

## **RUGBY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **QUESTION PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 10**

**COUNCIL – 25 SEPTEMBER 2024**

#### **QUESTION B**

**Councillor Gillias to ask the Growth and Investment, Digital and Communications Portfolio Holder, Councillor Robinson:**

“In view of the forthcoming changes to national and local planning policies, can the portfolio holder for Growth and Investment reassure our communities that protection by the RBC enforcement team of the borough's historic environment, including its listed buildings, will be fully resourced to enable prompt responses to serious planning breaches and in particular during periods of out of working hours breaches, when intentional unauthorised development and damage to our countryside takes place?”

**Councillor Robinson, Growth and Investment, Digital and Communications Portfolio Holder, to reply as follows:**

“The proposed changes to national policy currently being consulted on do not impact on breaches to the historic environment nor on unauthorised development and damage to the countryside.

At a local level, this Council is reviewing our Local Plan. As a Member of Planning Services Working Group, Cllr Gillias, can review and help shape the policies, allocations, and designation of the Local Plan before public consultation and before it is referred to the Planning Inspectorate for examination.

On issues of enforcement:

1. Councillors may remember the previous administration of this Council removed the Conservation Officer post from the Planning Service. Conservation Officers are employed to enhance and conserve the Boroughs heritage assets. In the absence of a dedicated Conservation Officer this work was undertaken by Planning Officers alongside their existing roles. To ensure that expert advice is available on heritage matters this administration has now employed a Conservation Officer in a shared service with a neighbouring authority.
2. One form of unauthorised development in the countryside is Gypsy and Traveller encampments. This issue is exacerbated because of the failure of this council over many years (under the last administration) to allocate Gypsy and Traveller sites. The new Local Plan is the primary means by which this Council can allocate sites to meet the identified need. This will give the Council the ability to take more control over this issue in the future. In the interim this administration is committed to exploring interim measures and solutions.
3. The Council's Planning Enforcement team investigate breaches of planning control. The Council Wardens provide the front-line response to breaches escalated outside of office hours. The Council has an adopted Local Enforcement Plan, and the team has sufficient capacity to deliver a service in accordance with that plan, therefore meeting the statutory duty.”