



2 July 2021

## SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 12 JULY 2021

A meeting of the Scrutiny Committee will be held at 5.30pm on Monday 12 July 2021 in the Council Chamber at the Town Hall, Rugby.

*Members of the public may view the meeting via the livestream on the Council's website.*

Mannie Ketley  
Executive Director

## A G E N D A

### PART 1 – PUBLIC BUSINESS

1. Minutes  
To approve the minutes of the meetings held on 8 March 2021 and 20 May 2021.
2. Apologies  
To receive apologies for absence from the meeting.
3. Declarations of Interest  
To receive declarations of:
  - (a) non-pecuniary interests as defined by the Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors;
  - (b) pecuniary interests as defined by the Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors;
  - (c) notice under Section 106 Local Government Finance Act 1992 – non-payment of Community Charge or Council Tax.

***Note: Members are reminded that they should declare the existence and nature of their non-pecuniary interests at the commencement of the meeting (or as soon as the interest becomes apparent). If that interest is a pecuniary interest, the Member must withdraw from the room unless one of the exceptions applies.***

***Membership of Warwickshire County Council or any Parish Council is classed as a non-pecuniary interest under the Code of Conduct. A Member does not need to declare this interest unless the Member chooses to speak on a matter relating to their membership. If the Member does not wish to speak on the matter, the Member may still vote on the matter without making a declaration.***

4. Draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2020/21.
5. Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme (table attached).
6. Motions – Town Centre Heritage.

**Membership of the Committee:**

Councillors Eccleson (Chair), Gillias, Mrs Hassell, Mahoney, Mrs New, Mrs O'Rourke, Mrs Parker, Roodhouse and Dr Williams

*If you have any general queries with regard to this agenda please contact Linn Ashmore, Democratic Services Officer on 01788 533522 or email [linn.ashmore@rugby.gov.uk](mailto:linn.ashmore@rugby.gov.uk). Any specific queries concerning reports should be directed to the listed contact officer.*

***AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET***

<b>Report Title:</b>	Draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2020/21
<b>Name of Committee:</b>	Scrutiny Committee
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	12 July 2021
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Linn Ashmore, Democratic Services Officer Tel: 01788 533522 or linn.ashmore@rugby.gov.uk
<b>Summary:</b>	The draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report presents a summary of the work undertaken by the Committee during 2020-2021.
<b>Financial Implications:</b>	There are no financial implications arising from this report
<b>Risk Management Implications:</b>	There are no risk management implications arising from this report
<b>Environmental Implications:</b>	There are no environmental implications arising from this report
<b>Legal Implications:</b>	There are no legal implications arising from this report
<b>Equality and Diversity:</b>	There are no equality and diversity implications arising from this report

## Scrutiny Committee - 12 July 2021

### Draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2020/21

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

##### Summary

The Draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report presents a summary of the work undertaken by the Committee during 2020-2021.

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

Scrutiny is a central element of the Council's aims and objectives and a key part of the democratic process making a proactive and positive contribution to the development of policy and the discharge of the Council's functions.

Section 2A paragraph 6.4(f) of the Council's Constitution states that scrutiny will perform the following function:

*"Report annually to the Council on the work of overview and scrutiny and make recommendations for future work programmes and amended working methods, if appropriate."*

The Constitution also states that the annual report shall be agreed by scrutiny before submission to Council.

#### 2. DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT

The draft report for the 2020/21 municipal year is attached at appendix 1. This has been produced in line with the approach agreed by the two former scrutiny committees to be a brief summary of the work carried out over the previous municipal year.

Since the annual report was drafted some changes have been made that affect the review work detailed. On 7 June 2021, Cabinet approved the appointments to working parties and this included a Waste Management and Fly Tipping Working Party. In consultation with the Task Group and the Committee Chair, it was agreed that to avoid duplication of work the Task Group would stand down.

#### 3. FUTURE SCRUTINY WORK

The Scrutiny Committee is responsible for setting its own work programme. This is a standing item for consideration and approval at each committee meeting. The work programme is also informed by the Council's Forward Plan

and in consultation with Members. The Senior Management Team works with the Committee and provides briefings or information to the Committee. Support is also provided by officers from various service areas as required.

The work programme is covered under item five of the agenda giving the Committee opportunity for a discussion on topics for review.

#### **4. RECOMMENDATION**

The Committee is asked to consider the draft Annual Report and approve it for submission to Council with a recommendation that the report be published.

**Name of Meeting:** Scrutiny Committee

**Date of Meeting:** 12 July 2021

**Subject Matter:** Draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2020/21

**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>

# OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21

## CHAIRS FOREWORD

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Since March 2020 the Council has been through a period of unprecedented times. Members have been responding to the effects of the pandemic and the increased demands on resources across the council.

This resulted in a review of the overview and scrutiny arrangements as it was recognised that the council needed to respond and enable a more fluid structure that was not dictated by portfolios to allow for more effective scrutiny.

The current structure of one Scrutiny Committee was introduced in September 2020 with the first meeting scheduled for November 2020. Since then, the Committee has focused on a more streamlined approach where scrutiny can add value through the forward work programme being decided by Committee members, ensuring that resources are targeted onto the right topics.

I have been honoured to serve as Chair during this period of change and would like to thank all members of the Committee for their support and dedication, as we have worked together to begin following a new path for scrutiny. Special thanks go to the Vice-Chair Councillor Tony Gillias.

I am also grateful to senior officers for their support and input of suggestions on the most appropriate topics for scrutiny.

**Cllr Tom Mahoney**  
**Chair 2020/21**

### **Members of the Committee 2020/21**

Councillors:  
Tom Mahoney (Chair)  
Tony Gillias (Vice-Chair)  
Mrs Julie A'Barrow  
Chris Cade  
Peter Eccleson  
Mrs Noreen New  
Mrs Maggie O'Rourke  
Ian Picker  
Jerry Roodhouse

## WORK PROGRAMME

MEETING DATE	TOPICS
2 November 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme based on the four key strands in the Covid-19 recovery process</li> </ul>
14 December 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of items carried over from 2019/20</li> <li>Future work programme – suggestions from the Senior Management Team</li> </ul>
25 January 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One-page strategy for the Review of Managing Council Tax Arrears</li> <li>Waste and Resources – presentation from the Deputy Executive Director on the Government Waste and Resources Strategy</li> <li>Training and Development for Members</li> <li>Progress of Motions</li> </ul>
8 March 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finance and Performance Monitoring 2020/21 Quarter 3</li> <li>One page strategy for the Review of Waste and Resources</li> <li>Motion from Council on the topic of Flooding</li> </ul>

## HIGHLIGHTS

Topic	Outcome
Work programme	A longer-term flexible rolling work programme was introduced to enable scrutiny to be able to adapt to a rapidly changing environment.
Review work	Topics were selected for reviews where scrutiny could add value.
The relationship with the Executive was strengthened.	Monthly meetings took place with the Chair and Vice-Chair and the Leader and Deputy Leader.
Engagement with the Executive Director was improved.	Meetings were held between the Chair and Vice-Chair and the Executive Director. The senior management team were consulted on review suggestions.
Motions from Council	A standing item to consider Motions from Council was introduced. The Committee received a report on past Motions and the outcomes.
Finance and performance	It was agreed the way finance and performance was scrutinised would be reviewed.
Member Training and Development	A refreshed approach was agreed based on regular meetings with group training co-ordinators, skills assessments, promotion of the LGA training tools and an annual item on the work programme on training and development.

## MOTIONS FROM COUNCIL

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**FLOODING** – following a motion put to Council in February 2021, the Committee considered the report of a Review of Drainage carried out in 2009 and concluded that this was a substantial piece of work resulting in a detailed report. The report was referred to the Planning Services Working Party with a request that it consider the report and the recommendations. A report on the outcome was scheduled into the future work programme.

## TASK GROUPS

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**MANAGING COUNCIL TAX ARREARS** – the Task Group commenced work at the beginning of April with the following aims:

- Understand the current situation and practices that are in place, including for potentially vulnerable customers.
- What financial support and advice is currently available.
- The level of capacity that is available to deal with a potential increase in demand for assistance due to the impact of Covid-19.
- Whether a formal protocol or policy should be introduced.

It was anticipated that a draft report would be produced in September 2021.

**WASTE AND RESOURCES – RECYCLING CAMPAIGN** – the first phase of a piece of work on waste and resources was a review of a targeted campaign to increase levels of recycling and reduce the amount of contamination in collected recycling. This was intended to be a short-term review.

NOTE: following the appointments made by Cabinet to the Waste Management and Fly Tipping Working Party, to avoid duplication of work it was agreed that this work would be passed to the Working Party and the review would be removed from the work programme.

## LOOKING AHEAD

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As a country we are continuing to go through a very difficult time, and everyone has been affected by the pandemic in some way. The Council has been doing all it can to support the most vulnerable in our society and the local economy. Council staff have adapted their working practices and worked to support and protect residents. The Scrutiny Committee wishes to thank all staff involved in the delivery of direct services, and those behind the scenes providing support, for all their hard work. The Council adapted to the government temporarily removing the legal requirement to hold public meetings in person and made use of the technology available to hold public meetings virtually, therefore continuing to make critical decisions on the delivery of its services for residents in a way that is both transparent and accessible to the public. Where appropriate, scrutiny will continue to play a key role in that process, ensuring local democracy continues to thrive in this difficult time.

Looking back over the last 12 months environmental concerns have been at the top of the agenda and the Council's new Corporate Strategy reflects the climate emergency in its commitments. Environmental concerns will continue to play a large part of scrutiny work during 2021/22.

A key area of focus for the future will inevitably be the impact of the Coronavirus including its impact on services and the Council's finances. Scrutiny will also need to look at what lessons can be learnt from the Council's response to the crisis and plans for recovery both in the short, medium and longer term and will look carefully at the new ways of working implemented as a result of the coronavirus pandemic and assess whether there should be changes to any of our practices in the long term.

Other future items included:

- Health and Wellbeing of the community
- To monitor achievements against the priorities and targets that have been set in the Corporate Strategy.
- Increased media on scrutiny – work will continue to increase the profile of scrutiny and raise awareness of the outcomes of the work of the Scrutiny Committee, especially in relation to reviews and high-profile issues. A more developed communications plan is proposed for 2021/22.
- Improvements to the way finance and performance is scrutinised.

The Committee will continue to build upon its new approach to a more pro-active flexible long-term approach to work programming allowing scrutiny to be able to adapt to a rapidly changing environment. It will also continue to strengthen the relationship between the Executive and Chief Officers, imbedding the working partnership that will be needed over the coming months.

Future review topics identified included:

**WASTE AND RESOURCES – MODEL FOR FOOD WASTE COLLECTION** – this review would follow the first phase of the waste and resources work identified in response to the Government consultation on its Waste and Resources Strategy and would explore the potential models and associated costs and benefits of each to identify the preferred model to be recommended.

NOTE: following the appointments made by Cabinet to the Waste Management and Fly Tipping Working Party, to avoid duplication of work it was agreed that this work would be passed to the Working Party and the review would be removed from the work programme.

**DIGITAL INCLUSION** – the review would link into the Council's work on a new Digital Strategy and would focus on communication and community engagement.

**MANAGING HOUSING ARREARS** – an assessment of the wider impact of Covid-19 on tenants was needed before the review could commence.

## STANDING ITEMS

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There are a number of standing items that return to scrutiny every year. They include:

**CRIME AND DISORDER** - in accordance with Section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006, scrutiny has responsibility to carry out an overview of crime and disorder at no less than one meeting each municipal year to scrutinise decisions made, and actions taken, by the responsible authorities that make up the Rugby Community Safety Partnership in connection with the discharge of their crime and disorder functions. The item had been included in the work programme for consideration but delayed due to purdah.

**FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE** reports are reviewed by scrutiny on a quarterly basis.

**HOLDING THE EXECUTIVE TO ACCOUNT** is one of the primary responsibilities of scrutiny to ensure that Cabinet is making decisions effectively and acting in the best interests of the local community. A question-and-answer style meeting was scheduled to take place. The Committee will review and decide on a fresh approach for the 2021/22 municipal year.

### Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme

Date of meeting 2021/22	Item	Report Description
All meetings	Motions referred to scrutiny	
All meetings	Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme	Long-term rolling work programme.
13 September 2021	Leader and Executive Director	Annual Performance Report and discussion with the Leader and Executive Director on performance and future strategies.
13 September 2021	Finance and Performance Monitoring 2020/21 Year End	
22 November 2021	Finance and Performance Monitoring 2021/21 Q1	
24 January 2022	Finance and Performance Monitoring 2021/22 Q2	
28 March 2022	Draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report	An overview of the work carried out by scrutiny during 2021/22.

#### Items to be scheduled

Item	Report Description/Notes
Crime and Disorder	Annual overview to scrutinise decisions made, and actions taken, by the responsible authorities that make up the Rugby Community Safety Partnership in connection with the discharge of their crime and disorder functions. The topic was scheduled for April but delayed due to the Purdah period.
Review of Managing Arrears (Council Tax)	Progress or final review report. Originally scheduled for September 2021.
Annual review of Member training and development	Annual overview.

<p>Referral of the flooding Motion to the Planning Services Working Party</p>	<p>Having previously considered the motion and acknowledging the thorough work on drainage carried out in 2009 as part of the Review of Drainage, the Committee previously referred the Motion on the topic of flooding to the Planning Services Working Party. Following further consultation with the Chief Officer – Growth and Investment and the Deputy Executive Director, and in recognising that flooding is a significant concern in the Council’s future plans, the Committee is asked to support a recommendation that the Climate Emergency Working Group address the motion through the forthcoming Climate Change Strategy, within the theme of adaptation and mitigation.</p>
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**Task Groups**

Topic	Responsible Officer	Notes
Managing Arrears of Council Tax	Revenues Manager	The Task Group commenced work in April.
Waste and Resources Review – Recycling and Education	Deputy Executive Director	To avoid duplication of work, this will be picked up by the Waste Management and Fly Tipping Working Party.
Waste and Resources – Model for Food Waste Collection	Deputy Executive Director	To avoid duplication of work, this will be picked up by the Waste Management and Fly Tipping Working Party.
Managing Housing Arrears	Head of Communities and Homes and Housing Services Manager	Due to the extension of furlough arrangements and to allow time to assess the impact of job losses this review was put on hold until after the end of the financial year.

**Future work programme Items carried over from 2020/21 to be scheduled**

Topic	Timescale	Notes
Corporate Strategy	To be agreed	
Health and Wellbeing	To be agreed	Linked to recovery of the Covid-19 pandemic.
Digital Inclusion	To be agreed	Due to the impact of Covid-19, and changing work priorities, the Digital Strategy has been delayed. The review will focus on communication and community engagement.

**Forward Plan**

The topics currently listed in the Forward Plan for the period August - November 2021 are available to download [here](#)

**Work Programme Items**

The Committee is asked to consider future topics for scrutiny review and items for inclusion into the forward work programme.

***AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET***

<b>Report Title:</b>	Motion from Council - Town Centre Heritage
<b>Name of Committee:</b>	Scrutiny Committee
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	12 July 2021
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Linn Ashmore, Democratic Services Officer Tel: 01788 533522
<b>Summary:</b>	<p>On 20 April 2021, Council referred a motion to Scrutiny Committee in accordance with Council Standing Order 11.</p> <p>The Committee is asked to consider the Motion and decide how it should be dealt with.</p>
<b>Financial Implications:</b>	There are no immediate financial implications.
<b>Risk Management Implications:</b>	There are no risk management implications arising from this report.
<b>Environmental Implications:</b>	There are no immediate environmental implications arising from this report.
<b>Legal Implications:</b>	There are no immediate legal implications arising from this report.
<b>Equality and Diversity:</b>	There are no equality and diversity implications arising from this report.

**Scrutiny Committee - 12 July 2021**

**Motion from Council - Town Centre Heritage**

**Public Report of the Chief Officer - Leisure and Wellbeing**

**Summary**

On 20 April 2021, Council referred a motion to a scrutiny committee in accordance with Council Standing Order 11.

The Committee is asked to consider the Motion and decide how it should be dealt with.

**1. MOTION FROM COUNCIL**

On 20 April 2021, Council considered a motion submitted on notice by Cllr Sandison and seconded by Cllr Roodhouse as set out below.

*“This Council recognises the significant contribution that heritage and the blue plaque scheme can play in promoting Rugby as a place to visit.*

*One example is the contribution made by the expedition of HMS Blonde (1824-1826) to South America, Galapagos Islands and the Hawaiian Islands and that two members of that expedition came from Rugby namely Andrew Bloxam, a naturalist, and his brother Richard Bloxam, who was the Chaplain on this voyage. Andrew Bloxam identified and named many new species on this voyage he also wrote three books on roses, brambles, and fungi. His findings and works are on display in the British Museum. Andrew later went on to be the Rector of Harborough Magna until his death in 1878. The small garden to rear of the Percival Guildhouse and adjacent to the Rugby Art Gallery and Museum would be a fitting place to display a blue plaque to Andrew Bloxam with an information board.*

*The Town Centre Heritage Task and Finish Group report (November 2017) made a series of recommendations, and, in light of the emerging town centre strategy, the Scrutiny Committee be requested to review and, where possible, the recommendations be implemented in order to enhance Rugby as a heritage visitor destination.”*

In accordance with Council Standing Order 11, the motion stood referred to a scrutiny committee.

## **2. MOTION ON NOTICE PROCEDURE**

The Constitution requires the Scrutiny Committee to decide whether to consider the motion itself or refer it for consideration by a task group. Any task group so appointed will report back to the Committee. Once the Committee has considered the motion, or received a report back from a task group, it will report to the next available meeting of Cabinet.

Consideration of a motion might take the form of simply dealing with the motion without further scrutiny and reporting to Cabinet accordingly. If, however, the committee were to decide to consider the motion itself in more detail, any scrutiny would need to be supported by evidence that might not yet have been assembled.

## **3. BLUE PLAQUE TRAIL**

Across the UK, blue plaques mark places that have historical importance or were relevant to the lives of famous people. In London this is managed by Heritage England. Outside London, there is no national scheme in place and some local councils, civic societies and other organisations operate their own similar plaque schemes.

Blue plaques are permanent signs installed in public places, marking locations that have historical importance, are linked to an event or were relevant to the lives of famous people.

Rugby has a number of blue plaques. The current Blue Plaque trail leaflet guides visitors around Rugby town centre to discover the plaques and explains more in detail the history behind each of them. Hard copies of the leaflet are available from Rugby Visitor Centre. Commemorative plaques, not included in the leaflet, are also located in Bilton, Old Brownsover and Dunchurch.

There are many reasons why the Council would wish to support and promote local heritage, particularly within the Town Centre. The Motion refers to the Rugby Town Centre Spatial Strategy and it is important that any proposal for introducing a local plaque scheme should be assessed in the context of this emerging strategy to ensure a coordinated approach to promotion of the town centre and local heritage.

## **4. REVIEW OF TOWN CENTRE HERITAGE**

In response to a Motion to Council in 2016, a review on the topic of Town Centre Heritage was carried out. The final review report was considered by Cabinet in November 2017 and the review recommendations were approved. A copy of the review report is attached at Appendix 1.

The former Whittle Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the progress of the review recommendations at its meetings held on 11 December 2018 and 11 March 2019.

The table below lists the review recommendations with officer comments from Arts and Heritage Services.

	<b>Recommendation 2017</b>	<b>Officer comments June 2021</b>
1.	Include heritage-led events in the town centre events programme, starting with the Festival of Culture in 2018.	Additional Town Tours are usually available during the Festival; the free Heritage Open Days event in September 2018 and 2019 included Cemex tours, Rugby School tour, visit to the Mayor's Parlour, town tour on a vintage bus to name a few.
2.	Update leaflets for walking tours and town centre trails with 'The Rugby Town' branding, ensuring information is clearly presented, relevant, factually correct and up-to-date.	New Visitor Guide, Blue Plaque leaflet, Pathway of Fame, Real Ale Trail, Town Tours leaflets were produced with the new branding. Most of the literature is now out of date given that the Hall of Fame features heavily in it.
3.	Develop an 'augmented reality' mobile app to help bring some of the existing town trails to life and engage new audiences.	An application was made for funding, but it wasn't successful.
4.	Continue support for the Town Guides programme and adopt a new marketing plan to promote walking tours more effectively.	This was successfully carried out. Following resignations and the pandemic, the Town Guides project needs to be revitalised. It is hoped to be able to access funding in order to do so.
5.	Support the redisplay of the Rugby social history collection through a Heritage Lottery Fund bid.	
6.	To modernise and enhance the present Blue Plaques scheme to ensure the route is visible and compatible with 'augmented reality' technology, whilst also exploring options for themed routes.	
7.	To consider establishing an advisory group regarding new additions to the Blue Plaque scheme.	Much needed, it is believed the last plaque was added in 2009.
8.	A register of significant public buildings and monuments should be compiled, to include listed buildings, for the new advisory group.	*See below
9.	A report be presented annually to an overview and scrutiny committee providing an update on the progress of the review groups recommendations.	

\*Extract from minutes of Whittle Overview and Scrutiny Committee 11 March 2019:

“The Committee was informed that there was a local list of heritage assets available and planning officers were aware of the resources available, including GIS mapping tools. The list was intended to be organic but there was a formal procedure for adding to the list by application through the Council. It would be necessary to have contact with the building owner so that any ‘new’ buildings can be added to the list.”

## **5. NEXT STEPS**

The Committee is now asked to decide how to deal with this motion.

**Name of Meeting:** Scrutiny Committee

**Date of Meeting:** 12 July 2021

**Subject Matter:** Motion from Council - Town Centre Heritage

**Originating Department:** Leisure and Wellbeing

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

**LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

<b>Doc No</b>	<b>Title of Document and Hyperlink</b>



# REVIEW OF TOWN CENTRE HERITAGE

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November 2017

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## TASK GROUP MEMBERSHIP

The task group consisted of the following members:

Councillor **Kathryn Lawrence** (Chair)  
Councillor **Tina Avis**  
Councillor **Sally Bragg**  
Councillor **Anthony Gillias**  
Councillor **Neil Sandison**  
Councillor **Jill Simpson-Vince**  
Councillor **Ramesh Srivastava**  
Councillor **Carolyn Watson-Merret**

## FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Please contact:

Michael Beirne  
Town Centre and Tourism Team Leader  
Tel: 01788 533213  
Email: [michael.beirne@rugby.gov.uk](mailto:michael.beirne@rugby.gov.uk)

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Group would like to thank the following for their valuable contribution to this review:

Aftab Gaffar, Managing Director, Rugby First Limited  
Chris Stanley, Unlimited Communications  
Amber Merrick-Potter, Events Manager, St Andrew's Parish Church  
Dr Rex Pogson, Open Door Programme, St Andrew's Parish Church  
Martin Stahel, Sales Director, Zappar

The Group are also thankful to the following officers who have supported them throughout the review process:

- Rob Back (Head of Growth and Investment)
- Victoria Gabbitas (Arts, Heritage and Visitor Services Manager)
- Michael Beirne (Town Centre and Tourism Team Leader)
- Matthew Deaves (Communication, Consultation and Information Manager)
- Linn Ashmore (Democratic Services Officer)

## **CHAIR'S FOREWORD**

I would like to thank all the members of this group for their passionate interest in Rugby's Heritage. During our meetings, members shared their in-depth knowledge of the town's heritage covering not only historical aspects but also highlighting our proud industrial, scientific and technological heritage.

Members also shared their experiences of participating in heritage and cultural events like the Rugby Festival of Culture, the Bikefest and their experiences of the Rugby Art Gallery & Museum. They expressed their appreciation for the partnership working of Rugby Borough Council with Rugby First and the Rugby Festival of Culture.

The five former Mayors contributed their experiences in hosting guests from neighbouring towns. Members were also motivated to participate in some of the visitor experiences on offer by following the Blue Plaque Trail and touring the town with one of the volunteer Town Guides.

We had some excellent presentations from officers and members of the wider community which focused the group's attention on potential ideas that could be explored to improve and enhance the experience of both residents and visitors exploring our town's heritage and culture.

The motion from Councillor Sandison to Council regarding the introduction of a Green Plaque Scheme was explored in detail. The members of the group took notice of the advice from English Heritage on Plaque Schemes and considered in depth the current Blue Plaque Scheme in the Town Centre. The group's conclusion was to recommend that the current Blue Plaque Scheme be modernised and enhanced and that consideration be given to new additions to the plaques.

The group was particularly interested in the session which explored the use of technology and software to enhance the visitor experience. Other towns and cities have already moved into this area and developed Apps that can be used on mobiles and tablets. This is a key area of our recommendations and although will entail an initial outlay, will replace the variety of leaflets currently available and be more appealing to our younger residents and visitors.

A special thank you to Linn Ashmore in her role as Democratic Services Officer for producing excellent minutes from our discussions.

**Councillor Kathryn Lawrence**  
**Chair**

## 1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Task Group proposes the following recommendations to Cabinet:

1.	Include heritage-led events in the town centre events programme, starting with the Festival of Culture in 2018.
2.	Update leaflets for walking tours and town centre trails with 'The Rugby Town' branding, ensuring information is clearly presented, relevant, factually correct and up-to-date.
3.	Develop an 'augmented reality' mobile app to help bring some of the existing town trails to life and engage new audiences.
4.	Continue support for the Town Guides programme and adopt a new marketing plan to promote walking tours more effectively.
5.	Support the redisplay of the Rugby social history collection through a Heritage Lottery Fund bid.
6.	To modernise and enhance the present Blue Plaques scheme to ensure the route is visible and compatible with 'augmented reality' technology, whilst also exploring options for themed routes.
7.	To consider establishing an advisory group regarding new additions to the Blue Plaque scheme.
8.	A register of significant public buildings and monuments should be compiled, to include listed buildings, for the new advisory group.
9.	A report be presented annually to an overview and scrutiny committee providing an update on the progress of the group's recommendations.

### 1.1 Alignment with the Corporate Strategy

The review relates to the following corporate priorities:

**GROWTH AND INVESTMENT: Promote and grow Rugby's visitor economy with our partners**

## 2. OBJECTIVES

### 2.1 Background

At its meeting on 19 July 2016 Council referred a motion on the topic of a Green Plaque Scheme, and in accordance with Standing Order 11 the Motion then stood referred to a scrutiny committee.

Whittle Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the motion referred by Council at its meeting on 12 September 2016 and decided that the proposal should be considered alongside wider work taking place in the town centre and that a task group should be set up to carry out this work.

Whittle approved the one-page strategy at its meeting on 13 March 2017.

On 6 February 2017, Cabinet also decided that a cross-party Visitor Economy Working Party would be established to provide guidance and overview on matters relating to tourism, destination marketing and the town centre.

### 2.2 The One Page Strategy

The 'one-page strategy' is the name given to the scoping document for the review. It defines the task and the improvements being aimed for and how these are going to be achieved. The review's one-page strategy, revised by the task group at the first meeting in June 2017, is as follows:

#### **What is the broad topic area?**

Town Centre Heritage. The broad aims of the review are to encourage local residents and visitors of all ages to explore, to enjoy, and to take pride in Rugby town's heritage.

#### **What is the specific topic area?**

Representing Rugby's heritage through initiatives to increase town centre footfall. A number of options are available, based on initial research of initiatives in other places, each with different advantages and disadvantages – broadly these include:

1. Reviewing the extent to which the current town centre events programme focuses on heritage and making initial recommendations on how this can be improved.
2. Enhancing access to information and marketing activities for existing initiatives i.e. the Blue Plaque trail, Pathway of Fame and Town Guides.
3. Green Plaque Scheme – progress with the original proposal of a new trail focusing on heritage sites and places of interest in the town.

4. 'Augmented Reality' mobile apps – this would allow people to view town centre environments through the lens of their camera phones, with additional interesting and engaging content. Examples include interaction with 3D characters, video or visitor interpretation and QR codes.

### **What should be considered?**

The following areas are relevant to the discussion:

- Use of digital and modern technology to provide unique visitor experiences.
- The wider marketing plan for the town centre and opportunities to collect information on our customers, particularly through the free public Wi-Fi network.
- Target audiences – the extent to which initiatives are designed for different local, regional, national or international visitors.
- Promotion of the town's wider heritage links alongside Rugby's unique selling point as the birthplace of the game.
- Ways to increase footfall not only the town centre, but specifically between individual cultural assets.
- Funding opportunities.

### **Who shall we consult?**

The Council's Town Centre and Tourism Team Leader, responsible for overseeing the Town Centre Action Plan 2016 – 2020, will support the Task Group to develop their recommendations.

- Arts, Heritage and Visitor Service
- Representatives of places with current good practice examples
- Local History Groups
- Rugby First Limited
- Rugby School
- Rugby Art Gallery and Museum

### **How long should it take?**

Report to committee in either November or January.

### **What will be the outcome?**

Recommendations on the development of heritage-based initiatives to increase town centre footfall.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Overview**

The work of the task group has focused on four main areas:

- Enhancing access to information and marketing activities for existing schemes and initiatives.
- Review the extent the current town centre events programme focuses on heritage.
- Plaque schemes.
- ‘Augmented reality’ mobile apps – to enhance the visitor experience and help tell a story.

The task group met six times between June and November 2017 and built a strong evidence base to support its conclusions, drawing on a variety of sources. This included:

- Scene setting presentation giving background and context for the review.
- Current town centre history and heritage.
- The town centre events programme and how heritage is represented.
- Public engagement and results of an online consultation and questionnaire.
- Feedback from members on their experiences of the Blue Plaque trail and the walking tours carried out by the Rugby Town Guides, and the Rugby Festival of Culture events.
- Enhancing access to information and marketing activities for existing initiatives.
- The role of Rugby First Limited, marketing promotion and town centre events.
- Festival of Culture feedback.
- The future ideas and events programme at St Andrew’s Parish Church, including a scheme to develop St Andrew’s Gardens for wider community use.
- Commemorative plaque schemes and guidance published by English Heritage.
- Use of technology and software to enhance the visitor experience. This included a presentation from a software specialist called Zappar on the use of codes and apps for mobile devices.

### **4. EVIDENCE**

#### **4.1 Call for Evidence**

The task group sought the views of a range of different individuals and groups. A public consultation was launched and an online questionnaire was set-up for people to submit feedback to the task group. Physical copies of the questionnaire were also made available in the Visitor Centre. A copy of the questions is attached at Appendix 1. The number of responses was low; however, the following general observations were made:

- There was general agreement that town centre events could include a clearer link to the town’s own heritage. One respondent provided examples of how this could be done.
- No respondents felt the need to provide more blue plaques, though there were various ideas for other sites of very local interest.

- Most respondents had ideas on how to make information about the Blue Plaque trail and other heritage assets more accessible, including using web technologies.
- There was general agreement that smartphone technologies should be used, with various ideas of how this could be achieved.

### 4.3 Access to evidence

The task group review papers are available online at [www.rugby.gov.uk/meetings](http://www.rugby.gov.uk/meetings) in the section 'agendas, reports and minutes', and can be found by selecting the Town Centre Heritage Task Group.

## 5. FINDINGS

### 5.1 Background

The task group received a presentation setting the scene for the review outlining current initiatives.

The Town Centre Action Plan 2016-2020 focuses on five areas:

- Marketing
- Visitor economy and Destination Management Planning
- Planning
- Physical environment/public realm
- Investment

It was important not to duplicate related work being carried out and maintain distinct work streams. It was acknowledged that matters relating to the town centre economy would be covered by the Visitor Economy Cabinet Working Party.

### 5.2 Current town centre history and heritage

The Arts, Heritage and Visitor Services Manager gave the task group a presentation on history and heritage in Rugby.

This included history relating to geology, railways, canals, Romans, the town centre market, Rugby School, the game of rugby, Victorian buildings and engineers amongst many personalities associated with literature, invention, innovation and design.

It was important to distinguish between heritage and culture. For the purposes of the review **heritage was defined** as being something tangible from the past that was worthy of preservation, and **culture was defined** as being something much wider and more intangible that related to traditions and the way people live.

There were a number of social history collections within the Rugby Art Gallery and Museum (RAGM).

A large piece of work has just begun on redisplaying items from the social history collections in the museum but this is still at the initial planning stage. Funding is being sought through the Heritage Lottery Fund. Connections could be developed to link the inside exhibits with the wider environment.

### **5.3 Town centre events programme**

Chris Stanley from Unlimited Communications gave the task group a presentation on town centre events and how heritage was represented.

There are a number of well-established annual events taking place in the town centre and there could be opportunities to enhance these that could include:

- Festival of Culture
- Open heritage weekend
- Heritage Open Days
- Bikefest

Rugby has a strong association with authors and this could be one way to encourage a new audience. Other towns have had success with literary events.

Some suggestions for future events could include:

- Connection to the centenary of WWI and war poets
- A literary festival
- Literary walking tours, living history or theatre productions including storytelling authors
- Themed events

Points to consider include:

- Explore ways of promoting events and an improved visitor approach
- Linking the Hall of Fame to written material such as a book launch

### **5.4 Current Schemes and Initiatives**

Members of the task group gave feedback on their experiences of attending the Festival of Culture events, completing the Blue Plaque trail and taking part in one of the Rugby Town Guide walking tours. The following points and comments were made by members of the group:

Festival of Culture

- The brochure was excellent.
- It was delivered to homes but some residents mistook it for a trade magazine and disposed of it.
- One councillor ordered 50 copies which proved very popular across their local community.
- The musical events were fantastic.

- Some events were poorly supported, but this could have been due to clashes with more popular ones.
- There are a number of good venues for musical events due to the excellent acoustics.
- The venue for the performance of the Reluctant Dragon was unsuitable and uncomfortable as it was cramped, meaning it got very hot, and children were expected to sit on the floor rather than with their parents.
- The concerts at the Temple Speech Room were very good and were all sold out.
- There was a good range of events and the outdoor musical events were very popular.

#### Blue Plaque trail

- The plaques were not numbered which meant it would be easy for additional plaques to be included.
- The map was not clear and it was difficult to see where the plaques were located.
- Positioning of the plaques was an issue. Some were high up covered by shrubbery or only visible by stepping out into the road.
- There were a number of historically interesting buildings which do not have any form of plaque or signage.
- It could get boring and needs reviewing.
- The information contained in the leaflet was extensive.
- The use of modern technology as a way of bringing the locations or subject matter to life was unanimously supported.
- An enhanced plaque scheme would include a number of other sites of interests and the use of apps would enhance the visitor experience. This could also highlight themes e.g. science, history, industrial heritage and literature.

#### Heritage walking tours

- Last year's Mayor organised a tour to raise funds for their mayoral charity which included the walking tours, a visit to the Hall of Fame, and afternoon tea at RAGM. This promoted these activities with civic guests from other local authorities.
- Each walking tour held was different and it was suggested that guides could use the same information as a basis for their tour.
- The pace of the tour was very good, time passed quickly, and it was an excellent way of drawing attention to the architecture of the buildings.

### **5.5 Enhancing access to information for existing trails**

Officers were updating the current range of leaflets and creating one for the Pathway of Fame. The Town Centre and Tourism Team Leader circulated draft copies of the Rugby Town re-branded versions of the Blue Plaque trail leaflet, the Rugby Town Guides walking tours and the Heritage Open Days.

The task group reviewed the revised Blue Plaque trail leaflet and made the following comments:

- There is scope to increase the number of local women represented.
- The numbering of the plaques on the leaflet was random and did not reflect a walking route.

- All routes should begin at the Visitors Centre.
- On opening the leaflet to view the map the list of plaques begins at 16 rather than the first plaque.
- The text in the boxes for each plaque was too small.
- A large print version should be made available.
- Different walks or trails could be considered.
- There could be a range of walks. Different routes could be created for different areas of interest, such as sport or literature and colour coded on the leaflet.
- There was a concentration of plaques within a small area and there were other buildings of importance that were not included.
- The plaque tour should focus on the immediate town centre and plaques outside this area could be listed separately.
- To support the local economy visitors should be drawn towards the shopping areas.
- Some ways of identifying the length of the trail, either by distance or time would be helpful.
- Some form of scale on the map and directional arrows would be useful.
- Plaque 31 (Rugby's Third Station) would be better described as Rugby Junction and the wording could be improved to include a reference to Charles Dickens.
- Plaque 1 (Caldecott Park) should include up-to-date information on the Green Flag award.

The Tourism and Town Centre Team Leader met with the volunteer Town Guides in July and one of the agreed outcomes from the meeting was that a new marketing plan was needed for the walking tours. Some ideas included:

- The use of social media.
- Targeting specific community groups such as the Women's Institute or Ramblers.
- To install some form of flag or air board to advertise the walks.
- Businesses and hotels could be targeted and specific offers could be linked, such as afternoon tea.

## **5.6 Rugby First Limited and Town Centre Events**

The task group received a verbal report from the Managing Director at Rugby First concerning the Town Centre programme of events and general introduction:

### **Rugby First**

- A limited company formed in 2005 which operates independently of the borough council and manages the Town Centre Business Improvement District.
- The third mandate was agreed by majority of Town Centre businesses in 2015 and will last for five years. The key aims of the business plan are:
  - BID Rangers
  - Town Centre CCTV
  - Cleaning Service
  - Marketing, Promotions and Events

## **Marketing, Promotion and Events**

Rugby First in partnership with businesses, Rugby Borough Council and other organisations deliver an exciting programme of high quality marketing, promotions and events. These have proved extremely effective in increasing Town Centre footfall, spend, raising the profile of Rugby and local businesses. They have also attracted new customers and businesses to the town. Rugby First wants to build on the legacy of the Rugby World Cup by establishing Rugby as a tourist venue and highlighting Rugby's unique selling points.

When Aftab Gaffar took over Rugby First as the new Managing Director in 2006, there weren't many events taking place in Rugby. It was quickly identified within Rugby First that more events need to take place in the Town Centre. Over 15 events are delivered annually. Most events are a joint effort and without the support of the Council and other partners would not be possible. These included:

- St George's Day – at a weekend, brings in about 2,000 people
- Rugby Bikefest – YouTube videos filmed by bikers of their rides from the A5 truck stop to the Town Centre
- Rugby Festival of Culture – two-week festival in its 7th year packed with activities happening in the Town Centre (covered under a separate agenda item)
- Rugby Food and Drink Festival – festival in its 4th year, 30 – 40 stalls. This year the top end of Regent Street will be closed to accommodate the increase in stalls.
- Christmas Light Switch on – one of the biggest events in the calendar, brings in between 8,000 to 10,000 people. The stage name can make a big difference to the number of people on the day.
- A customer survey was carried out recently asking the customers what Town Centre events they know about. The Christmas Light Switch on came out on the top and the Food and Drink Festival came in second.

The following ad-hoc events have been held in the Town Centre over the years and are available to view online:

- Family Fun Days
- Diamond Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II
- The Queen's 90th Birthday Celebration
- Godiva Festival
- Fashion Show
- Olympic Torch Relay
- Planting Scheme to help Rugby in Bloom
- Walking With The Wounded
- WWI 1914 Centenary – Rugby Remembers

The Town Centre events do not directly promote heritage. In the past two years, within the Rugby Festival of Culture, an objective has been to encourage people to walk around the town. In terms of ideas, it was identified that Rugby has a lot of beautiful buildings. Some other towns illuminate their key buildings to highlight them. This is something that Rugby First is looking into as part of the Public Realm Strategy. The company that supplies the Christmas lights in Rugby has recently moved into illuminating buildings. This a great way to highlight some of the town's heritage.

During discussion the following comments were made:

- Rugby First did a survey with businesses regarding the Christmas Lights Switch On. Over 90% of businesses stated they would like the event to remain on a Sunday.
- There are at least two iconic buildings in the Town Centre: St Andrew's Church with its steeple and Rugby School Chapel. If illuminated, they would be a beacon for Rugby.
- To place lights in the trees around the Rupert Brooke statue has been reviewed and would be very expensive.
- 'Looking up in Rugby' is a positive message to people out there. Rugby is picking up and moving forward.
- The Town Guides do a brilliant job at making people look up at building when they walk around.

## **5.7 St Andrew's Church and the public realm**

The task group received a presentation from Amber Merrick-Potter (Events Manager, St Andrew's Church) and Dr Rex Pogson (Open Door Programme, St Andrew's Church) concerning the St Andrew's Church and Garden. During the presentation, the following points were made:

- St Andrew's Church is a key part of Rugby's heritage, the town's oldest building with unique architecture and a rich history.
- New lighting has been installed to illuminate the church ceiling.
- The Events Manager is in contact with the Arts Development Officer at the Rugby Art Gallery and Museum with regards to displaying public art collections at St Andrew's and working with Coventry Cathedral on how to bring their Centenary Arts Festival to Rugby.
- St Andrew's will be applying for arts funding from the Council to support a community, culture and heritage programme which will be based around 1918, suffrage and WWI. Part of the programme will also be celebrating Woodbine Willie's life. It will also be a throughout the year project tying in with some of the annual events already taking place in the town centre.
- Working with Warwickshire County Council, Rugby Borough Council and a range of partners, the church aims to develop St Andrew's Gardens as a space for Reflection, Recreation and Renewal at the Heart of the Town.
- The area between the garden and the road, if adapted and modernised, could then be used for anything from drama, music, lectures in the summer through to an ice rink at Christmas.
- The railings are a sensitive issue because they were removed during the war and reinstated as a result of a public campaign.

## **5.8 Use of digital technology**

The task group received a presentation from Martin Stahel, Sales Director for a software specialist called Zappar, on the development of an 'augmented reality' (AR) app and what could be achieved in Rugby.

Zappar is a small global company in AR stakes. It was formed around seven years ago and its aim is to democratise new technology and make it quicker and more cost effective in the hands of the user.

During the presentation the following points were made:

- The technology is based on smartphone technology which is more widespread since phones became more powerful and cheaper to buy.
- This technology is accessible to people of all ages.
- The icon can be attached or printed on physical objects, buildings or leaflets so could be used in a variety of ways.
- Augmented reality apps connect the physical world with experiences and events to offer enjoyment and information.
- Augmented reality can be used to encourage visitors to explore areas and move around points of interest. Fun content can be shared digitally, for example by the taking of selfies.
- Within a town or city environment it could be used to drive wider exploration e.g. Bath City has an icon, similar to Pokemon Go that leads users through a visual pathway targeting particular points.
- Historical content and local stories can be brought to life.
- The apps can be personalised with a range of marketing channels.
- The apps can be used to deliver commercial objectives.
- Incentives and rewards can be built in to offer users news, information on events, tokens or vouchers.
- Some examples of work carried out with known brands was given. These included an example of fitting in a simple video of a sports personality, allowing the user to take a selfie and watching action clips that could be shared on social media
- The AR experience can be easily shared on other social media.
- The app could automatically detect user language, or allow users to select a particular language.
- The app was a simple means of connecting. Care would be needed to select the right message for the right user group.
- There is a need to consider what is interesting or important that would attract someone to scan the app.
- App sizes vary depending on the amount of content. The apps can be accessed quickly and do not use up a lot of data.
- The key to success is targeting the right audience at the right time.

### Note 1

The continuation of free wifi availability within the town centre will enable augmented reality to be cost effective for the user. Zappar stated that the app uses the same amount of mobile data as downloading one iTunes.

### Note 2

Zappar were the only company who responded to an invitation to address the group. They gave an extensive presentation including a question and answer session. They estimated the cost is to be between £25,000 and £50,000.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

The task group drew the following conclusions from the evidence that it gathered:

- A redisplay of the museum's social history collection could be made possible through a Heritage Lottery Fund bid – officers are currently in the early stages of looking at the project's feasibility.
- The town centre events programme should be reviewed in partnership with Rugby First and Rugby Festival of Culture to include more heritage-related events.
- To celebrate and enhance the town centre's heritage assets partnership working should be encouraged.
- The positioning of an enhanced commemorative plaque scheme should be reviewed to ensure the route is visible and compatible with AR technology. There is also potential to have different themed routes giving visitors more choice, with a colour coded leaflet.
- Leaflets for walking tours and town centre trails need to be updated with 'The Rugby Town' branding. At the same time, a number of improvements to the design of these marketing materials should be made to ensure information is clearly presented, relevant, factually correct and up-to-date.
- Improvements to the visitor information boards and additional signage in the form of banners should be costed and implemented where possible.
- The Town Guides programme should continue to be supported and promoted more effectively with a new marketing plan.
- Improvements to St Andrew's Church Gardens could have significant positive impacts for the wider town centre.
- The use of AR technology could help bring some of the existing town trails to life and engage new audiences. More detailed proposals and costs are required before a project could be developed.

Online forms: Rugby Town Centre Heritage

**Form progress: 0%** - Page 1 of 5

**A task group of Rugby borough councillors has been set up to encourage local residents and visitors of all ages to explore, to enjoy and to take pride in Rugby town's heritage. The specific topic areas they are looking at are:**

- Reviewing the extent to which the current [town centre events programme](#) focuses on heritage and making initial recommendations on how this can be improved.
- Improving access to information and marketing activities for existing activities, for example the [Blue Plaque trail](#), [Pathway of Fame](#) and [Rugby town guided tours](#).
- Reviewing the [blue plaque scheme](#) and whether there should be additional plaques.
- Investigating the use of technology to allow people to view town centre environments through smartphones, with additional content.

**The task group would like your feedback on these four topic areas, which they will consider as part of their review. Please click "save and continue" to give your feedback.**

## **Page 2 - Town centre events**

The main town centre events are the St George's Day fun day, Rugby Bikefest, Rugby Festival of Culture, Rugby Food and Drink festival, and the Christmas lights switch on.

Question 1: To what extent do you think that the town centre events programme focuses on heritage?

Question 2: Do you think that the town centre events could focus on heritage more than they do? How could this be done?

## **Page 3 - Access to information**

There is a blue plaque trail, a pathway of fame, and regular town guide tours of the town.

Technologies could reuse content from these schemes with additional interesting and engaging content, brought to life through smartphones.

Question 1: In what ways should residents and visitors be able to access information about these schemes?

Question 2: Does the blue plaque scheme cover all of the relevant heritage sites? Should it be supplemented?

Question 3: To what extent do you think that technology could tell the story of Rugby's heritage through smartphones?

**Page 4 - About you**

The task group may like to contact you to ask you more about your ideas. If you are happy for them to do this please provide your details below.

Question 1: Title

Question 2: First name

Question 3: Surname

Question 4: House number/name

Question 5: Street name

Question 6: Area

Question 7: Postcode

Question 8: Phone number

Question 9: Email

Question 10: If you are responding on behalf of a group, business or organisation, please state its name.