

MINUTES OF COUNCIL

22 JULY 2026

PRESENT:

The Mayor (Councillor Sayani), Councillors Bainbridge, Barnett, Brown, Daly, Dumbleton, C Edwards, S Edwards, Freeman, Garcia, Gillias, Glowacki, Hassell, Henderson, Howling, Karadiar, Kedward, D Keeling, J Keeling, McKenzie, I Mistry, U Mistry, New, O'Rourke, Pimm, Pullin, Robinson, Roodhouse, Russell, Sandison, Stewart, Thomas, Thompson, Trimble, Timms, Ward and Willis.

20. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence from the meeting were received from Councillors Davis, Downes, Harrington, Poole and Simpson-Vince.

21. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 2026 were approved and signed by the Mayor.

22. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Item 8(a) of Part 1 – Notice of motion – Councillor Ward (disclosable pecuniary interests as defined by the Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors by virtue of his wife's employment.)

Councillor Ward remained in the Chamber for the item but abstained from voting on the matter.

23. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

(a) Members had recently been informed of the sad news that Honorary Freeman of the Borough and Past Mayor, Phil Blundell, had passed away. Phil was a Borough councillor from 1973 to 1983 representing Newbold Ward. He was Mayor for the 1978/79 municipal year and was conferred the honour of Freeman of the Borough in 1992.

Members paid tribute to Phil and the Council placed on record its condolences to Phil's wife and wider family.

Everyone present at the meeting stood in a moment's silence in memory of Phil.

(b) The Mayor marked the recent passing of former MP, Ann Widdicombe. Ann devoted many years of her life to public service. At a time when many elected representatives, public servants and others serving their communities face increasing levels of intimidation, abuse and threats, her passing is a reminder of the vital role played by those who step forward to serve others and of the importance of ensuring their safety, wellbeing and ability to carry out their duties without fear.

Everyone present joined the Mayor in observing a moment's silence in Ann's memory.

- (c) The Mayor's theme this year is pluralism, the 3Cs: community, compassion, cohesion. It is important, therefore, that we reflect on ethical and humanitarian principles, in order to achieve exemplary governance and effective democracy.

Exemplary governance is built upon the highest standards of equality, fairness, accountability, democratic participation, local democracy, civil liberties and the protection of human dignity for everyone. From time to time a reminder of these universal humanitarian principles, enables us to navigate better and make informed ethical decisions.

In this context the Mayor mentioned medical neutrality which stands as a universal humanitarian principle, recognised within international humanitarian law, including the Geneva conventions, and reminds us of the importance of protecting the lives of medical professionals working here and abroad, respecting their role in saving lives and our responsibilities pertaining to humanity and acting with impartiality.

In addition a healthy democracy relies upon responsible, independent, and ethical journalism, that enables informed public dialogue, transparency and accountability. Respect for these principles helps ensure that public trust is strengthened while allowing diverse voices and perspectives to be heard, without influencing debate or favouring any particular viewpoint.

By embedding these values into civic leadership, we strengthen trust, uphold our responsibilities and set a precedent for exemplary local governance, advancing a culture of pluralism, community, compassion and cohesion in Rugby and reflecting on the importance of law, ethics, and high standards worldwide, reaffirming our commitment to exemplary governance.

- (d) The Mayor was pleased to announce that five of Rugby's parks have retained Green Flag Awards, the international benchmark for quality parks and open spaces. Caldecott Park, Newbold's Centenary Park, Millennium Green and New Bilton's Jubilee Recreation Ground all received Green Flag Awards, while the 'pocket park' at Gladstone Green retained its Green Flag Community Award.

The awards aim to raise standards in parks and green spaces around the world, promoting well-managed and well-maintained parks with excellent facilities. The Mayor congratulated all officers, volunteers and community groups who contribute to maintaining the borough's parks to such a high standard.

24. QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 10

- (a) Councillor Garcia asked the Partnerships, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder, Councillor O'Rourke:

"Little Church Street is currently not included in the town's festive lighting programme, despite being home to 11 businesses, including one that has been trading successfully for over 33 years. This demonstrates both the resilience and value of this part of town. Enhancing the street with Christmas lighting would not only support these existing businesses but also help create a more inclusive and vibrant festive atmosphere across the whole town centre area.

Given the Council's commitment to supporting local businesses and promoting town centre vitality, will the Portfolio Holder commit to extending its Christmas lighting scheme to include Little Church Street, in recognition of its importance to the local community and economy?"

Councillor O'Rourke, Partnerships, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder, provided the following response:

"I'd like to thank Councillor Garcia for her question about including Little Church Street in the Christmas light programme for the town centre. To help progress this matter at pace, I've asked for it to be placed on the agenda for the next Town Centre Working Group meeting. This is a cross-party group that also includes all the relevant partners, including Warwickshire County Council representatives. The working group also have access to funding that could help support this proposal if possible/practical."

Councillor Garcia then asked the Portfolio Holder if consideration could be given to lighting in the trees along Church Street during the whole year to enhance the area. Councillor O'Rourke replied that she had already requested that this be included as part of the Town Centre Regeneration Working Group agenda.

- (b) Councillor Garcia asked the Growth and Investment Portfolio Holder, Councillor McKenzie:

"Will the Portfolio Holder for Growth and Investment confirm the total sum received in Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy contributions arising from the Ansty development site, and set out how that funding has been allocated to date, distinguishing between expenditure within Ansty and expenditure in the surrounding area?"

Councillor McKenzie, Growth and Investment Portfolio Holder, provided the following response:

“No Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) has yet been collected from the development. The trigger for CIL payment is the commencement of a phase of the development comprising CIL chargeable development.

To date, £10,661,663.02 (17/3/2026 for employment and training measures) has been collected under the Section 106 agreement which can be accessed on the Council's website:

<https://planningapi.agileapplications.co.uk/api/application/document/RUGBY/SB6XY5JCGG8HEXXBV2N89CUUFADYRVU28QDDGDFCZSFM6HNG7ZC84W6X9CY55RHH52JAQHMXYC75RFYSACZCAFQ>

Money collected under the agreement is required to be spent in accordance with the terms of that agreement. Schedule 9 to the agreement sets out how the employment and training measures contribution is required to be spent, in summary to deliver a training and innovation focused hub in Rugby town centre and to provide services to promote training and skills relevant to the development at the training and innovation focussed hub in Rugby town centre.”

Councillor Garcia then asked the Portfolio Holder if there could be a guarantee that the CIL money could be allocated to surrounding parishes to the Ansty development. Councillor McKenzie informed Councillor Garcia that the Parish Council, if it has an up to date Neighbourhood Plan, would receive a proportion of the CIL money once it is received.

25. REPORT OF CABINET – 29 JUNE 2026

The Mayor informed the meeting that items 2, 4 and 5 of the report of Cabinet dated 29 June 2026 would be deferred to a future meeting.

RESOLVED THAT – items 1 and 3 of the report of Cabinet dated 29 June 2026 be approved and adopted.

26. REPORTS OF OFFICERS

(a) Local Plan submission for examination and strategic environmental assessment

Council considered the report of the Strategic Director for Place (Part 1 - agenda item 7(a)) concerning reaffirmation of the decision of Council of 27 January 2026 to submit its local plan for examination.

The report summarised the sustainability appraisal of the Local Plan and summarised responses to the Regulation 19 consultation.

As detailed in the body of the report, in light of ongoing litigation elsewhere in the country, officers considered it prudent, based on legal advice, to consider the responses and, if appropriate, to reaffirm the decision to submit the plan.

Further to debate the Mayor put the recommendation to the vote. In accordance with the Council's Constitution, at least three Members requested a recorded vote on the item.

For the motion – Councillors Bainbridge, Barnett, Brown, Daly, Dumbleton, C Edwards, S Edwards, Freeman, Henderson, Howling, Karadiar, Kedward, D Keeling, J Keeling, McKenzie, I Mistry, U Mistry, New, O'Rourke, Pimm, Robinson, Roodhouse, Russell, Sandison, Sayani, Thomas, Thompson and Trimble – **28 votes**.

Against the motion – Councillors Garcia, Glowacki, Hassell, Pullin, Stewart, Timms and Ward – **7 votes**.

Abstentions – Councillors Gillias and Willis – **2 votes**.

RESOLVED THAT – having considered the responses to the Regulation 19 consultation, the Council reaffirms its decision of 27 January 2026 to submit to the Secretary of State for independent examination the Submission Local Plan and the other submission documents including the Regulation 19 representations and a summary of those representations.

**(b) Appointment of Interim Chief Officer for Finance & Performance
(Statutory Section 151 Officer)**

Council considered the report of the Monitoring Officer (Part 1 - agenda item 7(b)) concerning the appointment of the Council's Interim Chief Officer for Finance & Performance (Statutory Section 151 Officer).

RESOLVED THAT –

- (1) Mathew Crosby be appointed as the Interim Chief Officer for Finance & Performance, and be designated as the Council's statutory Chief Finance Officer under section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 and as the officer designated under section 114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, with effect from 22 July 2026 until a permanent appointment or a period of up to 31 March 2028, whichever is the earlier;
- (2) it be confirmed that, in accordance with Part 3H, paragraph 4(b) of the Constitution and the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001, the appointment is made on the basis that no well-founded objection to it has been made by any member of the Cabinet, the opportunity to raise any such objection having been given prior to the meeting;
- (3) the Interim Chief Officer for Finance & Performance be authorised to exercise all the statutory functions, duties and delegated powers of the Chief Financial Officer / Section 151 Officer as set out in the Constitution, with immediate effect from the date in recommendation (a); and
- (4) the consequential interim management arrangements and the Council's thanks to the outgoing postholder be noted.

(c) Decision taken in exceptional circumstances

Council considered the report of the Monitoring Officer (Part 1 - agenda item 7(c)) concerning an urgent decision taken under delegated powers with regard to amendments to the 2026/27 Fees and Charges Schedule.

RESOLVED THAT – the report be noted.

27. NOTICES OF MOTION PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 11

Councillor Stewart moved and Councillor Kedward seconded the following motion on notice, as set out at agenda item 8(a), which had been submitted in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

"That this Council:

- 1. Recognises the critical issue of veterans facing homelessness and the need for immediate action to support those at risk;*
- 2. Requests that Cabinet investigates how the Council might gain access to funding available through The National Plan to End Homelessness, including the £159 million grant referenced in national announcements;*
- 3. Requests that Cabinet brings forward proposals for a comprehensive support programme for veterans at risk of homelessness, addressing housing assistance, mental health support, and job training, for consideration within the Council's approved budgetary framework, and in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules where any change to existing resource allocation is proposed;*
- 4. Calls upon Cabinet to ensure that relevant departments collaborate and consult with veteran organisations, non-profits, and charities to enhance access to services;*
- 5. Requests that Cabinet examines all available mechanisms within existing housing legislation, guidance and policy that could be used to better support veterans and members of the Armed Forces community;*
- 6. Requests that Cabinet considers whether any amendments to the Council's Housing Allocations Policy or associated procedures could strengthen support for veterans whilst remaining compliant with statutory requirements;*
- 7. Requests a report be delivered back to the relevant scrutiny committee and thereafter to Cabinet for consideration."*

Councillor O'Rourke then proposed and Councillor C Edwards seconded the following amendment (amendments in red font and tracked changes). Councillor Kedward, as proposer of the original motion, accepted the amendment.

"That this Council:

- 1. Recognises the critical issue of veterans facing homelessness and the need for immediate action to support those at risk;*
- 2. ~~Requests that Cabinet investigates how the Council might gain access to funding available through The National Plan to End Homelessness,~~*

~~including the £159 million grant referenced in national announcements;~~
Notes that Rugby Borough Council already delivers a range of support for members of the Armed Forces community through its Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan, Housing Allocations Policy, Armed Forces Covenant commitments, homelessness prevention services and partnership working;

- ~~3. Requests that Cabinet brings forward proposals for a comprehensive support programme for veterans at risk of homelessness, addressing housing assistance, mental health support, and job training, for consideration within the Council's approved budgetary framework, and in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules where any change to existing resource allocation is proposed;~~ *Welcomes the work already underway to strengthen support for veterans, including participation in regional partnership initiatives and the ongoing review of housing and homelessness services;*
- ~~4. Calls upon Cabinet to ensure that relevant departments collaborate and consult with veteran organisations, non-profits, and charities to enhance access to services;~~ *Requests that Cabinet, working with the relevant Portfolio Holder, examines available mechanisms within existing housing legislation, guidance and policy that could better support veterans, and considers whether any amendments to the Housing Allocations Policy could strengthen that support while remaining compliant with statutory requirements, informed by a report from officers to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Working Group;*
- ~~5. Requests that Cabinet examines all available mechanisms within existing housing legislation, guidance and policy that could be used to better support veterans and members of the Armed Forces community;~~ *Requests that a report on the outcome of this work be brought back to the Scrutiny Committee and thereafter to Cabinet for consideration;*
- ~~6. Requests that Cabinet considers whether any amendments to the Council's Housing Allocations Policy or associated procedures could strengthen support for veterans whilst remaining compliant with statutory requirements;~~
- ~~7. Requests a report be delivered back to the relevant scrutiny committee and thereafter to Cabinet for consideration."~~

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

RESOLVED THAT - this Council:

- (1) recognises the critical issue of veterans facing homelessness and the need for immediate action to support those at risk;
- (2) notes that Rugby Borough Council already delivers a range of support for members of the Armed Forces community through its Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan, Housing Allocations Policy, Armed Forces Covenant commitments, homelessness prevention services and partnership working;

- (3) welcomes the work already underway to strengthen support for veterans, including participation in regional partnership initiatives and the ongoing review of housing and homelessness services;
- (4) requests that Cabinet, working with the relevant Portfolio Holder, examines available mechanisms within existing housing legislation, guidance and policy that could better support veterans, and considers whether any amendments to the Housing Allocations Policy could strengthen that support while remaining compliant with statutory requirements, informed by a report from officers to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Working Group; and
- (5) requests that a report on the outcome of this work be brought back to the Scrutiny Committee and thereafter to Cabinet for consideration.

Councillor Stewart moved and Councillor Glowacki seconded the following motion on notice, as set out at agenda item 8(b), which had been submitted in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

"That this Council:

- 1. Recognises that fly tipping is a blight on our local communities, and a potential hazard to people and the environment;*
- 2. Requests that Cabinet, working with the relevant portfolio holder and officers, provides costings for the roll-out of a bulky waste amnesty scheme on a trial basis, with results to be correlated against fly-tipping reports recorded during the trial period;*
- 3. Requests that Cabinet directs officers to undertake an urgent review of all logged reports of fly tipping, and to produce a remediation plan to clear the existing backlog, within existing budgetary provision;*
- 4. Requests that Cabinet introduces a KPI tracking the number of fly-tipping reports, the time taken to respond to the complainant, and the time taken to clear the waste following a report;*
- 5. Requests a report be delivered back to the relevant scrutiny committee and thereafter to Cabinet for consideration, on the performance of the proposed trial, and the feasibility of a longer-term provision of the service."*

Councillor S Edwards then proposed and Councillor Roodhouse seconded the following amendment (amendments in red and tracked changes). Councillor Stewart, as proposer of the original motion, was happy to accept the amendment subject to point 4 being included.

"That this Council:

- 1. Recognises the work already being undertaken by RBC services in tackling fly tipping and encourages the greater take up and use of the RBC App to report fly tipping. We recognise that fly tipping is a blight on our local communities and is a potential hazard to people and the environment. We also note that majority of the fly tipping that takes place is on private land;*
- 2. Requests that Cabinet, working with the relevant portfolio holder and officers, pilots a bulky waste amnesty scheme in an urban ward and a rural ward within existing budgetary provision, or otherwise brought forward through the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules.*

~~Requests that Cabinet, working with the relevant portfolio holder and officers, provide costings for the roll-out of a bulky waste amnesty scheme on a~~ *The*

report should include success measures and an assessment of fly-tipping levels including bulky waste before, during and after each pilot. with results to be correlated against fly-tipping reports recorded during the trial period;

3. ~~Requests that Cabinet directs~~ In light of the new DEFRA Guidance on Fly Tipping Requests that Cabinet, working with the relevant Portfolio Holder, directs officers to update the fly tipping strategy and policy and also update the performance dashboard as published on the RBC website to ensure it fits with the new DEFRA Guidance. And undertake an urgent a review of all logged reports in order to update action plans of fly tipping, and to produce a remediation plan to clear the existing backlog, within existing budgetary provision.

4. ~~Requests that Cabinet introduces a KPI tracking the number of fly tipping reports, the time taken to respond to the complainant, and the time taken to clear the waste following a report.~~

5. And that Requests a report be delivered back to the relevant Scrutiny Committee and thereafter then to Cabinet following the review for consideration, on the performance and outcomes of the pilots. of the proposed trial, and the feasibility of a longer-term provision of the service."

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

RESOLVED THAT – Council:

- (1) recognises the work already being undertaken by RBC services in tackling fly tipping and encourages the greater take up and use of the RBC App to report fly tipping. We recognise that fly tipping is a blight on our local communities and is a potential hazard to people and the environment. We also note that majority of the fly tipping that takes place is on private land;
- (2) requests that Cabinet, working with the relevant portfolio holder and officers, pilots a bulky waste amnesty scheme in an urban ward and a rural ward within existing budgetary provision, or otherwise brought forward through the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules. The report should include success measures and an assessment of fly-tipping levels including bulky waste before, during and after each pilot;
- (3) in light of the new DEFRA Guidance on Fly Tipping, requests that Cabinet, working with the relevant Portfolio Holder, directs officers to update the fly tipping strategy and policy and also update the performance dashboard as published on the RBC website to ensure it fits with the new DEFRA Guidance and undertake a review of all logged reports in order to update action plans;
- (4) requests that Cabinet introduces a KPI tracking the number of fly tipping reports, the taken to respond to the complainant and the time taken to clear the waste following the report; and
- (5) requests a report be delivered to Scrutiny Committee and then to Cabinet following the review for consideration, on the performance and outcomes of the pilots.

28. REQUEST FOR EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL

Councillor Ward, requested on behalf of the Conservative Group that, in light of the Government's decision of 16 July 2026 to place Rugby within a new northern Warwickshire unitary authority, the Mayor consider exercising her power under Standing Order 3(b) to call an Extraordinary Council meeting so that Full Council could properly debate the authority's response.

The Mayor informed Councillor Ward that she would reflect on his request and would respond to him following this meeting.

29. 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 item on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of information defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

30. PRIVATE REPORT OF OFFICERS

(a) Decision taken in exceptional circumstances

Council considered the report of the Monitoring Officer (Part 2 - agenda item 1(a)) concerning an urgent decision taken under delegated powers.

RESOLVED THAT – the report be noted.

MAYOR