

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Report Title: Supporting Local Government Reorganisation with the establishment of a Data, Insights & Automation function within Rugby Borough Council.

Name of Committee: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 15 September 2025

Report Director: Chief Officer - Digital and Communications

Portfolio: Growth and Investment, Digital and Communications

Ward Relevance: N/A

Prior Consultation: Portfolio Holder, Lib Dem Spokesperson, Chief Executive & Deputy Chief Executive, ITDS, HR

Contact Officer: Chief Officer - Digital and Communications

Public or Private: Public

Report Subject to Call-In: Yes

Report En-Bloc: No

Forward Plan: Yes

Corporate Priorities: This report relates to the following priority(ies):
 A Healthier Rugby – To support people to live healthier, longer, and more independent lives.
 A Thriving Rugby – To deliver a thriving economy which brings Borough-wide investment and regenerates Rugby Town Centre.
 A Greener Rugby – To protect the environment and ensure the Borough adapts to climate change.
 A Fairer Rugby – To reduce inequalities and improve housing across the Borough.
[Corporate Strategy 2025-2035](#)
 This report does not specifically relate to any Council priorities but fits with ensuring that our systems and processes are fit for purpose, including digitally, ensure value for money and are compliant.

Summary: Establishment of a Data, Insights and Automation function at Rugby Borough Council to support the Council with Local Government Reorganisation. The team will support ongoing efforts to identify and realise efficiency savings within the authority

and support senior officers and elected members with data-led decision-making.

Financial Implications:	There would be a financial requirement of £131,000 for 2025/26, £162,000 for 2026/27 as outlined in Section 6 of the report below. With ongoing annual salary costs of £172,000 from 2027/28.
Risk Management/Health and Safety Implications:	There are no risk management implications arising directly from this report.
Environmental Implications:	There are no environmental implications arising directly from this report.
Legal Implications:	There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.
Equality and Diversity:	There are no equality or diversity implications arising directly from this report.
Options:	No options have been provided.
Recommendation:	(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.
Reasons for Recommendation:	The Council does not currently possess the required capability or capacity to effectively drive the adoption and exploitation of AI-tooling and Automation technologies. It is essential that we build this capability in order to satisfy the increasing operational and financial constraints.

Cabinet - 15 September 2025

Supporting Local Government Reorganisation with the establishment of a Data, Insights & Automation function within Rugby Borough Council.

Public Report of the Chief Officer - Digital and Communications

Recommendation

- (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.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report sets out the funding and resourcing requirements of a proposed Data, Insights and Automation (DIA) function, the creation of an AI Ethics board and an additional funding allocation for the Communications team to support Local Government Reorganisation at Rugby Borough Council.
- 1.2 Within local government the adoption of Automation and AI-assisted tooling is driving significant increases in efficiency and efficacy, delivering financial and operational benefits across all services.
- 1.3 The proposed DIA function seeks to delivery significant material savings and efficiencies to the Council, proposing to reach cost neutrality within FY2026/27 with *forecasted savings* of £690,000 by the end of FY2028/29.
- 1.4 The project represents an unprecedented opportunity for the Council to harness and exploit current technological advances to deliver sector leading data and insight capabilities within Rugby Borough Council.
- 1.5 The proposed DIA team represents a key **‘invest-to-save’** opportunity for the Council. The skills and capability that the team will introduce is pivotal for the successful realisation of the Council’s Corporate strategy and delivery of the Annual Delivery Plan.

- 1.6 With the support of the Rugby Borough Council Cabinet, the establishment of a Data, Insights and Automation team will enable the Council to capitalise on these financial and operational benefits whilst delivering an enhanced data-led decision making and insights capability across the Council.
- 1.7 Rugby Borough Council struggles to effectively utilise the vast amount of data it holds across a wide range of systems and repositories.
- 1.8 It is critical that this data is categorised and analysed in a way which presents a deeper understanding and insight and allows for a more informed decision to be made, such as:
- i. Service demand projections into the medium and long term.
 - ii. Monitoring of Council metrics (KPIs and service delivery)
 - iii. Service performance benchmarking and resource usage.
- 1.9 If this is not approved the Council will have a severely limited ability to analyse the data it holds and will continue to struggle to make informed decisions on key initiatives and projects.
- 1.10 The enhanced data-led decision making and insights capability will be expressly beneficial for the Council, working in partnership with our peer Councils in preparation for the upcoming Local Government Reorganisation across Warwickshire.
- 1.11 The DIA team would conduct specialist technical work, complementing the projects currently undertaken by both the Digital Projects and Transformation teams at Rugby Borough Council.

2. The Data, Insights and Automation Team

- 2.1 The primary purpose of the DIA team is to assess the ways-of-working across the Council and identify process and workflow efficiencies and ways in which AI-assisted tooling and automation can be exploited to drive operational and financial benefits.
- 2.2 It is proposed that the DIA team will, as a matter of priority, identify opportunities to automate and reduce service demand in areas with high turnover, agency staff spend and increasing levels of demand.
- 2.3 The DIA team will work to identify both cost avoidance and cost saving opportunities across Rugby Borough Council.

The estimated operational and financial benefit benchmarks are as follows:

	FY 2026 / 27				FY 2027 / 28				FY 2028 / 29			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Cost Avoidance	£100,000				£150,000				£30,000			
Cost Savings	170,000				£290,000				£690,000			
Hours Saved	10,000				18,000				30,000			

- 2.4 There is expected to be a small cost saving in FY2025/26 of £70,000 for ITDS projects already in-flight, not shown in the table above.

- 2.5 These existing ITDS projects will be transferred to the DIA function upon funding approval being granted.
- 2.6 The benefit benchmarks were established following discussions with sister authorities and wider industry reviews of past performance in similar sized organisations.
- 2.7 The DIA team will be responsible for working with all directorates to identify work intensive, low-value processes and manual workflows across the Council and developing automated workflows to increase efficiency and reduce workload.
- 2.8 Stabilising the demand on services by reducing the resource impacts of low-value and manual tasks will be beneficial for officers, residents and the communities of Rugby Borough.

3. Proposed Team Structure and Operational Impacts

3.1 The DIA function will sit within the Digital and Communications directorate, reporting directly to the Chief Officer Digital and Communications.

3.2 The proposed structure of the DIA team is as follows:

Role Title	Grade	FTE	Cost
Snr. Automation and Data Engineer	G	1.0	£63,458
Automation and Data Engineer	F	1.0	£57,479
Digital Projects Officer	E	1.0	£51,155

3.3 To reduce the financial impacts of the DIA team, the ITDS team will contribute £30,000 of accrued in-year savings in FY2025/26 and £10,000 of projected savings in FY2026/27.

3.4 The ITDS team will offer secondment to two existing members of staff;

- i. 1 x Grade G; and,
- ii. 1 x Grade F, to part-fill a proportion of the posts.

3.5 This will ensure that the new DIA team can begin work at pace, contributing key insights and data-driven decision making to support the continued success of program delivery across the Council.

3.6 An initial tranche of use cases has been identified across the Council for the deployment of AI-assisted tooling and automation technology.

3.7 The initial tranche of use cases will be actively developed from October 2025 through into FY2026/27, upon funding approval being granted.

3.8 The initial tranche of use cases is projected to have the following financial impacts and operational benefits:

Use Cases	Cost Avoidance	Cost Saving	Hours Saved
Reducing agency staff spend through automated workflows and AI-assisted tooling support.	£150,000	<i>tbc</i> (£250,000+)	<i>tbc</i>
Environmental Health System data flows using RPA	£100,000	-	1,400
Automated Email categorisation and response generation	-	£15,000	1,800
Online Chatbot and assistance tools to answer customer queries	-	£25,000	3,000

3.9 Further use cases are being reviewed and assessed for suitability.

4. AI Ethics Board

- 4.1 The AI Ethics board will provide independent oversight, advice, and assurance on the fair, legal, and responsible application of Artificial Intelligence and automation tooling across the local authority, as recommended by the LGA.
- 4.2 The board will meet on a monthly basis, with additional ad-hoc meetings as required for urgent AI-related matters.
- 4.3 The purpose of the board is to safeguard the interests of Officers, Residents and Communities by ensuring any AI systems that are deployed at the Council are done so in a transparent, accountable and inclusive manner.
- 4.4 The membership of the AI Ethics board is as proposed:

Chair

Chief Officer Digital and Communications

Membership

Chief Officer Legal and Governance
 Data Protection Officer (DPO)
 ITDS Manager
 Corporate Equality & Diversity Officer
 Data, Insights and Automation *representative from*
 Human Resources *representative from*
 Transformation *representative from*
 Elected Members *by prior invitation*
 Deputy Chief Executive *optional*

- 4.5 The board will promote innovation while protecting against bias, misuse, and unintended harms, ensuring AI-assisted tooling contributes positively to the provision of public services.
- 4.6 A draft terms of reference for the proposed AI Ethics board is contained in appendix I of this report.

- 4.7 A separate EqIA for the AI Ethics board has been created and is contained in appendix II of this report.

5. Communications Support for Local Government Reorganisation

- 5.1 It is essential that the views and opinions of residents, businesses and communities across Rugby Borough are involved in the upcoming Local Government Reorganisation.
- 5.2 Additional funding is required In order to drive the successful delivery of LGR and maintain a high level of community engagement and involvement,
- 5.3 It is proposed that an additional budget be assigned, over a 6-month trial period, to provide additional resource, capability and capacity into the Communications team, with the option to extend for an additional 18-months subject to further funding approval.
- 5.4 This budget will cover the cost of bringing in external specialist support and bolstering internal resources to deliver the specialist work around LGR and manage the implications and strategic impacts of any changes.
- 5.5 Over the past 24 months we have spent in excess of £30,000 on business critical ad-hoc initiatives, including the Traffic Commissioner enquiry and work to support the Town Centre and Local plan.
- 5.6 With the upcoming Local Government Reorganisation and further work around initiatives such as Warm Homes it essential that we establish a more permanent solution.
- 5.7 It is proposed that bringing in a specialist external resource, rather than continuing with the current piecemeal ad-hoc arrangement will provide better value for money and provide a more cohesive and effective service.
- 5.8 The proposed resource will increase the resilience in the Communications team and provide additional strategic oversight, allowing the Council to navigate the churn and disruption within Local Government.
- 5.9 It is proposed that a 6-Month trial period is initiated, followed by a further 18 month extension, if successful.
- 5.10 The external specialist support will concentrate on providing the following:
- i. Supporting with delivering high-level strategic communications
 - ii. Manage and improve public perception of the Council
 - iii. Review of the structure and resourcing of communications
 - iv. Assessment of tooling, processes and workflows
- 5.11 LGR has the potential to fundamentally shift the ways in which local government and local authority services are delivered across Rugby Borough.

5.12 It is therefore important that the views and opinions of residents and heard, listened to and where appropriate actioned to deliver a Rugby Borough with strong and resilient services.

5.13 If the additional funding is not approved there would be insufficient capacity and capability in the Communications team to deliver effective and strategic communications support and resident engagement.

6. Funding Arrangements

6.1 The Data, Insights and Automation team is a key driver of the Council Annual Delivery Plan and Corporate Strategy, funded via the Corporate Strategy Delivery Budget, with a one-off contribution of £30,000 for 2025/26 from ITDS savings.

6.2 It is proposed that an additional budget of £75,000 for Communications Consultants be assigned over a 6-month period, to provide additional resource, capability and capacity into the Communications team, funded via the Transformation Reserve.

6.3 The AI Ethics board does not require funding or resources at this stage.

6.4 A breakdown of the financial impact is provided below:

Financial Information	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £
Increase in Expenditure:				
Increase in salaries	86,046	172,092	172,092	172,092
All other increases in expenditure - detail below:				
Consultants PoC (Specialist Communications Support)	75,000	0	0	0
	-	-	-	-
Total Increase in Expenditure	161,046	172,092	172,092	172,092
Savings:				
Reduction in salaries	0	0	0	0
All other expenditure savings - detail below:				
ITDS Savings (Current Vacancies)	30,000	10,000	0	0
	<i>Projected Cost Savings</i>	<i>70,000</i>	<i>170,000</i>	<i>290,000</i>
	-	-	-	-
Total Savings	100,000	180,000	290,000	690,000
Income Changes:				
	-	-	-	-
Total Income Changes	0	0	0	0
Projected Total Net Cost/Saving	61,046	-7908	-117908	-517908

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 The proposed Data, Insights and Automation team represents an invest to save opportunity for the Council, leveraging and exploiting technology to drive data-led decision-making at the Council.
- 7.2 This enhanced capability will drive the Council to make effective data-led decisions, supporting initiatives such as the upcoming Local Government Reorganisation.
- 7.3 It is recommended that Cabinet approves the funding associated with the additional Communications support, to be drawn down from the Transformation reserve; and
- 7.4 Council approves the funding associated with the proposed Data, Insights and Automation team provided within this report.

Name of Meeting: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 15 September 2025

Subject Matter: Supporting Local Government Reorganisation with the establishment of a Data, Insights & Automation function within Rugby Borough Council.

Originating Department: Digital and Communications

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

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Doc No	Title of Document and Hyperlink
	Rugby Borough Council AI Tooling Policy – June 3 rd 2024

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

Terms of Reference – AI Ethics Board

Date: 18/08/2025

Author: Chief Officer Digital and Communications

The AI Ethics board will provide independent oversight, advice, and assurance on the fair, legal, and responsible application of Artificial Intelligence and automation across the Council. Safeguarding the interests of Officers, Residents and Communities by ensuring any AI systems that are deployed at the Council are done so in a transparent, accountable and inclusive manner.

Membership

Chair

Chief Officer Digital and Communications

Members

Chief Officer Legal and Governance

Data Protection Officer (DPO)

ITDS Manager

Data, Insights and Automation *representative from*

Human Resources *representative from*

Transformation *representative from*

Elected Members *by prior invitation*

Deputy Chief Executive *optional*

Purpose

- To oversee and guide the ethical, legal, and responsible use of AI systems within the Council's operations and decision-making.
- To ensure that AI deployment benefits Council Officers, Businesses, Residents, and Communities equitably.
- To provide advice and assurance to elected members, senior officers, and project teams on the risks, opportunities, and impacts of AI.

Scope

- Review and advise on all AI-related projects, policies, and procurement decisions.
- Assess AI systems for compliance with relevant laws, regulations, and Council policies.
- Promote standards of fairness, accountability, transparency, and inclusivity in AI use.
- Monitor risks, including data privacy, bias, accessibility, environmental impact, and public trust.

- Recommend best practice frameworks, ethical guidelines, and training to support responsible adoption of AI across the organisation.

Governance & Operations

- Reports to the Council's senior leadership and relevant committees.
- Meets monthly, with additional meetings as required for urgent AI-related matters.
- Maintains a public record of agendas, decisions, and recommendations to ensure transparency.
- Reviews its own effectiveness annually and adapts scope/terms as required.

Decision-making & Advisory Role

- Provides non-binding recommendations to Council leadership, with a focus on safeguarding fairness, legality, and public trust.
- Ensures that major AI initiatives are subject to ethical impact assessments before implementation.
- Acts as a forum for dialogue between technical teams, policy leads, and the elected members.

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:
Rebecca Ewers
Corporate Equality & Diversity Officer
rebecca.ewers@rugby.gov.uk
01788 533509

Equality Impact Assessment

Service Area	Digital and Communications
Policy/Service being assessed	The creation of an 'AI Ethics Board'
Is this a new or existing policy/service? If existing policy/service please state date of last assessment	This is a new board
EqlA Review Team – List of members	Rebecca Ewers, Thomas D Griffiths, Stuart Mewes
Date of this assessment	18/ 08/ 2025
Signature of responsible officer (to be signed after the EqlA has been completed)	

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

Details of Strategy/ Service/ Policy to be analysed

<u>Stage 1 – Policy to be analysed</u>	
(1) Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the Strategy/Service/Policy (or decision)?	The AI Ethics board will provide independent oversight, advice, and assurance on the fair, legal, and responsible application of Artificial Intelligence and automation across the Council. Safeguarding the interests of Officers, Residents and Communities by ensuring any AI systems that are deployed at the Council are done so in a transparent, accountable and inclusive manner.
(2) How does it fit with Rugby Borough Council's Corporate priorities and your service area priorities?	The board will ensure the transparency of decisions related to the usage of AI and automation at the Council and to safeguard the interests of Officers, Residents and Communities by ensuring any AI systems that are deployed at the Council are done so in a transparent, accountable and inclusive manner.
(3) What are the expected outcomes you are hoping to achieve?	The board will promote innovation while protecting against bias, misuse, and unintended harms, ensuring AI-assisted tooling contributes positively to the provision of public services.
(4) Does or will the policy or decision affect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customers • Employees • Wider community or groups 	The board will primarily affect Employees through enhanced and improved governance, which will indirectly improve the service provision for residents and communities.
(5) Will the policy or decision involve substantial changes in resources?	No, it will not

<p><u>Stage 2 – Evidence about user population and consultation</u></p>	<p>As a minimum you must consider what is known about the population likely to be affected which will support your understanding of the impact of the policy, e.g. service uptake/usage, customer satisfaction surveys, staffing data, performance data, research information (national, regional and local data sources).</p>
<p>(1) What does the data tell you about the groups this policy or decision impacts?</p> <p>Possible data sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • national statistics/census data • local statistics • evaluations • analysis of complaints • user feedback • outcomes from consultation/community voice • Council published information, service data • District and Ward Profile – Warwickshire Observatory • Office of National Statistics • Fingertips health profiles • Indices of Multiple Deprivation • RBC Annual Workforce Equality Report 	<p>As the 'AI Ethics' board will be used to ensure the fair, legal and responsible usage of AI across the Council the primary group impacted by the board is Council officers and other individuals employed by the Council.</p> <p>The LGA recommends that 'AI Ethics' board be established to protect against bias, misuse and unintentional harm. The proposed board will ensure that these virtues are upheld across all officer, residents and community groups across Rugby Borough.</p>

<p>(2a) Have you consulted or involved those groups that are likely to be affected by the strategy/ service/policy you want to implement?</p> <p>If yes, please state which groups were involved in the consultation and what were their views and how have their views influenced the policy/decision?</p>	<p>I have consulted on the creation of the 'AI Ethics' board with elected members, leadership team, chief executive and deputy chief executive and members of the ITDS team.</p> <p>There is board support for the establishment of enhanced governance to ensure the responsible usage of AI and automation assisted tooling at the Council.</p>																							
<p>(2b) If you have not consulted or engaged with communities that are likely to be affected by the policy/decision, give details about when you intend to carry out consultation or provide reasons for why you feel this is not necessary.</p>	<p>N/A</p>																							
<p><u>Stage 3 – Analysis of impact</u></p>																								
<p>(1) <u>Protected Characteristics</u> From your data and consultations is there any positive, adverse or negative impact identified for any particular group, which could amount to discrimination?</p> <p>If yes, identify the groups and how they are affected.</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="857 821 1292 959">Protected Characteristic</th> <th data-bbox="1292 821 1700 959">Nature of Impact Positive, Neutral, Adverse (explain why)</th> <th data-bbox="1700 821 2107 959">Extent of impact Low, medium, high</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="857 959 1292 1027">Age</td> <td data-bbox="1292 959 1700 1027">Neutral</td> <td data-bbox="1700 959 2107 1027">/</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="857 1027 1292 1096">Disability</td> <td data-bbox="1292 1027 1700 1096">Neutral</td> <td data-bbox="1700 1027 2107 1096">/</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="857 1096 1292 1165">Sex</td> <td data-bbox="1292 1096 1700 1165">Neutral</td> <td data-bbox="1700 1096 2107 1165">/</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="857 1165 1292 1233">Gender reassignment</td> <td data-bbox="1292 1165 1700 1233">Neutral</td> <td data-bbox="1700 1165 2107 1233">/</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="857 1233 1292 1302">Marriage/civil partnership</td> <td data-bbox="1292 1233 1700 1302">Neutral</td> <td data-bbox="1700 1233 2107 1302">/</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="857 1302 1292 1374">Pregnancy/maternity</td> <td data-bbox="1292 1302 1700 1374">Neutral</td> <td data-bbox="1700 1302 2107 1374">/</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Protected Characteristic	Nature of Impact Positive, Neutral, Adverse (explain why)	Extent of impact Low, medium, high	Age	Neutral	/	Disability	Neutral	/	Sex	Neutral	/	Gender reassignment	Neutral	/	Marriage/civil partnership	Neutral	/	Pregnancy/maternity	Neutral	/		
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Age	Neutral	/																						
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Sex	Neutral	/																						
Gender reassignment	Neutral	/																						
Marriage/civil partnership	Neutral	/																						
Pregnancy/maternity	Neutral	/																						

	Race	Neutral	/
	Religion/belief	Neutral	/
	Sexual Orientation	Neutral	/
<p>(2) <u>Cross cutting themes</u> (a) Are your proposals likely to impact on social inequalities e.g. child poverty, geographically disadvantaged communities? If yes, please explain how?</p>	Description of impact	Nature of impact Positive, Neutral, Adverse (explain why)	Extent of impact Low, medium, high
	Socio-economic e.g.: child poverty, income level, education level, working hours/occupation, family/social support, access to good nutrition	Neutral	/
	Environmental e.g.: housing status, transport links, geography, access to services, air quality, noise pollution	Neutral	/

<p>(3) Using the information gathered in stages 2 and 3, please describe how the policy/strategy/service will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other unlawful conduct prohibited by the act b. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share and people who do not share a relevant protected characteristic c. Foster good relations between people who share and people who do not share a relevant protected characteristic 	<p>The 'AI Ethics' board will directly contribute to the reduction in the likelihood of bias, misuse, and unintended harms occurring, ensuring AI-assisted tooling contributes positively to the provision of public services for all residents and communities within Rugby Borough.</p>
<p>(4) Are there any obvious barriers to accessing the service? If yes, how can they be overcome?</p>	<p>No, there is not.</p>
<p>(5) What Equality Monitoring Data will be collected to analyse impact? How will the Equality Monitoring Data collected be used?</p> <p>If no Equality Monitoring Data is being collected, why not?</p> <p>For support with this section, please refer to the Equality Monitoring Guidance.</p>	<p>The 'AI Ethics' board will be lead by a published agenda and the minutes will be minuted and share publicly upon request (excluding any sensitive non-public and commercial information)</p> <p>This can then be used to monitor the decisions being made and the eventual impact of these decisions within the Council.</p>

<p>(6) Complete this section if any adverse impacts were identified in 3.1.</p> <p>Outline any actions that will be taken to remove or mitigate the adverse impacts identified in 3.1 to ensure that no discrimination is taking place. If removing or mitigating the impact is not possible, you may in certain circumstances, justify the discrimination. If that is the case, please give evidence for why justifying is possible in this case.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
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<p><u>Stage 4 – Action Planning, Review and Monitoring</u></p>	
<p>(1) Data analysis What does feedback from Equality Monitoring Data gathered tell you about impact on groups? Were there any unforeseen impacts (positive or negative)?</p> <p>The feedback/data should be used to inform your Action Plan in (2)</p>	<p>N/A</p>

<p>If No Further Action is required then go to – Review and Monitoring</p> <p>(2) 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"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="875 352 1120 427">Action</th> <th data-bbox="1120 352 1364 427">Lead Officer</th> <th data-bbox="1364 352 1615 427">Date for completion</th> <th data-bbox="1615 352 1865 427">Resource requirements</th> <th data-bbox="1865 352 2114 427">Comments</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>					Action	Lead Officer	Date for completion	Resource requirements	Comments																				
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<p>(3) Review and Monitoring State how and when you will monitor policy and Action Plan. Will you make any changes to the Equality Data that you are collecting or how you are collecting/using the data?</p>	<p>No, I will not make any changes.</p>																													

Please annotate your policy with the following statement:

‘An Equality Impact Assessment on this policy was undertaken on (date of assessment) and will be reviewed on (insert review date).’

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:
Rebecca Ewers
Corporate Equality & Diversity Officer
rebecca.ewers@rugby.gov.uk
01788 533509

Equality Impact Assessment

Service Area	Digital and Communications
Policy/Service being assessed	Creation of a Data, Insights and Automation Function
Is this a new or existing policy/service? If existing policy/service please state date of last assessment	New
EqlA Review Team – List of members	Rebecca Ewers, Thomas D Griffiths, Stuart Mewes
Date of this assessment	18/08/2025
Signature of responsible officer (to be signed after the EqlA has been completed)	

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

Details of Strategy/ Service/ Policy to be analysed

<u>Stage 1 – Policy to be analysed</u>	
(1) Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the Strategy/Service/Policy (or decision)?	<p>The proposed Data, Insights and Automation (DIA) function will provide enhanced skills and capabilities to support and drive Local Government Reorganisation at Rugby Borough Council.</p> <p>Within local government the adoption of Automation and AI-assisted tooling is driving significant increases in efficiency and efficacy, delivering financial and operational benefits across all services.</p> <p>The establishment of a Data, Insights and Automation team will enable the Council to capitalise on these financial and operational benefits whilst delivering an enhanced data-led decision making and insights capability across the Council.</p> <p>The enhanced data-led decision making and insights capability will be expressly beneficial for the Council, working in partnership with our peer Councils in preparation for the upcoming Local Government Reorganisation across Warwickshire.</p>
(2) How does it fit with Rugby Borough Council's Corporate priorities and your service area priorities?	<p>The proposed DIA team represents a key 'invest-to-save' opportunity for Council. The skills and capability the team will introduce is pivotal for the successful realisation of the Council's Corporate strategy and delivery of the Annual Delivery Plan.</p> <p>The team will contribute to the improvement of public service provision across Rugby Borough for residents, businesses and communities.</p>
(3) What are the expected outcomes you are hoping to achieve?	<p>It is projected that the DIA team will be able to realise significant financial and operational benefits through the adoption and exploitation of technology across the Council.</p> <p>This will improve the insights and data-driven decision-making capacity at Rugby Borough Council, driving positive change.</p>

<p>(4) Does or will the policy or decision affect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customers • Employees • Wider community or groups 	<p>There are no significant direct impacts, as this is a new function to complete work which is new to the Council.</p>
<p>(5) Will the policy or decision involve substantial changes in resources?</p>	<p>Yes, the team requires funding of £170,000</p>
<p><u>Stage 2 – Evidence about user population and consultation</u></p>	<p>As a minimum you must consider what is known about the population likely to be affected which will support your understanding of the impact of the policy, e.g. service uptake/usage, customer satisfaction surveys, staffing data, performance data, research information (national, regional and local data sources).</p>
<p>(1) What does the data tell you about the groups this policy or decision impacts?</p> <p>Possible data sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • national statistics/census data • local statistics • evaluations • analysis of complaints • user feedback • outcomes from consultation/community voice • Council published information, service data • District and Ward Profile – Warwickshire Observatory • Office of National Statistics • Fingertips health profiles • Indices of Multiple Deprivation • RBC Annual Workforce Equality Report 	<p>The team is aware of the demographic breakdown of the residents of the Borough and an estimate of the digital proficiency of the residents based on previous interactions.</p> <p>However, as this function is designed to increase the ease of engagement and interaction and provide enhanced service provision through technology this is unlikely to be an issue.</p> <p>The technological solutions are designed to focus on the most vulnerable residents and adapt to their needs – so there should be a net benefit.</p>

<p>(2a) Have you consulted or involved those groups that are likely to be affected by the strategy/ service/policy you want to implement?</p> <p>If yes, please state which groups were involved in the consultation and what were their views and how have their views influenced the policy/decision?</p>	<p>No we have not, yet.</p> <p>Once the team is established and the future pipeline of work and projects is agreed we can begin to engage with a variety of groups and community organisations.</p>		
<p>(2b) If you have not consulted or engaged with communities that are likely to be affected by the policy/decision, give details about when you intend to carry out consultation or provide reasons for why you feel this is not necessary.</p>	<p>Once the team is established and the future pipeline of work and projects is agreed we can begin to engage with a variety of groups and community organisations.</p>		
<p><u>Stage 3 – Analysis of impact</u></p>			
<p>(1) <u>Protected Characteristics</u> From your data and consultations is there any positive, adverse or negative impact identified for any particular group, which could amount to discrimination?</p> <p>If yes, identify the groups and how they are affected.</p>	<p>Protected Characteristic</p>	<p>Nature of Impact Positive, Neutral, Adverse (explain why)</p>	<p>Extent of impact Low, medium, high</p>
	<p>Age</p>	<p>Positive AI assisted tooling can assist residents of all ages to better access services at a time, location and via a range of media of their choice</p>	<p>Low</p>

	Disability	Positive AI assisted tooling can assist disabled individuals to better access services at a time, location and via a range of media of their choice	Low
	Sex	Neutral	/
	Gender reassignment	Neutral	/
	Marriage/civil partnership	Neutral	/
	Pregnancy/maternity	Neutral	/
	Race	Positive AI assisted tooling can provide near real-time translation of documents allowing non-english speaking residents to better access services at a time, location and via a range of media of their choice.	Low
	Religion/belief	Neutral	/
	Sexual Orientation	Neutral	/
(2) <u>Cross cutting themes</u> (a) Are your proposals likely to impact on social inequalities e.g. child poverty,	Description of impact	Nature of impact Positive, Neutral, Adverse (explain why)	Extent of impact Low, medium, high

geographically disadvantaged communities? If yes, please explain how?	Socio-economic e.g.: child poverty, income level, education level, working hours/occupation, family/social support, access to good nutrition	Neutral	/
	Environmental e.g.: housing status, transport links, geography, access to services, air quality, noise pollution	Neutral	/
(3) Using the information gathered in stages 2 and 3, please describe how the policy/strategy/service will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other unlawful conduct prohibited by the act b. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share and people who do not share a relevant protected characteristic c. Foster good relations between people who share and people who do not share a relevant protected characteristic 	<p>AI assisted tooling will broaden the range of accessible interaction and engagement between the Council and communities across the Borough. The tools will allow for better access services at a time, location and via a range of media that best suits individuals with a range of disparate needs.</p> <p>The translation and alternative format document provision, support by AI tooling, will allow for a wider range of engagement for individuals who are non-english speaking or are unable to read conventional printed or digital documentation.</p>		
(4) Are there any obvious barriers to accessing the service? If yes, how can they be overcome?	No, there is not.		

<p>(5) What Equality Monitoring Data will be collected to analyse impact? How will the Equality Monitoring Data collected be used?</p> <p>If no Equality Monitoring Data is being collected, why not?</p> <p>For support with this section, please refer to the Equality Monitoring Guidance.</p>	<p>None will be collected.</p>
<p>(6) Complete this section if any adverse impacts were identified in 3.1.</p> <p>Outline any actions that will be taken to remove or mitigate the adverse impacts identified in 3.1 to ensure that no discrimination is taking place. If removing or mitigating the impact is not possible, you may in certain circumstances, justify the discrimination. If that is the case, please give evidence for why justifying is possible in this case.</p>	<p>N/A</p>

<p><u>Stage 4 – Action Planning, Review and Monitoring</u></p>	
<p>(1) Data analysis What does feedback from Equality Monitoring Data gathered tell you about impact on groups? Were there any unforeseen impacts (positive or negative)?</p> <p>The feedback/data should be used to inform your Action Plan in (2)</p>	<p>There are none.</p>

<p>If No Further Action is required then go to – Review and Monitoring</p> <p>(2) 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"> <thead> <tr> <th>Action</th> <th>Lead Officer</th> <th>Date for completion</th> <th>Resource requirements</th> <th>Comments</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Action	Lead Officer	Date for completion	Resource requirements	Comments															
Action	Lead Officer	Date for completion	Resource requirements	Comments																	
<p>(3) Review and Monitoring State how and when you will monitor policy and Action Plan. Will you make any changes to the Equality Data that you are collecting or how you are collecting/using the data?</p>	<p>N/A</p>																				

Please annotate your policy with the following statement:

‘An Equality Impact Assessment on this policy was undertaken on (date of assessment) and will be reviewed on (insert review date).’

Rugby Borough Council

Climate Change and Environmental Impact Assessment

CONTEXT

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

Rugby Borough Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and the Council's Corporate Strategy (2025-2035) [link](#) sets ambitious outcomes in relation to Climate Change. These ambitions are further defined through the Council's Climate Change Strategy [link](#) and 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 greenhouse gas 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.

To help you complete this assessment, please see the following guidance on SharePoint [here](#).

A copy of this Climate Change and Environmental Impact Assessment, including relevant data and information should be forwarded to your Chief Officer for approval.

If you require help, advice and support to complete the form, please contact Ellie Lawson, Climate Change Project Officer (ellie.lawson@rugby.gov.uk), .

SECTION 1: OVERVIEW

Portfolio and Service Area	Digital and Communications
Policy/Service/Change being assessed	Creation of a new Data, Insights and Automation function at Rugby Borough Council
Is this a new or existing Policy/Service/Change?	New
If existing policy/service please state date of last assessment	N/A
Ward Specific Impacts	None.
Summary of assessment Briefly summarise the policy/service/change and potential impacts	Establishment of a Data, Insights and Automation function at Rugby Borough Council to support the Council with Local Government Reorganisation. Supporting savings and efficiency targets within the authority and support officers and elected member with data-led decision-making.
Completed By	Dr. Thomas D Griffiths
Authorised By	
Date of Assessment	18/ 08/ 2025

SECTION 2: GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner	Timescales
Scope 1 Emissions Direct emissions from council owned resources, for example through boilers or vehicles.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	There is no direct impact	/	/	/
Scope 2 Emissions Indirect emissions occurring at the location energy is produced for council activities. For example, electricity generation for council buildings.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	There are no discernible indirect impacts that have a material impact or can be measured in any reasonable manner.	/	/	/

SECTION 3: CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY

	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner	Timescales
Workplaces and the Economy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	/	/	/
Transport	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	/	/	/
Natural Environment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	/	/	/
Homes and Energy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	/	/	/
Waste, Resources and the Circular Economy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	/	/	/
Climate and Nature Positive Communities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	/	/	/
Adaptation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	/	/	/

SECTION 4: 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	01 /09/ 2027
Key points to be considered through review	None identified.
Person responsible for review	Dr Thomas D Griffiths
Authorised by	