



20 January 2023

## SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 30 JANUARY 2023

A meeting of the Scrutiny Committee will be held at 6pm on Monday 30 January 2023 in the Council Chamber at the Town Hall, Rugby.

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

Mannie Ketley  
Chief Executive

## A G E N D A

### PART 1 – PUBLIC BUSINESS

1. Minutes

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 14 November 2022.

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. Cost of Living (report to follow).
5. Motion from Council – Impact of the Cost of Living on Children.
6. Motion from Council – Business Hubs (report to follow).
7. Motion from Council – Gypsy and Traveller Pitches.
8. Developing a Borough Wide Landlord Forum (report to follow).
9. Motion from Council – Survey of Young People (report to follow).
10. Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme.

**Membership of the Committee:**

Councillors Eccleson (Chair), Edwards, T Lawrence, Mahoney, Mrs New, Mrs O'Rourke, Mrs Parker, Rabin and Ward

*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 No 5

### ***AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET***

|                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Report Title:</b>                 | Motion from Council – Impact of the Cost of Living on Children   |
| <b>Name of Committee:</b>            | Scrutiny Committee   |
| <b>Date of Meeting:</b>              | 30 January 2023  |
| <b>Contact Officer:</b>              | Michelle Dickson, Chief Officer Communities and Homes  |
| <b>Summary:</b>                      | <p>On 23 November 2022, 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 – 30 January 2023**

**Motion from Council – Impact of the Cost of Living on Children**

**Public Report of the Chief Officer – Communities and Homes**

**Summary**

On 23 November 2022, 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 23 November 2022, Council considered a motion submitted on notice by Cllr Slinger and seconded by Cllr Mrs O'Rourke and further to debate amended as set out below.

*“The Council is extremely concerned about the impact the cost-of-living crisis will have on children in Rugby. Currently, 3,414 children rely on free school meals for basic nutrition in Rugby which represents 19.2% of the school population in the town. This is the third highest rate in Warwickshire, and this number is likely to rise. Families with multiple children who pay for school meals may find it increasingly difficult to afford school meals, as the cost-of living crisis hits them. We are gravely worried about the impact this will have on children’s ability to learn, their physical health and their long-term well-being, mentally, socially and physically.*

*The Council:*

- *asks the Warwickshire Health and Wellbeing Board – how in the context of the cost of living crisis they will be meeting their priority to ‘help children and young people to have the best start in life’ and for this to be presented to the Rugby Health and Wellbeing Partnership and the Scrutiny Committee.*

*Furthermore, the Council asks officers to present to Scrutiny Committee an update on the work which is already taking place in relation to Area Action Plans and how they will seek to;*

- *understand the number of families living in financial hardship, where children are at potential risk of homelessness; work with local/national organisations such as Magic Breakfast, Make Lunch, schools and other*

- *organisations nationally and locally, to help ensure that affordable and nutritious food is available for school children in Rugby;*
- *work to encourage schools that do not already have them, to host gardening clubs to grow fruit and vegetables for their school community and provide support and advice from the parks department where required; and*
- *encourage schools in Rugby to set up non-stigmatising second hand uniform sales/swaps, recognising both the environmental and financial benefits of such schemes.*
- *Apply this learning in other areas of the Borough.”*

In accordance with paragraph 11.2(d) of Council Standing Orders the motion stood referred to Scrutiny Committee.

## **2. RESPONSE FROM THE WARWICKSHIRE HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD**

A letter has been sent from the Leader of the Council to the Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Board in relation to the first bullet point of the above motion wording and their response was awaited.

## **3. CURRENT WORKSTREAMS AND AREA ACTION PLANS**

### **3.1 Introduction**

Two pilot areas for developing an Area Action Plan approach have been identified, covering the Benn and New Bilton Wards. To date, work has already been progressing, in both wards and in partnership with local Ward Members, currently focusing on public realm issues, with the aim of developing some short term actions that will result in immediate benefits to the area and the community.

The plans for Benn Ward are more advanced and as our approach develops work will continue to progress in New Bilton. For the purposes of this update, the focus will be on Benn Ward.

### **3.2 Rationale for this approach**

The Action Plan targeted approach to ‘place’ is one that pre-dates the national Levelling Up Agenda and will complement wider work in respect of the Town Centre Regeneration Strategy and the Rugby Economic Strategy.

This approach will require the engagement of a broad range of multi-disciplinary partners to develop strategies specifically in response to deprivation data available for this Lower Super Output area.

### **3.3 Understanding issues of families living in financial hardship and closer working with schools**

Activity is already taking place to better understand issues of financial hardship for families. This includes the current engagement of WCC officers, and in particular data analysts, to support with the provision of data specific to the ward. The next stage is to work more closely with local schools and the Benn Partnership Centre to understand the current community offer that is already in place, where the gaps are and how these can be filled.

In working with schools, Warwickshire County Council, as lead agency in respect of Free School Meals and the Warwickshire Local Welfare Scheme, have already pledged support in working with the borough to further develop the action plan approach, with particular emphasis on the understanding and the further development of the local offer in respect of healthy and affordable eating.

### **3.4 Links to the RBC community development offer**

In December 2022, Council agreed to the funding of a Service Level Agreement with the Benn Partnership Centre for 2023/24, £7,500, subject to budget setting. Fundamental to this is that officers will work with the Benn Partnership Centre to develop a bespoke action plan to set out their contribution to tackling issues within their community. This is an example of the community defining both the problem and potential solution, given their unique knowledge of both place and needs.

Here is an extract from the report to Council, to provide additional context:

*The Community Associations in Rugby have an excellent understanding of their communities and are uniquely able to identify and respond to their needs. They also provide the council with a focal point for engagement. Located in the more deprived areas of the borough, they provide a varied programme of support for their communities. They are in recovery, due to the impact of Covid and are now gearing up their offer.*

*The current agreements with the Community Associations are SLA's. They are all the same and broadly reflect requirements to provide services in line with the corporate priorities of the council. However, there is an opportunity for the Council to change this to a more formal funding agreement, underpinned with a bespoke action plan to be developed in partnership with each community association.*

*The proposed action plans will be more impact driven and better demonstrate the unique role that the community associations can play in delivering Rugby's levelling up agenda and improving residents' pride in place.*

In addition to the above, we have a contract for advice with the CAB. That same meeting agreed to continuing that arrangement for 2-4 years. A key part of the reporting data from the CAB is that presentations for advice, and the advice sought, is broken down to ward level. This is a valuable data source to be drawn upon when understanding the needs of the area, and the appropriate responses to be put in place via the action plan to be developed in collaboration with the Benn Partnership Centre.

This data specifically highlights where people have sought advice in respect of potential homelessness. The relationship between the CAB and Housing Advice & Benefits Team is an established one, alongside a range of other partners that contribute to the work of the Rugby Homelessness Forum.

It has also been agreed to continue to support WCAVA, via a contract arrangement. The support of WCAVA in developing a coherent action plan is vital, given their ability to signpost and advise on the suitability of grants that may be available and also to identify groups that may be able to work collaboratively with officers and the Benn Partnership Centre in response to the issues prioritised in the local action plan.

### 3.5 Links to the broader determinants of health

Public Health and the wider Rugby Health and Wellbeing Partnership will also have a role to play in terms of understanding localised health needs and the potential for creative approaches to service delivery in the area. This will all feed into the work of the Rugby Health and Well-Being Partnership to maximise reach to other health professionals.

For context, the Rugby Health and Wellbeing Partnership acts as a core agent for delivering the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy on behalf of the Warwickshire Health and Wellbeing Board. The partnership is the strategic lead on delivery of all four quadrants of the population health approach (see diagram below) to improve health and wellbeing outcomes and reduce health inequalities in Rugby Borough, with a particular focus on quadrant 1 – the wider determinants of health.



The area action plan approach allows a more holistic approach to tackling the issues that adversely impact on health and wellbeing, with income and wealth being just part of the broader picture and works in progress.

Specific to housing, is the consideration of potential licensing of Housing in Multiple Occupation, of which there is known to be a concentration in Benn Ward. In addition, terms of reference will be brought to Members for consideration in respect of a potential borough wide landlords' forum in 2023/24.

Discussions are already in progress with the Rugby College (now a provider of 'T Levels') in respect of encouraging positive pathways to employment and the development of potentially creative solutions to encourage this. Again, this is a broader conversation that will require input from a range of partners and the community itself and will contribute to the Council's Economic Development Strategy.

As the community safety partnership strategy and action plan is developed during 2023/24 that too will have an "area action / place" focus.

The Regeneration Strategy closely aligns with improved health outcomes, and one strand of this is the engagement of the expertise of transport and highways, for example, considering the potential for improving air quality and outcomes. In addition, there is the potential for considering improved access to leisure and open spaces.

This summary sets out current progress and engagement. What is immediately obvious from the broad range of issues identified and considered, substantial progress is being made in understanding the needs of our residents. As this approach develops, it is anticipated extending it to other areas of the borough, bringing the correct partners along.

### **3.6 Recommended way forward**

The view of officers is that:

- Ward Members are best placed to support work on the development of the area action plans, specific to their wards, and in partnership with others.
- the area action plans should be further developed, with an update report being provided to Cabinet in Quarter 1 of 2023/24.

### **3.7 Conclusion**

One of the benefits of selecting a small geography is that the approach can be deliverable, joined up, reflective of community priorities and an opportunity to identify a successful methodology that can be tweaked for roll out across other areas of the borough.



#### **4. 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.

#### **5. NEXT STEPS**

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

**Name of Meeting:** Scrutiny Committee

**Date of Meeting:** 30 January 2023

**Subject Matter:** Motion from Council – Impact of the Cost of Living on Children

**Originating Department:** Communities and Homes

**DO ANY BACKGROUND PAPERS APPLY**

YES

NO

**LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

| <b>Doc No</b> | <b>Title of Document and Hyperlink</b> |
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## Agenda No 7

### ***AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET***

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|--------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Report Title:</b>                 | Motion from Council – Gypsy and Traveller Pitches   |
| <b>Name of Committee:</b>            | Scrutiny Committee  |
| <b>Date of Meeting:</b>              | 30 January 2023   |
| <b>Contact Officer:</b>              | Nicola Smith, Chief Officer Growth and Investment   |
| <b>Summary:</b>                      | <p>On 28 September 2022, 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 – 30 January 2023**

**Motion from Council – Gypsy and Traveller Pitches**

**Public Report of the Chief Officer – Growth and Investment**

**Summary**

On 28 September 2022, 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 28 September 2022, Council considered a motion submitted on notice by Cllr Slinger and seconded by Cllr Mrs O'Rourke as set out below.

*“We note that Rugby Borough Council has, to date, not met its obligation to provide a full 61 permanent pitches for the Gypsy and Traveller community, as required for the period between 2017/18 and 2031/32 in Policy DS2 of the adopted Rugby Borough Local Plan 2011- 2031. We note that assessing Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs when carrying out a periodical review of housing needs under section 8 of the Housing Act 1985 is a statutory requirement under section 225 of the Housing Act 2004. We further note that 41 pitches were still required as at 1 November 2021 and that no planning permission has been granted for pitches since 1 April 2021 that would contribute to the 5-year supply in the period of 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2026. We call on this Council to fulfil urgently its duties in respect of the allocation of sites for gypsy and traveller community and call on the Leader of the Council to write immediately to the Leader of Warwickshire County Council to coordinate with all Borough and District Councils, and all other stakeholders, with a view to holding a Warwickshire-wide summit to ensure that Warwickshire is providing its full allocation as required by the Government.”*

In accordance with paragraph 11.2(d) of Council Standing Orders the motion stood referred to Scrutiny Committee.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

It should also be noted that on the 13 July 2022 the Council under delegated powers granted planning permission for 3 gypsy and traveller pitches at Rosewood, Mile Tree Lane, Bulkington/Alderman's Green ref R21/1081. The notice set out above is therefore incorrect in the claim that no planning permissions have been issued.

The Council is required to provide pitches, to meet its need, in line with the Local Plan timescale which is up to 2031. The Local Plan Inspector in 2019 at the examination of the Local Plan required the pitches to be allocated through the adoption of a Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document (DPD).

Since 2019 work has been undertaken on gathering the necessary evidence base including refreshing the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment to ensure that the evidence base is as up to date as possible.

The Council has also published the timetable for the adoption of the DPD as part of Local Development Scheme which is available on the Council's website. In this scheme the Council stated it would consult on the issues and option in October 22 and adopt the DPD following and Examination in Public by an Independent Examiner in September 2024.

Work on the DPD evidence gathering commenced March 2022. Due to the cancellation of Cabinets in August and September an emergency decision was taken in September to allow the Issues and Options consultation which is part of the statutory consultation process to commence so as not to delay the timetable even further. This emergency decision was reported to Cabinet on 17 October 2022.

The Issues and Options consultation took place during October and November 22. The results of the consultation are currently being reviewed by officers and will be reported to Planning Services Working Party on the 15 February 2023.

A training session for Members of the Planning Committee was also arranged by officers so that Members could be more aware of the issues they needed to consider during the DPD process. The session was conducted by Barristers of No.5 Chambers who have significant experience in this field.

The Council is therefore fulfilling its statutory requirements to ensure that it meets the needs of the Gypsy and Traveller community inline with the statutory process set out in the Town and Country Planning Acts. The timetable for the adoption of the DPD is set out within the Council's Local Development Scheme and its progress is reported through the Planning Services Working Party which is an established cross party group.

## **3. 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.

#### **4. NEXT STEPS**

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

**Name of Meeting:** Scrutiny Committee

**Date of Meeting:** 30 January 2023

**Subject Matter:** Motion from Council – Gypsy and Traveller Pitches

**Originating Department:** Growth and Investment

**DO ANY BACKGROUND PAPERS APPLY**       YES       NO

**LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

| <b>Doc No</b> | <b>Title of Document and Hyperlink</b> |
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***AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET***

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|--------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Report Title:</b>                 | Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme  |
| <b>Name of Committee:</b>            | Scrutiny Committee  |
| <b>Date of Meeting:</b>              | 30 January 2023   |
| <b>Contact Officer:</b>              | Linn Ashmore, Democratic Services Officer, Tel:<br>01788 533522   |
| <b>Summary:</b>                      | The report updates the Committee on the progress of task group reviews within its remit and details the overview and scrutiny forward work programme. |
| <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>       | No new or existing policy or procedure has been recommended.  |



**Scrutiny Committee - 30 January 2023**

**Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme**

**Summary**

The report updates the Committee on the progress of task group reviews within its remit and details the overview and scrutiny forward work programme.

**1. CURRENT REVIEWS**

**1.2 Access to Emergency Health Care Provision**

The interest of councillors in carrying out the review has been reviewed and the group is due to meet in February.

**1.3 Managing Council Tax Arrears**

Due to the busy workload of the external agencies the task group wished to consult there was a delay in progress of the review. The task group will meet on 16 February with a representative from the Citizens Advice Bureau to understand the levels of debt being experienced before, during, and after the Covid pandemic as part of its evidence gathering.

**2. WORK PROGRAMME**

**2.1 Current Work Programme**

A copy of the current work programme is attached at Appendix 1. A table listing the motions from Council has been included for reference.

**3. FORWARD PLAN**

The topics currently listed in the Forward Plan for the period February – May 2023 are available to download [Here](#)

**4. CONCLUSION**

The committee is asked to consider and agree the future work programme.

**Name of Meeting:** Scrutiny Committee  
**Date of Meeting:** 30 January 2023  
**Subject Matter:** Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme

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

**LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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## Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme

| Date of meeting 2022/23 | Item   | Description   |
|-------------------------|--|---|
| All meetings            | Motions referred to scrutiny                           |   |
| All meetings            | Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme                   | Long-term rolling work programme.   |
| 30 January 2023         | Discussion with Portfolio Holder/s and Chief Officer/s | Communities, Homes, Digital and Communications Portfolio Holder and Chief Officer for Communities and Homes to attend.  |
| 30 January 2023         | Cost of Living   | Report from the Scrutiny Committee Sub-Group.   |
| 30 January 2023         | Motions  | Reports on various motions referred to Scrutiny Committee from Council (listed in the table below)  |
| 27 March 2023           | Discussion with Portfolio Holder/s and Chief Officer/s | Leisure and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder and the Chief Officer for Leisure and Wellbeing to attend (to be confirmed).   |
| 27 March 2023           | 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. |
| 19 June 2023            | Discussion with Portfolio Holder/s and Chief Officer/s | Finance, Performance, Legal and Governance Portfolio Holder and Chief Officers for Finance and Performance and Legal and Governance to attend (to be confirmed).  |
| 19 June 2023            | Draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report              | An overview of the work carried out by scrutiny during 202/23.  |
| 11 September 2023       | Discussion with Portfolio Holder/s and Chief Officer/s | To be scheduled.  |
| 20 November 2023        | Discussion with Portfolio Holder/s and Chief Officer/s | To be scheduled.  |
| 29 January 2024         | Discussion with Portfolio Holder/s and Chief Officer/s | To be scheduled.  |

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| 8 April 2024 | Discussion with Portfolio Holder/s and Chief Officer/s | To be scheduled. |
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### Items to be scheduled

| Item   | Report Description/Notes                        |
|--|---|
| Review of Managing Arrears (Council Tax)         | Progress or final review report.                |
| Review of Access to Emergency Health Care        | Progress or final review report.                |
| Annual review of Member training and development | Annual overview.                                |
| Review of Communication                          | To include internal and external communication. |

### Motions from Council

| Topic   | Progress/Notes   |
|---|--|
| Cost of Living – Reducing Fuel Poverty<br>Cost of Living – Impact of Increases<br>Cost of Living – Impact of the Energy Price Cap | The motions were addressed in a report to the meeting held on 14 November 2022 which identified a number of workstreams. Committee resolved to form a small sub-group of the committee made up of one Member from each political group to support the workstreams identified, to feedback to their own political group and to update the committee.<br>Report to Committee 30 January 2023 |
| Cost of Living – Impact on Children   | Report to Committee 30 January 2023  |
| Business Hubs   | Report to Committee 30 January 2023  |
| Gypsy and Traveller Pitches   | Report to Committee 30 January 2023  |
| Survey of Young People  | Report to Committee 30 January 2023  |
| Landlord Forum  | Report to Committee 30 January 2023  |

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

| <b>Topic</b>         | <b>Timescale</b> | <b>Notes</b>   |
|----------------------|------------------|--|
| Health and Wellbeing | To be agreed     | Linked to recovery of the Covid-19 pandemic. A place-based Health and Wellbeing Strategy had initial conversations between the Chief Officer for Leisure & Wellbeing and Chief Officer Communities & Homes to outline the development of the new strategy. External advice is currently being sought to support the development of the Health and Wellbeing Partnership arrangements and the creation of a Place-based Rugby strategy. |
| Digital Inclusion    | To be agreed     | The IT and Digital Strategy was considered and adopted by Council on 19 July 2022.   |