

MINUTES OF CABINET

29 JUNE 2026

PRESENT:

Councillors Robinson (Chair), C Edwards, S Edwards, McKenzie, Mistry, Pimm and Roodhouse.

Councillors Gillias, Poole, Stewart and Ward were also in attendance.

15. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 June 2026 were approved and signed by the Chair.

16. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence from the meeting was received from Councillor O'Rourke.

17. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

18. QUESTION TIME

There were no questions.

19. MATTERS REFERRED FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEE OR FULL COUNCIL

There were no items to be considered.

Growth and Investment Portfolio

20. RUGBY TOWN CENTRE PUBLIC REALM PRIORITY PROJECT

Cabinet considered the report of the Strategic Director - Place (Part 1 – agenda item 6) concerning Council approval for the allocation of monies from the Town Centre Budget to advance project 1 of the Public Realm Masterplan (2025) to RIBA stage 4 (final design).

Options considered

The alternative option would be to not agree the spend as set out in the report.

Reasons for decision

Approval of the allocation of monies would ensure that the public realm priority schemes are progressed to instigate positive change within the town centre in order to realise the development and investment opportunities in the town centre which will also deliver on the aims of the Corporate Strategy.

RESOLVED THAT – IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL THAT £0.314m (revenue) of the Town Centre Budget be allocated to progress priority projects 1 within the Public Realm Masterplan (2025) to RIBA stage 4.

Partnerships, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio

21. THE BENN HALL – CAPITAL PROGRAMME REFURBISHMENT

Cabinet considered the report of the Strategic Director - Place (Part 1 – agenda item 7) concerning a capital budget request for a refurbishment programme for The Benn Hall.

Options considered

The alternative option would be to reject the supplementary capital budget.

Reasons for decision

The refurbishment programme will ensure the Council continue to support its town centre entertainment asset, offering modern and a fit for purpose venue for the residents of Rugby.

RESOLVED THAT – IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL THAT -

- (1) a supplementary General Fund capital budget of £0.179m be approved and added to the 2026/27 capital programme for the refurbishment of the Benn Hall, to be financed through borrowing; and
- (2) delegated authority be given to the Assistant Director Leisure & Wellbeing to enter into necessary contracts following procurement process.

22. RUGBY ART GALLERY AND MUSEUM DEVELOPMENT

Cabinet considered the report of the Strategic Director - Place (Part 1 – agenda item 8) concerning Council approval for the submission of an application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund for the modernisation and re-development of Rugby Art Gallery and Museum including the required match funding as set out within the body of the report.

Options considered

The alternative option would be to reject the proposal.

Reasons for decision

The facility is a key town centre leisure asset delivering significant economic and social impact for the borough and wider population. By securing the required match funding, the Council will be in a strong position to apply for the National Lottery Heritage Fund and ensure its future delivery is modern and fit for purpose.

The investment will enable the Council to reach new audiences, develop its user accessibility and develop a key cultural asset for the town of Rugby.

RESOLVED THAT – IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL THAT -

- (1) delegated authority be given to the Assistant Director Leisure and Wellbeing to submit an application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund and progress through outlined grant phases if successful;
- (2) if National Lottery Heritage Funding is obtained match funding of £2m be funded from the business rates equalisation reserve for the capital re-development of Rugby Art Gallery and Museum be approved; and
- (3) delegated authority be given to the Assistant Director Leisure and Wellbeing to submit an application to funding bodies in relation to the RAGM Redevelopment project to secure additional grant funding, including the Clore Duffield Foundation.

People, Resources and Governance Portfolio

23. FINANCE 2025/26 OUTTURN POSITION – GENERAL FUND REVENUE AND CAPITAL MONITORING

The Chair reported that this item had been deferred to the next available meeting of Cabinet.

24. FINANCE 2025/26 OUTTURN POSITION – HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT REVENUE AND CAPITAL MONITORING

The Chair reported that this item had been deferred to the next available meeting of Cabinet.

25. PERFORMANCE REPORT 2025/26 QUARTER FOUR

The Chair reported that this item had been deferred to the next available meeting of Cabinet.

26. COUNCILLORS' ALLOWANCES 2025/26

Cabinet considered the report of the Chief Financial Officer (Part 1 – agenda item 12) concerning allowances claimed by councillors for the 2025/26 financial year. The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 require each local authority to publish details of allowances paid to each councillor for the previous financial year.

Options considered

No alternative options were presented within the report

Reasons for decision

The report satisfies the legislative requirement to publish the list of allowances claimed by councillors for the previous financial year.

RESOLVED THAT – the allowances claimed by Councillors for 2025/26 as detailed at Appendix 1 to the report, be noted.

Communities, Housing and Safety Portfolio

27. ADDITIONAL ALLOCATION OF DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT (DFG) FUNDING

Cabinet considered the report of the Strategic Director - Communities (Part 1 – agenda item 13) concerning an additional allocation of £62,586 for Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) being added to the Capital Programme in 2026/27 as a supplementary capital budget to enable the additional allocation to be transferred to the Heart Partnership to administer.

Options considered

Option 1 - assign the additional funding to the HEART Partnership to administer as per the existing agreement.

Option 2 - return the additional grant allocation to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government as there are no mechanisms outside of the HEART Partnership to enable the spend.

Reasons for decision

The HEART partnership is the established mechanism for delivering Rugby's Disabled Facilities Grants. The funding is government grant which is being paid over to the HEART Partnership and has no financial impact on the Council.

RESOLVED THAT – a General Fund supplementary capital budget of £62,586.00 be added to the Capital Programme in 2026-27, financed from grant contributions.

28. UPDATE ON LANDLORD SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN FOLLOWING THE REGULATORY JUDGEMENT BY THE REGULATOR FOR SOCIAL HOUSING (RSH)

Cabinet considered the report of the Strategic Director - Communities (Part 1 – agenda item 14) concerning a summary of the areas to be covered by the developing improvement plan, an update on the engagement programme with the RSH, The governance and assurance, for monitoring and overview, including regularly updates to Cabinet following the regulatory judgement by the Regulator for Social Housing (RSH).

Options considered

Option 1 - Cabinet notes the content of the report and appendices and endorses the approach set out to service improvement, engagement with the Regulator of Social Housing and the proposed governance and assurance arrangements.

Option 2 - Referral to Scrutiny Committee for further review.

Reasons for decision

A C3 Judgement, with identified failures and weaknesses in the delivery of two of the Consumer Standards requires a proactive, sustained and focussed approach that will move Rugby Borough Council, in a timely and sustainable way, to a C1 judgement, indicating that the Council is delivering for its tenants the outcomes set out by the consumer standards.

The report sets out the areas covered by the improvement plan, an update on the engagement programme with the RSH and proposals on governance and assurance.

RESOLVED THAT –

- (1) the progress of the co-regulatory approach to ensure service improvement, being developed between the Council and the Regulator of Social Housing be noted;
- (2) a further report to Cabinet, confirming the proposed improvement plan, will be submitted in Autumn 2026; and
- (3) this be followed by regular updates to Cabinet on progress and implementation

Environment and Climate Portfolio

29. CASHLESS PARKING PAYMENT SOLUTION

Cabinet considered the report of the Strategic Director - Communities (Part 1 – agenda item 15) concerning a proposal to continue with the provision of cashless parking payment solutions in Council owned car parks.

Options considered

Option 1 - the Council discontinue the availability of a parking app and revert to cash and card payments only.

There would be a likely reduction in both parking income and customer experience, as service users are potentially deterred from using the car parks. 61% of transactions are made via the cashless method. Changes would be required to signage within the car parks, removing the discontinued cashless payment option.

Option 2 – the Council continues to offer a parking app option.

The 61% of transactions currently made using this method indicates that this will help to sustain current income streams and maintain a positive customer experience. The decision to continue would be informed by intelligence led data based on recorded use of the cashless solution.

This option supports customer choice and accessibility, as well as supporting the Council's objectives in terms of digital service delivery.

Reasons for decision

The current contract for the Council's cashless, app-based, parking provider is due to expire on 25 July 2026, and a decision is required to ensure continuity of this service beyond this date.

Usage data shows a clear increase towards app-based payments, which now account for approximately 61% of all parking transactions, making this the primary payment method for many customers.

Maintaining an app-based option alongside cash and card payments ensures a range of accessible, convenient choices for residents and visitors.

RESOLVED THAT –

- (1) a cashless payment solution, accessible via a mobile app, telephone, text message, and PayPoint outlets continue to be provided. This will complement the cash and card payment options, which will be retained;
- (2) the supplier of the cashless payment solution be procured in compliance with the requirements of the Council's Contract Standing Orders, which will be the highest scoring bidder under the ESPO 509-23 Lot 3 mini competition;
- (3) the initial contract period be for two years, with two optional one-year extensions; and
- (4) delegated authority be given to the Strategic Director - Communities, in consultation with the Section 151 Officer and Portfolio Holder for Communities, Homes, and Safety, to award and enter a contract with the highest scoring bidder.

30. CAPITAL FUNDING FOR THE PURCHASE OF COUNCIL FLEET

Cabinet considered the report of the Strategic Director – Operations and Transformation (Part 1 – agenda item 16) concerning proposed funding for the purchase of the Council's fleet.

Options considered

Option 1 - approve the proposed funding as recommended.

Option 2 - do not approve the proposed approach and request a revised proposal for further consideration.

Option 3 - reject the proposed funding and continue operating the current fleet.

Reasons for decision

Failure to approve the fleet replacement programme would result in continued reliance on an ageing fleet, leading to rising maintenance and hire vehicle costs, increased downtime, and greater operational and service delivery risk. Older vehicles negatively impact productivity, fuel efficiency, health and safety standards, and the Council's environmental and carbon reduction objectives. Replacing vehicles with newer, Euro 6-compliant models would improve reliability, safety, fuel efficiency, and ULEZ compliance, while reducing costs and supporting consistent service delivery.

RESOLVED THAT - IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL THAT a supplementary General Fund capital budget of £0.992m be approved and added to the capital programme for 2026/27 for the procurement of replacement vehicles to be financed through borrowing.

31. GREAT CENTRAL WALK BRIDGE STRUCTURAL REMEDIATION

Cabinet considered the report of the Strategic Director – Operations and Transformation (Part 1 – agenda item 17), together with an addendum and additional appendix showing an equality impact assessment, concerning proposed capital funding for structural monitoring, vegetation clearance, and critical remediation of bridges along the Great Central Walk.

Options considered

Option 1 - approve the 3-year programme to ensure safety and manage whole-life costs.

Option 2 - reject or delay funding, leading to asset deterioration and potential public safety risks.

Reasons for decision

To ensure the safety and structural integrity of assets, remove long-term maintenance liabilities (e.g., Staveley Way), and minimise whole-life costs.

RESOLVED THAT - IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL THAT a supplementary General Fund capital budget of £1.925m be approved and added to the 2026/27 capital programme for bridge improvements along the Great Central Walk, to be financed through borrowing.

32. BRANDON STADIUM – CURRENT POSITION AND PROPOSED PREPARATORY WORK

Cabinet considered the report of the Strategic Director – Operations and Transformation (Part 1 – agenda item 18), together with a public addendum and a private addendum, concerning the current position in relation to Brandon Stadium (also known as Coventry Stadium) and a decision on whether the Council should continue the project into a limited and controlled preparatory phase.

The Leader of the Council advised that if there was any debate relating to the exempt addendum and appendix, the meeting would need to move into private session.

It was then moved, seconded and

RESOLVED THAT - in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3 and 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, and that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

The meeting then moved into private session.

Cabinet considered the exempt information contained in the confidential addendum and appendix. Following debate, the meeting then reconvened in public session in order to consider and determine the recommendation.

Options considered

Option 1 - Cease active progression work

Benefit: avoids further officer and external resource commitment.

Risk: closes off further structured exploration of the issue despite changed planning and policy context.

Option 2 - continue with controlled preparatory work

Benefit: allows the Council to test deliverability, implications and risk in a structured and evidence-led way.

Risk: requires continued officer time and some further support without guarantee of a positive outcome, and would need to be managed alongside LGR pressures and longer-term governance uncertainty.

Option 3 - maintain only a limited watching brief / policy-support position

Benefit: limits immediate resource commitment.

Risk: unlikely to move the matter forward in any meaningful or evidence-based way and may simply defer the issue into a more uncertain future governance environment.

Reasons for decision

Brandon Stadium remains a site of longstanding public interest and policy significance. The Council has an existing democratic basis for having explored the issue, and Local Plan consultation responses demonstrate both significant support for the policy approach relating to the stadium and objections / unresolved issues around matters including viability, future use, deliverability and the landowner's position. The work undertaken to date shows that the matter remains complex and that any further progression should be limited, staged and evidence-led at this stage. This approach is consistent with the Council's wider strategic commitment to support sustainable growth, strong governance and evidence-led decision-making. It also recognises that any next phase would need to be carefully managed in the context of local government reorganisation, which may affect both near-term capacity and the longer-term governance environment within which any later substantive decision would be taken.

RESOLVED THAT –

- (1) the background, planning history and current position in relation to Brandon Stadium be noted;
- (2) the comments received from the Wolston and the Lawfords Ward Members, and the officer response set out in section 9.0 be noted;
- (3) continuation of the project into a limited and controlled preparatory phase be approved;
- (4) officers be authorised to undertake the defined preparatory work described in sections 6 and 7 of the report relating to the current position and proposed preparatory work at Brandon Stadium, within existing approved service budgets and available officer resources, and to bring a further report to Cabinet before any market-facing soft market testing document is issued or any substantive commitment is made;

- (5) the indicative staged route set out in section 7 of the report and the supporting Soft Market Testing Delivery Note at Appendix B be noted, recognising that any later substantive step would be subject to a further report and approval as appropriate; and
- (6) the more detailed legal, financial and commercial considerations set out in Exempt Appendix 1 be noted.

CHAIR