

MINUTES OF JOINT MEETING OF BROOKE AND WHITTLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

8 NOVEMBER 2018

PRESENT:

Membership of Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Councillors Claire Edwards, Mrs A'Barrow, McQueen, Mrs New, Pacey-Day, Picker, Srivastava and Mrs Timms

Membership of Whittle Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Councillors Sandison (Chair), Bearne, Brader, Douglas, Gillias, Leigh Hunt, Roberts and Ms Watson-Merret

Portfolio Holders: Councillors Mrs Crane (Communities and Homes Portfolio Holder), Mrs Parker (Environment and Public Realm Portfolio Holder) and Ms Robbins (Corporate Resources Portfolio Holder)

In Attendance: Councillors Mrs Bragg, Lewis and Roodhouse

Officers: Veronika Beckova (Democratic Services Officer)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the meeting were received from Councillors Lowe (Growth and Investment Portfolio Holder), Mistry and Mrs O'Rourke.

2. DISCUSSION WITH PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

The Council's portfolio holders attended the meeting to answer questions on performance of their service areas:

Corporate Resources

Q1 How resilient is your portfolio? What are the strengths and weaknesses? How has your portfolio performed and what improvements have been made over the past 12 months? Are you achieving what you have set out to do?

The **strengths** of the Corporate Resources portfolio are in the strong management team headed by the Head of Corporate Resources and Chief Financial Officer and most ably supported by all the staff. A robust Medium Term Financial Plan and a forward-thinking council provides a positive future.

Weaknesses are in the inability to plan for the forthcoming changes to business rates, know knowing what formula this will take or the amount of Business Rates retention we will be allowed. However, because we are preparing for the worst, we will be fit to face the best and we will be ready to take the council into the next decade financially self-sufficient.

The portfolio has performed well over the last 12 months, despite many challenges due to financial restraints and staffing there have been many positive outcomes.

Q2 On the assumption that most Members' are now in agreement that there is no such thing as the Magic Money Tree, under what circumstances should the Council take advantage of the Government's lifting of the cap on local Government borrowing?

Borrowing should only be used when the financial market is favourable and then only if it is necessary for the benefit of the Council and Borough. For instance, the financing of the redevelopment of Biart Place and possible refurbishment or redevelopment of Rounds Gardens could not be realised without borrowing. This would be in the interest of residents and the Council. However, other sources of income should be researched and there should not be a wholesale reliance on borrowing to fund the scheme.

With regards to Biart Place and Rounds Gardens, we will be approaching the Government to see how they can help us and to find out what position they hold with regards to high-rise flats and their development/refurbishment.

No guidance from Government has yet been received.

Q3 What are the key issues for your portfolio for the next 12 months?

The improvements to our assets are key to our prosperity. Over the next 12 months, I expect to see the council using its assets for the financial benefit of the borough. The area of most concern is as mentioned before regarding Business Rates reset and retention.

Communities and Homes

Q1 How resilient is your portfolio? What are the strengths and weaknesses? How has your portfolio performed and what improvements have been made over the past 12 months? Are you achieving what you have set out to do?

It has been a very busy year for the Communities and Homes portfolio. The portfolio is resilient, but we have to deal with a lot of change and continuously review, how and what we are doing with limited resources. As you all will be aware, local government is under a lot of pressure.

Officers are working hard on achieving priorities and aims set out in the Corporate Strategy whilst dealing with challenges associated with projects such as Biart Place and Rounds Gardens. The Biart Place decant was handled extremely well by council officers.

Strengths

- Coping with all challenges and changes - Universal Credit has been another challenge for the portfolio. Rugby was the first in Warwickshire to roll out a full service. *An update on Universal Credit is provided as part of the answer for question 2.*

- Financial inclusion work - this year there was a merger of Housing Benefits Team and Housing Options Team. The aim was to provide the customer with a more streamline service (one stop shop).
- Digitalisation project - the aim is to assist with the seamless customer journey.

Challenges

- Customer demand and expectations

Q2 What has been the impact of Universal Credit on council tenants? What feedback has been given to the government on how Universal Credit is working in Rugby?

The majority of Council tenants have found it difficult to adjust to Universal Credit (UC) not only in terms of applying for UC but also managing their online accounts. Many tenants have struggled in terms of financial hardship (due to the delay in receiving UC) but with recent Government changes to reduce the waiting period we hope that this will improve over time. The delays have left many tenants and their households in financial hardship. The emotional impact of getting into arrears has also caused many needing other forms of support and guidance, and in a lot of cases more support from Rugby as a landlord.

We currently have approximately 644 tenants claiming UC, with 533 of those tenants in rent arrears owing an average of £818 each. In September 2018, 48.5 per cent of our total rent arrears were due to tenants in receipt of UC.

This has also made it difficult for us as a landlord and resources have had to be used to provide an enhanced package of support to tenants to ensure they are aware of what they need to do when they receive their UC payments, in particular budgeting, planning spend and then reminding tenants on the day of receiving their payment with a rent first approach. There are support mechanisms in place through Benn Partnership Centre (help with filling the application in) and Citizen Advice Bureau (budgeting advice funded by Department for Work and Pensions for 319 clients in 2018. 107 referrals were made to date.) and help from Rugby Borough Council officers, however, in some cases, despite all efforts, some tenants have had to pay off lenders before paying any money towards their rent. This cycle then repeats as most of their first UC payment is used on paying debts, leaving them to borrow again and often having to use foodbanks. Those that claim for advanced payments while the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) process their claims, have to pay back these advances and may also be having deductions made for other debts. The amount of deductions that can be made is quite high and this can in turn leave them facing further hardship.

Council officers meet with our DWP colleagues on a monthly basis and along with colleagues from Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) and the Benn Partnership Centre (BPC), discuss issues that have been encountered and look at how we can work together increase the support available to clients. Officers also participate in ad-hoc meetings with the DWP and other local authorities where experiences can be shared and learning relayed to the DWP.

The portfolio holder wrote to and arranged a meeting with the (then) DWP Minister Damian Hinds and attended a meeting with local MP Mark Pawsey. The issues

encountered by Rugby tenants were raised with the minister along with the informing him of the high levels of arrears. We requested early access to the Landlords Portal which will allow officers to verify applications more quickly, to see when an application has been processed and to set up arranged and managed payments. This has made the process somewhat easier.

After the meeting, I followed up with a letter to the DWP civil servants setting out some of the case studies provided to us by CAB (such as the issue of people who are paid in different timescales rather than every four weeks which can cause UC payments to be stopped or varied unexpectedly). DWP civil servants and the ministers promised to look into this issue to see what could be done to stop this discrepancy.

Q3 How many council dwellings have been sold through the Right to Buy scheme and how many have been replaced in the last 12 months comparing to last five years?

September Year	RTB sales	Purchases
2017 to 2018	26	22
2016 to 2017	24	8
2015 to 2016	30	4
2014 to 2015	34	31
2013 to 2014	28	0

The large increase in 2014 relates to the Sewell Place redevelopment.

Q4 Can the portfolio holder provide an update on the number of empty properties (houses) in the borough? How long have they been empty? How does this compare to the previous period?

A breakdown is attached at Annex 1 to the minutes.

Q5 What are the key issues for your portfolio for the next 12 months?

- Homelessness and Rough Sleeping
- Multi-storey flats
- Universal Credit/debt amongst tenants/tenancy sustainment
- Digitalisation
- Assisting customers with complex needs

Environment and Public Realm

Q1 How resilient is your portfolio? What are the strengths and weaknesses? How has your portfolio performed and what improvements have been made over the past 12 months? Are you achieving what you have set out to do?

The Environment and Public Realm portfolio continues to perform excellently with resilience being shown throughout. Its strengths lie in its staff who are experienced and committed to the services we provide. Improvements over the last 12 months include:

Waste and Recycling

- Implementing Webaspx software package to digitalise the way that we organise and manage waste and recycling collections. The reorganisation of the garden waste rounds reduced the number of operational rounds from five to three.
- Delivery of Year 2 of chargeable green waste has led to over £900,000 of income for the Council and a service which is now running efficiently and delivering an excellent customer service. The garden waste customer subscription is 50.1 per cent with an income of £923K.
- Efficiencies and better organisation has saved 468K from the budget for 2018/19 accounting year from 2017/18.

Regulatory Services

- Reviewing all of our processes in licencing, meaning that waste is removed from the system and our processes are as efficient as possible
- Responding to changes in legislation and ensuring that our Regulatory Services continue to protect our communities from harm
- Introducing a new and improved Priority Action Group to the Community Safety Partnership structure. This means that a group of professionals now meet on an operational level to respond to community safety priorities and develop new and innovative projects.
- Borough-wide injunction for gypsy and traveller incursions

Cemeteries and Crematoria - Bereavement Services

- Continual improvement in the Rainsbrook Crematorium
- Continues to deliver an excellent customer service whilst maximising the financial return for Rugby Borough Council and Daventry District Council
- On target to meet our number of cremations and keep our market share steadily improving

Parks and Open Spaces

- Recognition through the Green Flag and In Bloom programmes for our Parks and Open Spaces - demonstrating that our green spaces are of the highest quality
- Rugby awarded Gold in the Heart of England in Bloom awards and is to represent the West Midlands Region in the 2019 National Britain in Bloom Campaign
- Retained the Green Flag Awards for Caldecott Park, Millennium Green, Centenary Park, Rainsbrook Crematorium and a Green Flag Community Award for Gladstone Green
- Successfully gained funding from the British Horse Society to open a new permissive horse route at the Diamond Wood
- Britain In Bloom and the wonderful ways we've marked the 100th Centenary of the end of the First World War
- Successfully secured 75K external funding form Veolia for the refurbishment of the play area at Whitehall Recreation Ground

- Supported by over 10,000 hours of volunteering on our green spaces across Rugby
- Keep Britain Tidy Network Finalist for 'Love Parks Week' campaign
- A genuine key achievement is managing to battle through this year's weather from the snow, wind and drought
- All council owned allotments are now transferred to devolved self-management arrangements

Street Scene Team

- Supply and installation of hooped barriers and bollards on Castle Mound Way to prevent traveller incursions outside Continental Tyres (external income - £39.5k)
- Construction of a balancing pond and headwalls in the Diamond Wood adjacent the Rains Brook
- Continuation of asset mapping throughout the borough
- Continuation of car park surface repairs and lining
- Surfacing repairs and new street furniture installations to several play areas
- Installation of new street furniture for the parishes of Clifton upon Dunsmore and Binley Woods
- Construction of a memorial area at Rainsbrook Crematorium (works have started) and a new cemetery (preliminary works have started but these works will be ongoing into 2019)

We are achieving what we set out to do, however we are not complacent. We continue to identify areas for improvement, areas where we can work more effectively, areas where we can deliver commercialised services and areas where we can deliver an even higher standard of customer service.

Q2 Can the portfolio holder provide details on the number and type of reported fly tipping incidents in the borough from January 2015 to October 2018? Are there hotspots of repeat incidents? How many prosecutions have been carried out? Can the portfolio holder provide a year by year breakdown?

Prosecutions for fly tipping are rare as the majority are small domestic dumps or organised crime who are very good at evading detection and prosecution. For the period in question, we have successfully prosecuted in four cases.

The number of fly tipping incidents recorded for the period in question is as follows:

Year	Requests
2018	1118
2017	1085
2016	1066
2015	1033
Total	4302

Areas which are considered by officers to be 'hotspots' are as follows:

- Withybrook Lane, Shilton
- Brockhurst Lane, Monks Kirby

- Penn Lane, Wibtoft
- Wolvey, Magna Park
- Coombe Fields
- Moores Lane, Hillmorton
- Barnacle/Shilton Lane (nr Hilltop garden centre)
- Coal pit Lane, Brinklow
- Lawford Heath Lane
- Bramcote, Wolvey
- Alleyways in Benn and New Bilton areas
- Overslade Lane
- Dunchurch to Long Furlong
- Kew Road to Park Road
- Mill Road to Crowthorns
- Great Central Way (various locations)
- Turning circle on Brownsover Road

Q3 How many fines has Rugby Borough Council collected in the past five years against private sector landlords and letting agents? How many health and safety/environmental breaches have there been? How many notices of improvement have been served, complied with and led to prosecution?

The question is a little unclear as it seems to relate to numerous different issues.

The purpose of our regulatory work is undertaken with the aim of improving public safety. Within that context, enforcement is often the last step in ensuring that businesses and individuals comply with regulation. Furthermore, prosecutions do not always follow non-compliance of notice, if the breaches are serious enough a prosecution may be taken with the service of legal notices.

Regarding Private Sector Landlords - Rugby Borough Council has collected no fines from private sector landlords over the past five years (because these fall to the courts). However, notices have been served relating to the enforcement of private sector housing conditions, as follows:

- 318 Hazard Awareness Notices
- 281 Improvement notices (Category 1 hazard - if a hazard is a serious and immediate risk to a person's health and safety)
- 249 Improvement notices (Category 2 hazard - if a hazard is less serious or less urgent)
- 3 Prohibition orders
- 39 Emergency prohibition orders
- 16 Notices to produce documentation
- 4 Smoke/Carbon Monoxide Detector Remedial Notices

This has led to 10 prosecutions.

Q4 What are the key issues for your portfolio for the next 12 months?

Our most significant challenge can be summed up as delivering an excellent, value for money service to the public whilst recognising the overall financial pressure which local government is under.

We have new pressures such as an expected increase in the cost of disposing of recyclable materials. In examples such as this, we need to be innovative – identifying new ways of working and the opportunities which digitalisation brings.

We need to consider some of our core business – such as how we manage parks and open spaces. In the Corporate Strategy, we have committed to ‘enhance our local open spaces, to make them places people want to be’, but we need to carefully consider how we do this. Is there a more efficient way of doing things? How do we manage public expectation? How do we engage residents? How do we ensure that we truly are fit for the future? We are therefore undertaking a review of our grounds maintenance functions.

We need to further examine our income generating activities and ensure that we both protect the income which they generate and look for new opportunities.

We also need to recognise our commitment in the corporate strategy to ‘Protect the Public’. There are ongoing changes to both the legislation that guides much of this activity and the nature of the danger which our communities face. We need to remain one step ahead of these changes and ensure that we deliver the commitment which we have set out in the corporate strategy.

Growth and Investment

Q1 How resilient is your portfolio? What are the strengths and weaknesses? How has your portfolio performed and what improvements have been made over the past 12 months? Are you achieving what you have set out to do?

Resilience

The portfolio is considered resilient but has the potential to suffer operational risks like any other service area/organisation that delivers services to the public or clients. Corporate Risk Management Strategy is therefore key. Proactive monitoring of these risks and mitigation measures is expected monthly and reported quarterly.

Strengths

- Staff – technical knowledge/skillsets/experience
- Successful stakeholder liaison and partnership working which supports the delivery of sustainable growth and economic prosperity. This includes the commitment to growing the visitor economy.
- Breadth of reach to the community – service delivery ranges from ‘grass roots’ initiatives such as ‘On Track’ and the Play Rangers to directly supporting Small and Medium Enterprises as well as tackling complex strategic matters that will significantly shape Rugby Borough for the long term, e.g. the Local Plan.

Weaknesses

- Recruitment and retention is a challenge for all small local authorities. The council needs to remain competitive in the employment market particularly when staff have specialist skillsets or there is a requirement for casual staff. Regular market analysis is therefore undertaken and under review by new Head of Service.

- Ensuring that the council has the technology to keep pace with our people and processes, e.g. the introduction of the new 'Agile' IT system in Development Management and Enforcement which will streamline our systems and ensure that we are fit for purpose for the future.

Performance

The Budget has seen a continued increase in Business Rates and Council Tax in previous years and is promoting the transformation of the town centre to encourage future business growth. However, there is ongoing work in progress to build visitor economy. The service has taken action to mitigate this through a marketing plan which is now in place and there are continued discussions with third parties to provide the necessary reassurance on future income streams. Whilst the Hall of Fame is showing reduced footfall, the Art Gallery and Museum has maintained a steady level of visitors over the last couple of years.

Q2 What measures does Rugby Borough Council have in place to increase footfall to the World Rugby Hall of Fame.

The below marketing activities have been and continue to be delivered for the World Rugby Hall of Fame. These are jointly funded by Rugby Borough Council and World Rugby as part of an agreed plan:

- 121,000 copies of a leaflet have been printed and distributed through the Take One Media network. This includes tourist information centres, service stations, accommodation providers and attractions across the Midlands, areas of Wales, North and South.
- Paid social media campaigns and video content involving local rugby clubs, focusing on target markets within a 1.5-hour drive from Rugby.
- Radio advertising across the Midlands through the Quidem network.
- Direct mailing to groups and local rugby clubs.
- Attendance at trade shows to promote Rugby to coach companies and tour operators.
- Familiarisation trips to showcase the town and attraction to the group travel market.
- Links with Wasps Rugby Football Club to deliver advertising, leaflet distribution, email shots and activities to promote the World Rugby Hall of Fame within the Fan Village.
- Installation of 60+ signs on the platforms at Rugby Station with 'Rugby – Home of the World Rugby Hall of Fame' messaging.
- Free admission days – approximately six a year.
- Discounts linking to wider marketing opportunities e.g. town centre events and school holidays.
- Direct e-marketing to schools to promote the education programme.

A scrutiny group met four times between April – October 2017 to review of how the World Rugby Hall of Fame is currently operated and promoted. Analysis of visitor numbers, marketing activities and feedback from stakeholders was used as evidence. One of the recommendations included introducing an annual entry pass for visitors. This was launched on Thursday 18 October 2018. Those purchasing a standard admission ticket will be given the opportunity to upgrade to an annual pass free of charge also benefiting from offers and events.

'The Rugby Pass' is a new product in development, promoting itineraries incorporating the World Rugby Hall of Fame, Rugby School and town centre walking tours. These will replace and adapt the current pricing structure for groups. Links are also being established with Wasps Rugby Football Club to include add-ons such as matchday experiences and ground tours. Various destination marketing activities will be delivered linking to the 'The Rugby Pass' to be launched in March 2019 during Visit England's English Tourism Week.

Q3 Are there any plans to redevelop the former Herbert Gray College site which is currently empty?

Planning permission (2011), listed building consent (2009) and conservation area consent (2009) for offices, a 35-bed hotel with ancillary leisure and conference facilities and a retail/café unit remain extant for this site (pre-commencement conditions have been approved and physical start has been made on site). The site has been marketed with these permissions but there have been no viable takers.

A revised scheme was submitted for a 73-bed extra care residential unit scheme which was subsequently granted planning permission in 2016 and currently remains extant although the associated listed building consent granted in 2014 has lapsed.

However, this month officers met with a new set of investors for the site together with their technical advisors including representatives from well-known consultancies. Their intention is to develop the site, but they are only still working up their initial plans.

Q4 What percentage of new homes build in the borough are affordable? What is the policy in terms of expectation?

A breakdown is attached at Annex 2 to the minutes.

Q5 What are the key issues for your portfolio for the next 12 months?

- Adoption of the Local Plan
- Delivery of South West Rugby urban extension – consultation on and adoption of the South West Rugby supplementary planning document to ensure a coherent approach and delivery of critical infrastructure
- Revisiting the Town Centre Action Plan – in particular, identifying/accessing external funding sources to bring forward regeneration, business growth and expanding the cultural offer in the town centre
- Ensuring a smooth transition to the new 'Agile' IT system in Development Management and Enforcement – this will support the provision of a smooth and efficient service to our customers

The following ***additional questions*** were asked:

Are there any plans for Rugby Borough Council to move from fortnightly to three-weekly domestic waste collection?

There are no plans to change the domestic waste collection. The Warwickshire Waste Partnership is looking at ways to increase our recyclables and green waste.

Are there any plans for Rugby Borough Council to introduce a direct debit scheme for the green waste charge?

At present time, there are no plans for a direct debit scheme.

Last year, the town centre was very bad with snow which had an impact on the shops. It is predicted that this winter will be equally harsh. Who is responsible for clearing the pavements in town centre? Does Rugby Borough Council have any enforcement power?

Rugby Business Improvement District (BID) is responsible for clearing pavements in the town centre. Uncleared pavements haven't been flagged as an issue last year. The Environment and Public Realm Portfolio Holder will raise the issue with Rugby BID.

Is Rugby Borough Council responsible for the staff at the Hunters Lane Waste Recycling Centre? After some conversations, the staff morale appears to be low. Are any review processes in place?

The staff at the recycling centre is employed by Warwickshire County Council. Any comments can be fed back to Warwickshire County Council through the Warwickshire Waste Partnership.

Following a recent gypsy and traveller encampment in the Rokeby and Overslade Ward, can something be done to secure the site to prevent future encampments? Following their removal, Rugby Borough Council was left with clearing up the site. Has Warwickshire County Council been recharged for Rugby Borough Council performing this duty?

With regards to securing the site, the Environment and Public Realm Portfolio Holder advised the member to contact the relevant county councillor.

With regards to the recharge, the Corporate Resources Portfolio Holder was unable to provide an answer at the meeting. A response will be sent via email.

What evidence do we have of what military covenant is working at Rugby Borough Council?

The Corporate Resources Portfolio Holder was unable to provide an answer at the meeting. A response will be sent via email.

The following **additional comments** were made:

Members raised concerns with regards to the lack of data available for scrutiny across the portfolios on the Council's Rugby Performance Monitoring System (RPMS). It was highlighted that access is not necessarily the issue and that a further training won't be of any value until the system is fully populated. The Corporate Resources Portfolio Holder will raise the issue with her head of service. The issue will also be raised with the Executive Director at the next joint scrutiny chairs' meeting.

The arrangements for the annual portfolio holders' meeting will be reviewed in 2019/20 as members felt that if answers to the questions submitted in advance were

circulated prior to the meeting, it would free up time to ask additional questions at the meeting.

It was agreed that Affordable Housing Provision will be added to the work programme as a scrutiny item for a future meeting due to the concerns raised with regards to Annex 2 to the minutes.

Members were informed that the next Joint Overview and Scrutiny Meeting will be held on 28 January 2019 where the Leader of the Council and the Executive Director will be scrutinised.

The Chair thanked the portfolio holders for attending the meeting.

A minute of silence was held at the end of the meeting to mark the centenary of the First World War.

CHAIR

Empty property data October 2018

The empty property data for Rugby is extracted from Council Tax data and is produced quarterly. The data represented in the table is from October 2018 and is subject to fluctuations. To summarise the data is broken down as follows:

1. There are a total of 1661 properties in October 2018 classed as empty
2. 331 properties are exempt from Council Tax because of one of the following reasons:
 - B owned by charity/HA (48)
 - D in prison (3)
 - E in residential care (66)
 - F deceased (109)
 - FC probate granted (40)
 - G occupation prohibited by law (1)
 - H held for minister of religion (4)
 - I receiving personal care elsewhere (5)
 - J providing care elsewhere (1)
 - K left empty by a student (2)
 - L repossessed (3)
 - Q bankrupt (0)
 - R empty pitch or mooring (31)
 - T unoccupied annexe (18)
3. 616 have been empty less than 6 months, this figure has increased slightly from last year and represents properties that are newly built or undergoing refurbishment or repair.
4. 363 properties have been empty between 6 months and 2 years although some of these can be problematic the majority fall into the category of waiting to be sold or let. (quite a few are RBC properties)
5. 15 properties are judged to be uninhabitable (this is mainly due to Biart Place)
6. 55 have been empty for over 2 years and for the basis of the term problematic property
7. 161 are 2nd homes

When the data is analysed there is no significant increase in numbers moving from different categories, which means that the vast majority of empty properties are empty between 0 – 2 years. The longest empty property, from Council Tax data is from 1996.

Note: empty property data is from Council Tax data there may be other empty properties that are not on the list because Council Tax are unaware

Total	Empty property	Reason	Comments
1661	1661		
1330	331	Exempt from C/Tax	Prison, residential care, probate repossessed etc
714	616	Empty less than 6 months	
553	161	2 nd homes	
190	363	Empty 6 months – 2 years	
135	55	Empty more than 2 years	
0	135	Uninhabitable	
Total			

Empty property data September 2017

The empty property data for Rugby is extracted from Council Tax data and is produced quarterly. The data represented in the table is from September 2017 and is subject to fluctuations. To summarise the data is broken down as follows:

1. There are a total of 1348 properties in September 2017 classed as empty
2. 284 properties are exempt from Council Tax because of one of the following reasons:
 - B owned by charity/HA
 - D in prison
 - E in residential care
 - F deceased
 - FC probate granted
 - G occupation prohibited by law
 - H held for minister of religion
 - I receiving personal care elsewhere
 - J providing care elsewhere
 - K left empty by a student
 - L repossessed
 - Q bankrupt
 - R empty pitch or mooring
 - T unoccupied annexe
3. 486 have been empty less than 6 months – this figure is pretty consistent and represents properties that are newly built or undergoing refurbishment or repair.
4. 282 properties have been empty between 6 months and 2 years although some of these can be problematic the majority still fall into the category of being refurbished or repaired (lack of funds and availability of contractors is often cited as a reason)
5. 35 properties are judged to be uninhabitable
6. 24 properties are currently appealing the status it has been given
7. 64 have been empty for over 2 years and for the basis of the term problematic property
8. 173 are 2nd homes

When the data is analysed there is no significant increase in numbers moving from different categories, which means that the vast majority of empty properties are empty between 0 - 2 years. The longest empty property, from Council Tax data is from 1996. Of the 64 properties only 44 are owned by private individuals the remaining 20 are owned by:

- Charities - 6
- Warwickshire County Council - 2
- Rugby Borough Council - 1 (Bellhouse, 320 Lawford Road)
- Private companies - 6
- Exors (deceased) - 4
- Ministry of Defence - 1

Note: Empty property data is from Council Tax data there may be other empty properties that are not on the list because Council Tax are unaware.

Total	Empty property	Reason	Comments
1348	1348		
1064	284	Exempt from C/Tax	Prison, residential care, probate repossessed, ect
578	486	Empty less than 6 months	
405	173	2 nd homes	
123	282	Empty 6 months - 2 years	
59	64	Empty more than 2 years	
24	35	Uninhabitable	
0	24	Under appeal	

The table below shows the affordable housing completions compared to the gross number of new dwellings by year. Figures for 2017/18 are due to be published in early January 2019 as part of the Council's Authority Monitoring Report.

	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Local Authority	0	0	0	10	10	0	0	23	27	1	3
RSL – Rented	118	181	28	70	64	44	54	48	57	26	0
RSL – Shared Ownership	98	39	0	23	41	36	38	17	45	19	0
Discounted Market	4	3	19	21	0	0	0	9	0	0	0
TOTAL	220	223	47	124	115	80	92	97	129	46	3
Total housing completions (Gross)	1451	810	382	429	428	343	467	452	472	541	395
% Affordable provision	15.16%	27.53%	12.30%	28.90%	26.87%	23.32%	19.70%	21.46%	27%	8.50%	0.8%

The adopted Core Strategy 2011 Policy CS19 seeks to provide affordable housing on all sites of at least 0.5 Hectares in size or capable of accommodating 15 or more dwellings. On sites between 0.5 Hectares to 1 Hectare a target provision of **33.3%** is sought. On sites exceeding 1 Hectare or capable of accommodating 30 or more dwellings a target of **40%** is sought.

To note, the % target of affordable housing as defined in CS19 only relates to those larger sites where the policy is applicable and is not measured against the total completions of *all* sites as illustrated in the table above.

As an indication of the % of affordable housing on the sites where the policy is applied, a study of permissions between 2014 – 2017 identified that **19.5%** of the housing granted was affordable compared to the target of **40%**.

The forthcoming local plan – anticipated for adoption early next year, includes a policy seeking provision of affordable housing on all sites of at least 0.36 hectares in size or capable of accommodating 11 (net) dwellings or more. On previously developed sites a target affordable housing provision of **20%** will be sought. On green field sites a target affordable housing provision of **30%** will be sought.