



26 February 2025

## SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 6 MARCH 2025

A meeting of the Scrutiny Committee will be held at 6pm on Thursday 6 March 2025 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.*

Dan Green  
Acting Chief Executive

## A G E N D A

### PART 1 – PUBLIC BUSINESS

1. Minutes  
To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2025.
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. Customer Journey Interim Update.
5. People Strategy Update.

**Membership of the Committee:**

Councillors Timms (Chair), S Edwards, Freeman, Hassell, Lawrence, New, Parker, Sayani and Srivastava.

*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>	Customer Journey Interim Update
<b>Name of Committee:</b>	Scrutiny Committee
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	6 March 2025
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Dr Thomas Griffiths - Chief Officer for Digital and Communications
<b>Summary:</b>	This report is an interim update report prepared for Scrutiny in advance of a full report to be produced later in 2025, covering the recent improvements and planned future changes to the Customer Journey at Rugby Borough Council.
<b>Financial Implications:</b>	There are no financial implications arising from this report.
<b>Risk Management/Health and Safety 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>	No new or existing policy or procedure has been recommended.

**Scrutiny Committee - 6 March 2025**

**Customer Journey Interim Update**

**Public Report of the Chief Officer - Digital and Communications**

**Summary**

This report is an interim update report prepared for Scrutiny in advance of a full report to be produced later in 2025, covering the recent improvements and planned future changes to the Customer Journey at Rugby Borough Council.

**1. Recent Improvements**

- 1.1. In light of highlighted challenges that have faced the Council the Digital and Communications portfolio, working with teams across Revenues and Finance, implemented a new Online Digital Platform for the self-service registration and handling of Direct Debits at RBC.
- 1.2. The platform, referred to as the 'Direct Debit Digitalisation' project, has been live since mid-Jan 2025 and has currently seen almost 4,000 households across Rugby Borough register and sign-up for an account.
- 1.3. The platform will, over the next 12-24 months, lead to a reduction in the call volume into the Customer Service Centre, and reduce the subsequent manual processing of requests and queries related to Council Tax direct debits into the Revenues team.
- 1.4. This will greatly improve the speed, access and standard of customer assess at RBC and improve the experience of residents and individuals within our communities.
- 1.5. The platform has diverted calls away from the Customer Service Centre, freeing up time and resources for staff to take calls, enquiries and requests from residents who prefer or require to use the phone to contact the Council. This has improved their customer journey by reducing overall wait time at what would have previously been an exceptionally busy period.

## **2. Planned Future Changes**

- 2.1. The revised **Communications and Engagement Strategy** is being finalised by the Communications team with input from the wider directorate and portfolio holders. The document outlines a renewed approach to consultation with our Residents, Businesses and Communities.
- 2.2. The Strategy will include a pledge to increase resident and community involvement in decision making at the Council and any associated activities which may have an impact on their day-to-day lives.
- 2.3. The Strategy will be accompanied by a short guide for Officer and Elected Members on practical ways and examples by which they can apply the new Strategy in their activities. This document will serve as a guide to the roll-out and practical application of our renewed consultation and community engagement activities.
- 2.4. The Strategy will be presented to Scrutiny in its full form once finalised by the Team.

**Name of Meeting:** Scrutiny Committee  
**Date of Meeting:** 6 March 2025  
**Subject Matter:** Customer Journey Interim Update  
**Originating Department:** Digital and Communications

**DO ANY BACKGROUND PAPERS APPLY**       YES       NO

**LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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

***AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET***

<b>Report Title:</b>	People Strategy Update
<b>Name of Committee:</b>	Scrutiny Committee
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	6 March 2025
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Judith Hicks - Human Resources Manager
<b>Summary:</b>	This report provides an update on the introduction of the People Strategy.
<b>Financial Implications:</b>	There are no financial implications arising from this report.
<b>Risk Management/Health and Safety 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>	No new or existing policy or procedure has been recommended.

**Scrutiny Committee - 6 March 2025**

**People Strategy Update**

**Public Report of the Human Resources Manager**

**Summary**

This report provides an update on the introduction of the People Strategy.

**1. Introduction**

1.1. The Council recognises that following a period of review and consultation, the need to focus on strengthening people management practices, introducing performance development reviews, enhancing leadership capability and investing in learning & development is essential if the Council is to deliver the corporate strategy. Following consultation with the Chief Executive, Leadership Team and Management Team, it was agreed that the Council required a People Strategy to give clear direction to this work.

**2. Strategy Development and Consultation**

2.1. The People Strategy 2023 – 2026 has been developed by analysis of data, conversations and insights from people managers, external benchmarking and good practice from other local authorities. The draft strategy has been reviewed by the All Leaders Steering Group (A.L.S.G) in August 2023 and then by the Local Government Association (LGA) Corporate Peer Challenge team in October 2023 and its inclusion in their key recommendations has given assurance that the correct priorities have been identified. The strategy was then drafted after input and consultation with employees, unions via JUCF, employee briefings, leadership, management team and focus groups.

2.2. Input has also been received from West Midlands Employers, LGA corporate peer challenge team, senior legal officer and feedback acted upon. Following the May 2024 elections, the strategy has been shared with portfolio holders, leaders and other elected members of the new administration. In December 2024, the chair of the Scrutiny Committee has also offered valuable and insightful feedback.

2.3. Since January 2025, proposed devolution, the drafting of the Corporate Strategy Delivery Plan and the feedback from the employee engagement survey have meant that it is necessary to review the work that has already been completed and expand on the planned priorities and actions for 2025/26. This will take



account of the organisation wide action plan to deliver against the issues raised in the employee engagement survey, as well as a focus on clarity of priorities to ensure a manageable workload for employees and the learnings from the pilot Performance Development Review (PDR) pilot during 2024/25 and how that has informed the planned rollout of PDRs across the Council from April 2025 onwards.

### **3. Key areas of focus following feedback from the Scrutiny Committee**

3.1. During a Scrutiny committee pre-meeting the following points were highlighted for inclusion in this report:

- **Are the overall priorities / ambitions aligned with Elected Members expectations?**

Extensive consultation to date, as well as input from the current administration indicates that the priorities are evidence led and will support the delivery of the corporate strategy.

- **Is the annual delivery plan appropriate to make progress?**

The current delivery plan for 2024/25 is on track in key areas, with some relating to leadership capability planned to continue during 2025/26. The creation of the annual delivery plan is scheduled to be devised in April 2025, following revision of the People Strategy. The work relating to leadership capability, culture and climate will continue throughout 2025/26

- **Do the performance indicators give members assurance that progress is being made?**

The KPI's relating to turnover and sickness absence are challenging, but achievable. A 25% reduction in sickness absence by April 2025 is unlikely, but we should be able to demonstrate a small reduction and a 10% reduction in the number of mental health related absence. Other KPI's are on track to be achieved.

- **How would scrutiny committee like to be kept updated on the delivery of the strategy and action plan?**

Regular updates on a quarterly or monthly basis can be provided by the Human Resources Manager. The frequency and format can be agreed by the committee

### **4. Next Steps**

4.1. In agreement with the portfolio holder, an updated People Strategy will be presented for June Cabinet.

**Name of Meeting:** Scrutiny Committee  
**Date of Meeting:** 6 March 2025  
**Subject Matter:** People Strategy Update  
**Originating Department:** Chief Executive Office

**DO ANY BACKGROUND PAPERS APPLY**       YES       NO

**LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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