

MINUTES OF CABINET

15 SEPTEMBER 2025

PRESENT:

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

Councillors Dumbleton, McKenzie, Poole, Roodhouse and Ward were also in attendance.

18. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 June 2025 were approved and signed by the Chair.

19. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence from the meeting were received from Councillors Livesey and Robinson.

20. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Item 5 of Part 1- St Andrew's Church Public Realm projects – Councillor O'Rourke (non-pecuniary interest as defined by the Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors by virtue of being a trustee of the Friends of St Andrew's Church).

Item 10 of Part 1 – Centenary Park Allotments – Councillor Roodhouse (non-pecuniary interest as defined by the Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors by virtue of being involved in allotments within the borough).

Item 16 of Part 1 - The impact of the Voluntary and Community Sector organisations funded by the Council in 2024/25 – Councillors Poole and Ward (non-pecuniary interests as defined by the Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors by virtue of being members of Long Lawford Community Association).

21. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no questions.

Growth, Investment, Digital and Communications portfolio

22. ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH PUBLIC REALM PORJECTS

Cabinet considered the report of the Chief Officer – Growth and Investment (Part 1 – agenda item 5) concerning proposed public realm projects at St Andrew's Church, Rugby.

RESOLVED THAT – IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL THAT -

- (1) a supplementary General Fund Revenue budget of £0.210m for 2025/26 be approved to fund external improvement works to St Andrew's Church, to be financed from the Town Centre Strategy Reserve; and
- (2) a supplementary General Fund Capital budget of £0.081m be approved and added to the capital programme for 2025/26 to fund external improvement works to St Andrew's Church, to be financed from the Town Centre Strategy Reserve.

Note: this decision is not subject to call-in.

23. HIGH STREET RENTAL AUCTIONS

Cabinet considered the report of the Acting Chief Executive (Part 1 – agenda item 67) concerning proposals to designate the town centre following consultation for the purposes of the High Street Rental Auctions.

RESOLVED THAT –

- (1) the steps taken to obtain the High Street Rental Auction powers be noted;
- (2) the additional Government Funding of £75,000 for improvements for each auctioned leased property be noted; and
- (3) the Acting Chief Executive be given delegated authority to initiate and manage High Street Rental Auctions including the issuing of all notices, licences, orders and other legal action as appropriate.

24. ECONOMIC STRATEGY ACTION PLAN

Cabinet considered the report of the Chief Officer – Growth and Investment (Part 1 – agenda item 7) concerning proposals on how the action plan for the recently adopted Economic Strategy will be developed and created.

RESOLVED THAT –

- (1) the proposals to develop the Economic Strategy Action Plan be approved; and
- (2) a high-level plan covering 10 years and an initial three-year plan from 2026 – 2029 be submitted to Cabinet in detail for approval by the end of this financial year.

Note: this decision is not subject to call-in.

25. SUPPORTING LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION WITH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A DATA, INSIGHTS & AUTOMATION FUNCTION WITHIN RUGBY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cabinet considered the report of the Chief Officer – Digital and Communications (Part 1 – agenda item 8) the proposed establishment of a data, insights and automation function at the Council to support the Council with local government reorganisation.

RESOLVED THAT –

(1) IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL THAT –

- (a) the creation of a Data, Insights and Automation function to support Local Government Reorganisation at Rugby Borough Council be approved; and
 - (b) the creation of an AI Ethics board, assuring the responsible, fair and legal use of AI across the Council, as recommended by the LGA, be approved; additionally; and
- (2) a 6-month proof-of-concept funding for external Communications support, guiding the team through the current surge in demand, including Local Government Reorganisation, be approved.

Partnerships and Wellbeing Portfolio

26. CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2025/26 - QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE CENTRE SECTION 106 FUNDING

Cabinet considered the report of the Chief Officer – Leisure and Wellbeing (Part 1 – agenda item 9) concerning a capital budget request for the renovation of the gym area and high use wet areas at the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Centre to be funded through identified Section 106 funds.

RESOLVED THAT – IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL THAT a supplementary General Fund Revenue budget of £0.360m for 2025/26 be approved for the enhancement of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Leisure Centre, to be fully funded through existing Section 106 funding.

27. CENTENARY PARK ALLOTMENTS

Cabinet considered the report of the Chief Officer – Leisure and Wellbeing (Part 1 – agenda item 10) additional Section 106 funding to enable phase 2 and 3 of the Centenary Park Allotment capital project to progress.

RESOLVED THAT – IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL THAT a supplementary General Fund Revenue budget of £0.105m for 2025/26 be approved for Centenary Park Allotments for the next phase of procurement and construction to be fully funded through Section 106 income.

Finance, Performance, Legal and Governance portfolio

28. FINANCE QUARTER ONE 2025/26 GENERAL FUND REVENUE AND CAPITAL MONITORING

Cabinet considered the report of the Chief Officer – Finance and Performance (Part 1 – agenda item 11) concerning the Council's General Fund financial position for quarter one of 2025/26 for both revenue and capital and other adjustments for approval as required by Financial Standing Orders.

RESOLVED THAT –

- (1) the Council's General Fund financial position for 2025/26 be considered; and
- (2) IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL THAT General Fund virements totalling £0.212m be approved.

29. PERFORMANCE REPORT 2025/26 QUARTER ONE

Cabinet considered the report of the Chief Officer – Finance and Performance (Part 1 – agenda item 12) concerning the Council's performance data for quarter one of 2025/26.

RESOLVED THAT – the Council's Performance Report for 2025/26 Quarter One be noted.

30. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STRATEGY 2025-2028

Cabinet considered the report of the Chief Officer – Legal and Governance (Part 1 – agenda item 13) concerning a proposed refreshed Equality and Diversity Strategy for 2025-2028.

RESOLVED THAT – the Equality & Diversity Strategy 2025-2028, as at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.

31. FINANCE QUARTER ONE 2025/26 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT MONITORING

Cabinet considered the report of the Chief Officer – Finance and Performance (Part 1 – agenda item 14) concerning the Council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) financial position for quarter one of 2025/26 for both revenue and capital and other adjustments for approval as required by Financial Standing Orders.

RESOLVED THAT - the Council's HRA forecast financial position for 2025/26 be noted.

Communities, Homes, Regulation and Safety portfolio

32. HOUSING STRATEGY 2025-2035

Cabinet considered the report of the Chief Officer – Communities and Homes (Part 1 – agenda item 15) concerning a proposed Housing Strategy for 2025 to 2035.

RESOLVED THAT - IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL THAT -

- (1) the proposed Housing Strategy 2025-2035, as at Appendix 1 to the report, be adopted; and
- (2) delegated authority be given to the Chief Officer (Communities and Homes) to review and revise the strategy in response to changes in legislation and policy, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Communities and Homes.

33. THE IMPACT OF THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR ORGANISATIONS FUNDED BY THE COUNCIL IN 2024/25

Cabinet considered the report of the Chief Officer – Communities and Homes (Part 1 – agenda item 16) concerning the positive impact and achievements of the voluntary and community sector organisations funded by the Council during 2024/25.

RESOLVED THAT –

- (1) the content of the report be noted; and
- (2) the achievements of the organisations supported through Council grant funding during 2024/25 be commended.

34. 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 paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

Finance, Performance, Legal and Governance Portfolio

35. CIVICA REVENUES AND BENEFITS CONTRACT AND CLOUD MIGRATION

Cabinet considered the private report of the Chief Officer – Finance and Performance (Part 2 – agenda item 1) concerning the Revenues and Benefits system contract.

RESOLVED THAT –

- (1) a supplementary General Fund Revenue budget of £0.050m for 2025/26 be approved to cover the immediate revenue commitment of the migration to cloud to be financed from the Budget Stability Reserve;
- (2) the ongoing revenue costs of £0.050m be built into the General Fund Medium Term Financial plan from 2026/27; and
- (3) IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL THAT a supplementary General Fund Capital budget of £0.104m be approved and added to the capital programme for 2025/26 for the software upgrade.

Communities, Homes, Regulation and Safety Portfolio

36. GARAGE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Cabinet considered the private report of the Chief Officer – Communities and Homes (Part 2 – agenda item 2) concerning a management plan for Council owned garages sites.

RESOLVED THAT – IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL THAT -

- (1) the garage disposal framework as outlined within this report be adopted;
- (2) a Housing Revenue Account (HRA) supplementary capital budget, as outlined in paragraphs 8.2 and 8.3 of the report, be approved; and
- (3) delegated authority be granted to the Chief Officer for Communities and Homes, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, to dispose of garage sites as per appendices 1, 2 & 3 and future potential disposals, in line with the outline framework covered in section 4 of this report.

CHAIR

CHAIR