

**AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET**

**Report Title:** Community Governance Review of Rugby Town Council

**Name of Committee:** Council

**Date of Meeting:** 18 March 2026

**Report Director:** Chief Officer - Legal and Governance

**Portfolio:** Finance and Performance, Legal and Governance

**Ward Relevance:** Borough-wide

**Prior Consultation:** Cabinet, All Leaders

**Contact Officer:** John Murphy, Chief Officer - Legal and 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):  
 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

**Summary:** To conduct a Community Governance Review to consider whether to create a new Town Council for Rugby, in accordance with the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

**Local Government Reorgansiation** The proposed Structural Changes Order, likely to be issued in Autumn 2026, will likely impact of the

<b>Implications:</b>	precise timing of the community governance process owing to the creation of the Shadow Authority. Precise assessment must wait until its publication.
<b>Financial Implications:</b>	The resources will be managed with existing resources, but limited additional costs for the Council may arise from consultation and administrative requirements.
<b>Risk Management/Health and Safety Implications:</b>	The Council must comply with legislation.
<b>Environmental Implications:</b>	None
<b>Legal Implications:</b>	The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (Part 4) devolved power from the Secretary of State to principal councils to carry out community governance reviews. The Community Governance Review will be undertaken in accordance with this Act and published guidance. The review process must ensure transparency, fairness and adherence to statutory requirements.
<b>Equality and Diversity:</b>	The Community Governance Review will be undertaken in compliance with the Council's equality duties. Any consultation and engagement will include appropriate accessible channels.
<b>Options:</b>	As detailed in the report
<b>Recommendation:</b>	As detailed in the report
<b>Reasons for Recommendation:</b>	As detailed in the report

**Council - 18 March 2026**

**Community Governance Review of Rugby Town Council**

**Public Report of the Chief Officer - Legal and Governance**

**Recommendation**

1. It is recommended that the Council conduct a Community Governance Review, in accordance with the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, to consider whether to create a Town Council for Rugby;
2. The timetable and Terms of Reference for the Review, as set out at Appendix A to this report, be approved;
3. The Chief Officer – Legal and Governance be authorised to take all necessary steps in relation to the Review;
4. A Working Group be appointed to consider the Review and make recommendations to the Council.
5. Full Council to have the vote on the final recommendation to create a Town Council.

**Executive Summary**

1. A community governance review examines the governance arrangements of unparished areas and existing parishes within the area defined for review, seeking to ensure that the arrangements are reflective of the identities and interests of the community in that area.
2. In undertaking the Review, Rugby Borough Council will comply with the requirements of Part 4 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and other relevant legislation, and have regard to Guidance on Community Governance Reviews issued in accordance with section 100(4) of that Act by the Department of Communities and Local Government and the Local Government Boundary Commission for England in March 2010.
3. The Council is commencing a Community Governance Review to consider whether to create a Rugby Town Council. In this report, reference to 'parish councils' and 'parishes' are synonymous with 'Town Council'.
4. This review is taking place partly in response to informal calls for the creation of a Town Council but also in response to concerns about the future Local Government Review (LGR) and how that may impact on Rugby, the borough and the identity of the town.

## **Recommendations**

5. It is RECOMMENDED to Full Council that:
  - 5.1 – the Council conduct a Community Governance Review, in accordance with the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, to consider whether to create a Town Council for Rugby;
  - 5.2 - Approves the timetable and Terms of Reference for the Review, as set out at Appendix A ('Appendix A') to this report, be approved;
  - 5.3 - Agrees that the Chief Officer - Legal & Governance is authorised to take all necessary steps in relation to the Review;
  - 5.4 - Agrees that a Working Group be appointed to consider the Review and make recommendations to the Council;
  - 5.5 - Agrees that the final recommendation will be presented to Council for a final decision.

## **Reasons for Recommendations**

6. To comply with the requirements of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 to formally commence a community governance review and ensure that community governance arrangements within the area under review are reflective of the identities and interests of the Community in that area.

## **Details**

7. A CGR is a legal process whereby the Council will consult with those living in the area, and other interested parties, on the most suitable ways of representing the people in the area identified in the review. This means making sure that those living in the area, and other interested groups, have a say in how their local communities are represented.
8. Within Rugby, the Council is the principal authority with responsibility for community governance arrangements. Section 93 of the 2007 Act allows principal councils to decide how to undertake a Review, provided that it complies with certain duties in that Act including details set out relating to consultation, the need to ensure any proposals reflect the identities and interests of the community in that area and is effective and convenient. The Council must publish its recommendations but the way the Council consults with its residents is not prescribed.

9. A Review can consider one or more of the following options:

- Creating, merging, altering or abolishing parishes;
- The naming of parishes and the style of new parishes and the creation of town councils;
- The electoral arrangements for parishes (for instance, the ordinary year of election; council size; the number of councillors to be elected to the council, and parish warding);
- Grouping parishes under a common parish council or de-grouping parishes;
- Other types of local arrangements, including parish meetings.

10. Section 81 of the 2007 Act requires the Council to publish its Terms of Reference for the Review which clearly set out the focus of the review.

### Scope of the Review

11. The Council must determine, following consultation with relevant stakeholders whether:

- the creation of a separate Town council would provide for better governance and service delivery,
- an alternative proposal should be implemented, or
- no change made to the current governance arrangements for the area.

12. The Review will assess existing governance structures and the following considerations:

- The creation of a new town council - whether separate governance arrangements would be more effective than the current warded governance arrangements;
- Impact on existing arrangements – effects on local democracy and representation, community identity, and service delivery;
- Boundaries – are the parish boundaries likely to remain easily identifiable and are they reflective of the identities and interests of the community;
- Electoral arrangements – how would any changes to the governance arrangements impact on the number of councillors elected;
- Town council name – whether a new name should be adopted if any changes were made to the governance arrangements;
- The potential financial implications, arrangements and efficiencies.

## Consultation

13. The Council is responsible for conducting this Review and has drawn up and will publish the Terms of Reference ('ToR')('Appendix A'). The ToR will lay out the aims of the Review, and the legislation that guides it.
14. In coming to its recommendations in the Review, the Council will take account of the views of local people and stakeholders. This includes ensuring all local government electors in the Borough are provided with an opportunity to input, and any other person, organisation or business who appears to have an interest in the Review.
15. The Council will publicise the Review by displaying information at the Council offices and on the Council's website, where submissions can be made.
16. It will also issue press releases and promote the process via social media.

## Indicative Timetable

Stage	What happens?	Dates
Review begins	Terms of reference published	1 April 2026
Consultation phase 1	Public consultation will be undertaken to gather views from affected parishes and local stakeholders	April 2026 – End May 2026
Review phase one	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consideration of all submissions received to consultation.</li><li>• Review of demographic, financial and governance data</li><li>• Assessment of potential benefits and drawbacks of creation</li></ul>	June 2026 – End July 2026;  Cabinet: August/September;  Council: September/October;
Draft recommendations	Draft recommendations published	October 2026
Consultation Phase 2	Public consultation on the draft recommendations	October 2026 - End November 2026
Review Phase 2	Consideration of consultation feedback	December 2026- January 2027

Conclusion of review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final recommendations prepared;</li> <li>• Final recommendations considered and approved by Council</li> </ul>	January 2027 – March 2027: Cabinet – March 2027; Council – April 2027.
Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council resolves to make a Reorganisation Order if required</li> <li>• Any necessary governance changes will be implemented, including amendments to parish boundaries, electoral arrangements or administrative structures</li> <li>• Any amendments to the Register of Electors will be implemented in time for publication of the annual register</li> </ul>	By May 2027

### Consequential Matters

17. The Council notes that a Reorganisation Order may cover any consequential matters that appear to the Council to be necessary or proper to give effect to the Order. These may include:

- The transfer and management or custody of property
- The setting of precepts for new parishes
- Provision with respect to the transfer of any functions, property, rights and liabilities
- Provision for the transfer of staff, compensation for loss of office, pensions and other staffing matters

18. In these matters, the Council will be guided by Regulations that have been issued following the 2007 Act.

19. In particular, the Council notes that the Regulations regarding the transfer of property, rights and liabilities require that any apportionments shall use the

population of the area as estimated by the Proper Officer of the Council as an appropriate portion.

20. Furthermore, the Council notes the Regulations regarding the establishment of a precept for a new Town Council and their requirements.

### **Local Government Reorganisation**

21. The Council notes that the ongoing Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) process presents a significant material consideration for this Review.

22. Following the Government's statutory consultation on proposals for Warwickshire, a Structural Changes Order (SCO) is anticipated in Autumn 2026.

23. It is unknown at this stage what is the critical date at which control over the Review may pass from this Council to the shadow unitary authority. It will depend on what wording is written into the SCO as to whether the Council retains its powers beyond Autumn 2026, or up to May 2027. Whenever the SCO transfer powers to the shadow authority, it is likely that the shadow authority may assume the role of principal council for community governance purposes, and the power to make a Community Governance Order establishing a Rugby Town Council may no longer rest with the Council.

24. The timetable set out in this report has been designed with this constraint explicitly in mind: the Review is intended to reach its final recommendations and receive Full Council approval in April 2027, immediately before the shadow authority elections. Members should be aware that any slippage in the Review timetable could result in the decision on whether to create a Rugby Town Council passing to a body in which Rugby's elected members will not hold a controlling influence.

### **Options**

25. Council could:

- Agree the recommendations in paragraph 5 in full, as stated.
- Defer a decision on some, or all, of the recommendations if further information is required, stating what further information is needed.
- Reject some, or all, of the recommendations, stating the reason(s) for this, and provide officers with guidance on the next actions to be taken.

### **Implications**

26. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk, equality and diversity, climate change, and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered:-

## **Financial**

27. The review will be managed within existing resources, but limited additional costs for the Council may arise from consultation and administrative requirements.

## **Legal**

28. The CGR must comply with the 2007 Act and associated guidance. The review process must ensure transparency, fairness and adherence to statutory requirements.

29. It is proposed to establish a politically balanced Working Group to consider the Review and make recommendations to the Council. The composition of the Group will be proportionate to the political balance of the Council.

## **APPENDIX A - RUGBY TOWN COUNCIL**

### **Review of Community Governance Arrangements within the Rugby Borough Council area for a Rugby Town Council - Terms of Reference**

#### **Introduction**

Rugby Borough Council is conducting a Community Governance Review of the whole of the Rugby Borough Council area in accordance with Part 4 Chapter 3 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. The Council is required to have regard to the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews issued by the Secretary of State. This guidance was considered when drawing up the Terms of Reference (TOR).

#### **What is a Community Governance Review?**

A Community Governance Review offers the opportunity to put in place strong, clearly defined boundaries, tied to firm ground features and to remove any anomalous parish boundaries. It can take place for the whole or part of the Borough to consider one or more of the following:

- Creating, merging, altering or abolishing parishes;
- The naming of parishes and the style of new parishes;
- The electoral arrangements for parishes (the ordinary year of election; council size, the number of councillors to be elected to the council, and parish warding); and
- Grouping parishes under a common parish council or de-grouping parishes.

The Council is required to ensure that community governance within the area under review will be reflective of the identities and interests of the community in that area; and is effective and convenient.

In doing so the community governance review is required to take into account:

- The impact of community governance arrangements on community cohesion; and
- The size, population and boundaries of a local community or parish.

The aim of the review is to consider and bring about improved community engagement, better local democracy and efficient, more effective and convenient delivery of local services, and ensure electors across the whole Borough will be treated equitably and fairly.

#### **Why Undertake this Community Governance Review?**

This review is taking place partly in response to informal calls for the creation of a Town Council but also in response to concerns about the future Local Government

Review (LGR) and how that may impact on Rugby, the borough and the identity of the town.

### **Areas to be Reviewed**

The Community Governance Review includes the whole of Rugby Borough Council area about whether to create a Rugby Town Council.

### **Who will Undertake the Review?**

Rugby Borough Council is responsible for conducting the review. The Council has established a task and finish group which will be responsible for making both draft and final recommendations during the process. In coming to its recommendations, the Council will need to take account of the views of local people. A full consultation process will form part of the Review to ensure that the views of local people are captured.

The Council will publicise the review by displaying a notice at the Council Offices, placing articles on the Council's website, via social media channels and other appropriate routes. The Council will also write to all existing parish and town councils, the Warwickshire Association of Local Councils, Councillors, the MPs, and neighbouring councils.

The Council will be required to approve the final recommendations prior to the Community Governance Order being made.

### **Timetable for the Review**

A timetable for the review is attached herewith. The programme and timeline may be adjusted after representations have been received by local people and interested bodies in response to the initial public consultation. Any adjustments to the programme and timetable will be approved by the Council and published on its website.

### **Electorate Forecasts for the Borough**

The Review will be conducted using electoral data taken from the most recent electoral register. Electorate forecasts will be prepared by the Council using extant planning permissions and the Local Plan to project the five-year electorate forecast. These forecasts will be made available to all interested parties as early as possible in the review process.

### **Representations**

Rugby Borough Council welcomes representations from any person or body who may wish to comment or make proposals on any aspect of the matters under review.

Representations should be submitted via the Council's website at [www.rugby.gov.uk/CGR](http://www.rugby.gov.uk/CGR), by email to [cgr@rugby.gov.uk](mailto:cgr@rugby.gov.uk) or in writing addressed to: Chief Officer – Legal & Governance (CGR), Rugby Borough Council, Town Hall, Evreux Way, Rugby CV21 2RR.

The Council will consult with the local government electors for the area under review and any other person or body who appears to have an interest in the Review and take the representations that are received into account by judging them against the criteria in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

All representations received will be published, as will the reasons for accepting or rejecting any such representations.

### **How will the Results be Disseminated?**

The Council will publish full details on the Council's website; press releases will be issued at key points and key documents will be on deposit at the Council Offices.

## Rugby Borough Council

### Rugby Town Council - Community Governance Review 2026/27

#### Programme and Timetable

Stage	Date/Timeline	Timescale	Outline of Activity
Commencement	18 March 2026 Council		Approval of Terms of Reference and timetable
	1 April 2026		Publication of Notice and Terms of Reference and Stakeholder Notification of commencement of the review.
Preliminary Stage	Late April 2026 to mid-May 2026	4 weeks	Offer of local briefings and meetings with stakeholders
Stage One - Invite initial submissions	Late May 2026 to mid-July 2026	8 weeks	Initial submissions invited. Consultation/Representations. Consultation with stakeholders.
Stage Two - Consider submissions	Mid-July 2026 to mid-August 2026 Cabinet: September 2026 Council: October 2026	5 weeks	Consideration of submissions received - draft recommendations prepared. * Consider volume and whether special Cabinet is required prior to Council.
Stage Three - Publish Draft Recommendations	October 2026 to January 2027	12 weeks	Publish draft recommendations for further consultation.
Stage Four - Final Recommendations	January 2027 to March 2027 Cabinet: March 2027 Council: April 2027	10 weeks	Consideration of further submissions received and prepare final recommendations. Final recommendations published. Cabinet required to consider recommendations. Council resolves to make a Reorganisation Order.
Implementation	May 2027 (Elections)		Effective date of any changes to town boundaries and electoral arrangements.

**Name of Meeting:** Council

**Date of Meeting:** 18 March 2026

**Subject Matter:** Community Governance Review of Rugby Town Council

**Originating Department:** Legal and Governance

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

**LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

<b>Doc No</b>	<b>Title of Document and Hyperlink</b>
1	<a href="#">Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007</a>
2	<a href="#">Guidance on community governance reviews</a>

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.

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Exempt information is contained in the following documents:

<b>Doc No</b>	<b>Relevant Paragraph of Schedule 12A</b>