Legal and elections. Planning and Culture. Resources.
2.	Section/Department	Works Services Unit, Housing Options Team etc
3.	Name and Description Of Task	The name of the task i.e. The shredding of controlled documents. A description of what the risk assessment covers i.e. To operate the XXXXXX shredding machine to reduce controlled documents to unrecoverable waste paper. This is a one person operation and requires the use of PPE and RPE protection during operation. Use of times and frequency will also assist this information box.
4.	Diagram/Photo	A diagram of the machine/operation will help the reader to identify exactly what the risk assessment is about. A photo of the task/product will be a much easier way to show this information.
5.	Date of the Assessment	The date the assessment was carried out
6.	Names of Assessors And Job titles	These are the names of the persons carrying out the risk assessment. Ideally at least two names will appear in this box. Member of management, Employee normally carrying out the task, Safety representative and if required someone with specialist health and safety knowledge.
7.	Information Gathered From	Circle or highlight the areas that information has been gathered from.
8.	What are the hazards and how might they be harmful	These are the hazards (anything that may cause harm such as chemicals, fire etc). Also add a brief statement of what harm could be received i.e. asphyxiation, burns, fractures or bruising etc. The use of the hazard keyword list can be helpful to assist with identification of hazard subjects.
9.	Who might be harmed and how many	Identify people who might be harmed by the hazard, including employees, other workers in the workplace and members of the public. Do not forget office staff, night cleaners, maintenance staff, security guards, visitors and members of the public. You should identify groups of workers who might be particularly at risk, such as young or inexperienced workers, new and expectant mothers, night workers, homeworkers, those who work alone and disabled staff.

Ser	Box	Guidance Note
10.	Risk Rating L X S The (Without Control Measures in place)	This is the likelihood X by the severity of the illness or injury caused without any control measures in place. higher the rating the higher the risk. Use the risk rating matrix for this score. The worst case scenario I is what you should be scoring.
11.	Current Control Measures	These are the safety precautions that are being taken to reduce the risk of injury or illness. Refer to the guide on page 4 of this document e.g. Training, inspections and testing etc.
12.	Risk Rating	This is the likelihood and severity of the illness or injury caused. The higher the rating the higher the risk. Use the risk rating matrix for this score. A score of unlikely is the recommended level to achieve.
13.	Recommended Improved control Measures	These will be added following a review of the assessment or as part of an update process. i.e. Following and accident or incident where the assessment has been reviewed.
14.	Modified Risk Rating	This is the score given following the implementation of any of the above control measures or recommended improved control measures are applied.
15.	Action Required measure	Following the identification of a control measure there may need to be action taken to implement the control measure such as training or provision of upgraded equipment, repairs etc.
16.	Action Reference Number	This is the number that will correspond to the attached action plan and enable reference for future use.
17.	Review Date	This will normally be 5 years from the date of the current assessment. This can be shorter should there be the need due to higher risks etc. The RA should also be reviewed following an accident or a significant change affecting the work activity.
18.	Document Audit Date	This is the date that the audit is carried out
19.	Auditors Name:	This is the name of the person carrying out the audit.
20.	Outcome	This is the findings of the auditor regarding satisfaction or a report explaining the concerns identified.
21.	Auditors signature	This is the signature of the person carrying out the audit.

- 22. See additional report (an additional report will be attached by the auditor explaining the findings of the audit and any further actions required).

Register of Person(s)

Ser	Box	Guidance note
1.	Name	Name of the person reading who has read and is accepting responsibility for their conformance.
2.	Job Role	The job role of the person who has read and is accepting responsibility for their conformance.
3.	Signature	The signature of the person who has read and is accepting responsibility for their conformance.
4.	Date	The date the document was signed by the person who has read and is accepting responsibility for their conformance.
5.	Comments	Any comments that the person may have relating to the document or its relevance.

Risk Assessment Action Plan (Transferred from the main risk assessment document to the action plan).

Sections 1 – 6		These are identical to the main risk assessment form. This is to enable this document to be used independently of the main form if required.
7.	Action reference	This is the reference number from the main risk assessment document.
8.	Hazard Keyword	This is the key word relating to the subject to be actioned such as Manual Handling or Chemicals.
9.	Recommended Action	This is the action/activity required to ensure that the control measure requirements are met such as training for employees in the basic techniques of manual handling.
10.	Person Responsible	This is the named person responsible for ensuring the action is carried out correctly.
11.	Target Completion Date	This is the date the action is expected to be completed by. Earlier if possible is better than late.
12.	Completed	This is the date that the action was completed

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	Legal & Governance
Policy/Service being assessed	Return to Full Council meetings in the Council Chamber
Is this is a new or existing policy/service? If existing policy/service please state date of last assessment	Return to previous practice, replacing temporary arrangements
EqlA Review team – List of members	Minakshee Patel, Claire Waleczek, Sarah Chapman
Date of this assessment	15 th November 2021
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)?	<p>Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic there have been no Full Council meetings within the Council Chamber. Initially, meetings took place remotely and following changes in legislation earlier this year a decision was taken for meetings to take place in the Benn Hall.</p> <p>Restrictions have slowly been easing; however, the risk of COVID-19 still remains. Government guidance puts the management of risk to individuals and organisations. Therefore, Members are being asked to consider the present arrangements and whether a return to the Council Chamber should take place for Full Council meetings.</p>
(2) How does it fit with Rugby Borough Council's Corporate priorities and your service area priorities?	<p>This supports the priority under Organisation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rugby Borough Council is a responsible, effective and efficient organisation.
(3) What are the expected outcomes you are hoping to achieve?	Return to the Council Chamber in a Covid safe manner.
(4) Does or will the policy or decision affect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customers • Employees • Wider community or groups 	The decision will have an impact on Officers, Members and the general public as attendees of Full Council.
<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).

Appendix 2

(1) What does the information tell you about those groups identified?	The demographic data for officers and members is available, however, it is difficult to ascertain this for the general public.		
(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?	Internal consultation with Group Leaders, Leadership Team, Stephen Agutter – Health & Safety, Henry Biddington – Regulatory, Minakshee Patel – Equality & Diversity, Suzanne Turner – HR.		
(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 - this is about the Council managing the risk in relation to COVID-19.		
Stage 3 – Analysis of impact			
<p><u>(1)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>	RACE Potential impact	DISABILITY Potential impact	GENDER Potential impact
	MARRIAGE/CIVIL PARTNERSHIP N/A	AGE Potential impact	GENDER REASSIGNMENT N/A
	RELIGION/BELIEF Potential impact	PREGNANCY MATERNITY Potential impact	SEXUAL ORIENTATION N/A

Appendix 2

<p><u>(2) 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?</p>	<p>N/A. N/A.</p>
<p>(3) If there is an adverse impact, can this be justified?</p>	<p>No.</p>
<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.)</p>	<p>Mitigations need to be put in place in the Council Chamber to ensure the risk of COVID-19 is reduced for high risk / clinically vulnerable and clinically extremely vulnerable individuals such as, people with disabilities, people from different community groups, older people, gender (specifically males) and pregnant women.</p> <p>The disparities review report published by Public Health highlighted age (older age range), gender (males) and ethnicity (BAME) as at higher risk of dying if they caught COVID. This may also include undertaking individual risk assessments.</p> <p>One alternative measure is to continue holding meetings in the Benn Hall where social distancing can more effectively be achieved.</p>
<p>(5) How does the strategy/service/policy contribute to the promotion of equality? If not what can be done?</p>	<p>N/A.</p>
<p>(6) How does the strategy/service/policy promote good relations between groups? If not what can be done?</p>	<p>N/A.</p>

(7) Are there any obvious barriers to accessing the service? If yes how can they be overcome?	One of the issues with the Council Chamber is that it is a small, not very well-ventilated space and so could be a barrier to those who are vulnerable or anxious about COVID.
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<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="875 687 2112 1066"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="875 687 1122 762">Action</th> <th data-bbox="1122 687 1368 762">Lead Officer</th> <th data-bbox="1368 687 1615 762">Date for completion</th> <th data-bbox="1615 687 1861 762">Resource requirements</th> <th data-bbox="1861 687 2112 762">Comments</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="875 762 1122 951">Mitigations as identified in the risk assessment to reduce the risk</td> <td data-bbox="1122 762 1368 951">Aftab Razzaq</td> <td data-bbox="1368 762 1615 951"></td> <td data-bbox="1615 762 1861 951"></td> <td data-bbox="1861 762 2112 951"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="875 951 1122 986"></td> <td data-bbox="1122 951 1368 986"></td> <td data-bbox="1368 951 1615 986"></td> <td data-bbox="1615 951 1861 986"></td> <td data-bbox="1861 951 2112 986"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="875 986 1122 1021"></td> <td data-bbox="1122 986 1368 1021"></td> <td data-bbox="1368 986 1615 1021"></td> <td data-bbox="1615 986 1861 1021"></td> <td data-bbox="1861 986 2112 1021"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="875 1021 1122 1066"></td> <td data-bbox="1122 1021 1368 1066"></td> <td data-bbox="1368 1021 1615 1066"></td> <td data-bbox="1615 1021 1861 1066"></td> <td data-bbox="1861 1021 2112 1066"></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>					Action	Lead Officer	Date for completion	Resource requirements	Comments	Mitigations as identified in the risk assessment to reduce the risk	Aftab Razzaq																		
Action	Lead Officer	Date for completion	Resource requirements	Comments																										
Mitigations as identified in the risk assessment to reduce the risk	Aftab Razzaq																													
(2) Review and Monitoring State how and when you will monitor policy and Action Plan	Ongoing																													

Please annotate your policy with the following statement:

‘An Equality Impact Assessment on this policy was undertaken on 15.11.21.’

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 (2021-24) 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 Executive Director.

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

SECTION 1: OVERVIEW

Portfolio and Service Area	Legal & Governance
Policy/Service/Change being assessed	Return to Full Council meetings in the Council Chamber
Is this a new or existing Policy/Service/Change?	Return to previous practice, replacing temporary arrangements
If existing policy/service please state date of last assessment	N/A
Ward Specific Impacts	N/A
Summary of assessment Briefly summarise the policy/service/change and potential impacts.	The report considers the return to the Council Chamber for Full Council meetings. This means reverting to previous arrangements in place of the various temporary arrangements in place throughout the Covid-19 pandemic.
Completed By	Aftab Razzaq
Authorised By	Dan Green
Date of Assessment	15/11/2021

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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Energy consumption in the Council Chamber will be a direct replacement of energy consumption in the Benn Hall.	None required		
Fleet usage	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No impacts anticipated			
Sustainable Transport/Travel (customers and staff)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No impacts anticipated.			
Sustainable procurement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No impacts anticipated			
Community leadership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No impacts anticipated			
Biodiversity and habitats	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No impacts anticipated			
Adaptation/Mitigation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No impacts anticipated			
Impact on other providers/partners	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No impacts anticipated			

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	Not required
Key points to be considered through review	Not required
Person responsible for review	Not required
Authorised by	Dan Green