

BOROUGH OF RUSHMOOR

MEETING OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL held at the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Farnborough on Thursday, 10th July, 2025 at 7.00 pm.

The Worshipful The Mayor (Cllr Calum Stewart (Chairman))
The Deputy Mayor (Cllr P.J. Cullum (Vice-Chairman))

Cllr A. Adeola
Cllr Gaynor Austin
Cllr Leola Card
Cllr A.H. Crawford
Cllr Keith Dibble
Cllr A.H. Gani
Cllr Lisa Greenway
Cllr Julie Hall
Cllr Rhian Jones
Cllr G.B. Lyon
Cllr S.J. Masterson
Cllr Bill O'Donovan
Cllr M.J. Roberts
Cllr M.D. Smith
Cllr P.G. Taylor
Cllr S. Trussler
Cllr Gareth Williams

Cllr Abe Allen
Cllr C.W. Card
Cllr Sue Carter
Cllr Thomas Day
Cllr Peace Essien Igodifo
Cllr C.P. Grattan
Cllr Christine Guinness
Cllr Steve Harden
Cllr Halleh Koohestani
Cllr Mara Makunura
Cllr T.W. Mitchell
Cllr Sophie Porter
Cllr Dhan Sarki
Cllr Sarah Spall
Cllr M.J. Tennant
Cllr Becky Williams

Honorary Alderman Diane Bedford
Honorary Alderman Tony Gardiner
Honorary Alderman John Marsh

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Cllr Jules Crossley, Cllr Nadia Martin, Cllr Jacqui Vosper and Cllr Ivan Whitmee.

Before the meeting was opened, the Mayor had invited Reverend Andy Latifa, Senior Chaplain from the Military Headquarters, South East, to lead the meeting in prayers.

7. MINUTES

It was MOVED by Cllr Gareth Williams; SECONDED by Cllr Sophie Porter and

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting on 20th May, 2025, (copies having been circulated previously), be taken as read, approved and signed as a correct record.

8. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor reflected on the events he had attended since the Annual Council Meeting. He extended his thanks to Padre Andy Latifa and the Garrison personnel for a successful Armed Forces Day event on 23rd June. He also paid tribute to the

Farnborough and Rushmoor Rotary Clubs for their organisation of the Donkey Derby, Children's Fun Day (formally Kids Out) and Music in the Park events.

The Mayor updated Members on the launch of the Mayor's Award. He advised that a staff panel had been established and would be convened shortly to review the nominations already received. Awards would be presented at future meetings of the Council. Discussions were also ongoing regarding the arrangements for the "Step Beyond" Programme with Alderwood School.

The Mayor advised that the Council's thoughts were with Cllr Clive Grattan following his recent loss and congratulations and best wishes were conveyed to Cllr Rhian Jones for her forthcoming nuptials.

9. STANDING ORDER 8 - QUESTIONS

The Mayor reported that no urgent questions had been submitted under Standing Order 8.

10. NOTICES OF MOTION

(1) The Council were asked to consider a Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr Gareth Williams under Standing Order 9 (1) on Debate Not Hate, as set out below:

"This Council:

- Affirms its commitment to free speech and robust debate, and its rejection of abuse and intimidation as part of legitimate political discourse.
- Notes, with concern, increasing levels of toxicity in public discourse, affecting politicians of all parties.
- Recognises the impact that this has upon council officers and election staff.
- Believes that respect is a two-way street and that all councillors have a role in treating members of the public with civility and respect.
- Commits to upholding the highest standards in public and political debate.

Consequently, this Council resolves to:

- Sign up to the LGA's Debate Not Hate Campaign.
- Regularly review the support available to councillors and officers in relation to abuse and intimidation.
- Write to the Government to ask them to work with the LGA to develop and implement a plan to address abuse and intimidation of politicians, and to extend to election staff and council officers the same legal protection from harassment afforded to campaigners, elected representatives and candidates under s30 of the Elections Act (2022).

- Ensure the Council has a clear reporting mechanism which councillors and officers can use for incidents of abuse and intimidation.”

In PROPOSING the Motion, Cllr O'Donovan advised that the campaign, backed by the Local Government Association (LGA) and supported by 67 councils, promoted free speech and robust debate and rejected abuse, intimidation and threat. It was noted that it was not just a councillor issue but affected everyone, including council staff, who should be able to work in a place that felt safe and comfortable. In SECONDING the Motion Cllr Makunura, stressed the need for respect for debate and the protection of those that served the community.

During discussion on the Motion which had cross party support, it was noted that free speech was a fundamental right and must be protected to ensure democracy is undertaken in a civil, polite manner.

The Motion was put to the meeting. There voted FOR: 35 AGAINST: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 and the Motion was **DECLARED CARRIED** unanimously.

(2) The Council were asked to consider a Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr Gareth Lyon under Standing Order 9 (1) on Democratic Representation, as set out below:

“This council notes the growing concerns amongst residents at the democratic deficit being created by the Government's rushed and ill-thought-out local government reorganisation which could see all decisions about local services being made in Basingstoke by councillors with no links to our area.

This council further notes that local residents rightly take pride in the strong and historic identities of Farnborough, Aldershot and North Camp and the importance of securing a voice for these communities.

This council will therefore:

- Propose to residents the creation of local Town Councils for Farnborough and Aldershot and a separate parish council for North Camp as an option, if a first round of consultation shows that residents would support this tier of governance.
- Undertake preparatory work to enable the transfer of community assets, green spaces and facilities to these councils to safeguard their futures.
- Subject to residents' response to Community Governance Review consultation and January Council agreeing the order, proceed at pace with planning for elections for any new town and/or parish councils to take place at the earliest possible opportunity.”

In PROPOSING the Motion, Cllr Lyon referred to the strong history of the Borough and that those who are elected to represent the area should be able to relate to the place and with experience and understanding of the local services provided. He emphasised that Rushmoor's residents should be allowed to have their say on the

governance arrangements. Aldershot, Farnborough and North Camp all had their own identities, and it was important to ensure these were not lost. In **SECONDING** the Motion, Cllr S.J. Masterson stated that the motion moved things forward to avoid a democratic deficit.

During debate, it was noted that work was already underway to consult with residents on their views about Local Government Reorganisation and further consultation would be carried out through the Community Governance Review.

Following debate, the Motion was put to the meeting. In a recorded vote, there voted **FOR**: Cllrs A. Adeola, C.W. Card, Leola Card, Sue Carter, A. Gani, Steve Harden, Peace Essien Igodifo, G.B. Lyon, Mara Makunura, S.J. Masterson, T.W. Mitchell, M.D. Smith, P.G. Taylor, M.J. Tennant, S. Trussler (15); **AGAINST**: Cllrs Abe Allen, Gaynor Austin, A.H. Crawford, Thomas Day, K. Dibble, C.P. Grattan, Lisa Greenway, Christine Guinness, Julie Hall, Rhian Jones, Halleh Koohestani, Bill O'Donovan, Sophie Porter, Dhan Sarki, Sarah Spall, Becky Williams, Gareth Williams (17); and **ABSTAINED**: the Deputy Mayor (Cllr P.J. Cullum) and the Mayor (Cllr Calum Stewart) (2); and the Recommendations were **DECLARED LOST**.

11. **RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CABINET AND COMMITTEES**

a) **Council Delivery Plan 2025/26**

Cllr Gareth Williams, Leader of the Council introduced the Report of the Cabinet on 22nd April, 2025, which set out the Council Delivery Plan for 2025-26.

It was **MOVED** by Cllr Gareth Williams and **SECONDED** by Cllr Sophie Porter that the Council Delivery Plan for 2025-26 be approved.

There voted **FOR**: 17 **ABSTAINED**: 13 **AGAINST**: 0 and the Recommendation was **DECLARED CARRIED**.

b) **Gambling Licensing Statement of Principles**

Cllr Christine Guinness, Pride in Place and Neighbourhood Services Portfolio Holder introduced the Report, which set out the recommended changes to the Council's Gambling Licensing Statement of Principles.

It was **MOVED** by Cllr Christine Guinness and **SECONDED** by Cllr Gaynor Austin that the Gambling Licensing Statement of Principles be approved.

There voted **FOR**: 19 **ABSTAINED**: 10 **AGAINST**: 0 and the Recommendation was **DECLARED CARRIED**.

c) **Local Government Reorganisation**

Cllr Gareth Williams, Leader of the Council introduced the Report, which set out the recommendation to note the update on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).

It was **MOVED** by Cllr Gareth Williams and **SECONDED** by Cllr Thomas Day that:

- 1) the update on the LGR programme, to date, and the continued collaboration with 11 other councils on options that would replace the current 15 councils with four new unitary councils on the mainland, keeping the Isle of Wight as its own unitary council, be noted,
- 2) a unitary council based on the areas of Rushmoor, Hart and Basingstoke and Deane continued to be the preferred option for Rushmoor as, in line with the assessment criteria, it represented the best balance of a Council large enough to deliver high quality services and value for money, but small enough to be connected to the place and the needs of the people the Council served, be confirmed, and,
- 3) the programme of engagement being undertaken to ensure that all residents, businesses and partners had an opportunity to feed into the process, be noted.

There voted FOR: 33 ABSTAINED: 2 AGAINST: 0 and the Recommendations were **DECLARED CARRIED**.

d) **Proposal to Start a Community Governance Review**

Cllr Bill O'Donovan, Chairman of the Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee introduced the Report of the Committee on 2nd July, 2025, which set out a proposal to start a Community Governance Review in response to Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).

It was MOVED by Cllr Bill O'Donovan and SECONDED by Cllr A.H. Crawford that the Terms of Reference for a Community Governance Review be approved.

There voted FOR: 31 ABSTAINED: 3 AGAINST: 1 and the Recommendation was **DECLARED CARRIED**.

e) **Constitution and Committee Review Update**

Cllr Bill O'Donovan, Chairman of the Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee introduced the Report of the Committee on 2nd July, 2025, which set out the recommendations for changes to the Council's Constitution, and changes to the Council's decision-making arrangements for committees arising from the Committee Review findings.

It was MOVED by Cllr Bill O'Donovan and SECONDED by Cllr S.J. Masterson that a revised and updated Constitution with the revisions as describe in the schedule of proposed updates be approved.

There voted FOR: 27 ABSTAINED: 2 AGAINST: 0 and the Recommendations were **DECLARED CARRIED**.

12. QUESTIONS FOR THE CABINET

- (1) Cllr Sarah Spall had submitted a question for response by the Finance and Resources Portfolio Holder (Cllr A.H. Crawford) on the progress of the Financial Recovery Working Group to achieve a sustainable financial position.

Cllr Crawford advised that he was very pleased with the improvements made to the Council's financial position and the resulting outturn report. It was noted that £4million less had been drawn down from reserves than anticipated, through the stabilisation on borrowing costs, savings targets being met and additional work underway to improve the position further. Cllr Crawford extended his thanks to the Finance Team and wider staff for all their hard work.

- (2) Cllr Halleh Koohestani had submitted a question for response by the Pride in Place and Neighbourhood Services Portfolio Holder (Cllr Christine Guinness) on National Anti-Social Behaviour Awareness Week.

Cllr Guinness advised that the events had been really well received and showed strong engagement with the community. 110 people had engaged across the two towns and personal attack alarms, purse and key bells and bottle top covers had been handed out during the event. The Police, PCSO's and anti-social behaviour team had all been involved in the event and played a key role in engaging with the community.

The event had gone so well that another event would be held before the next national event in 2026.

- (3) Cllr Thomas Day had submitted a question for response by the Policy, Performance and Sustainability Portfolio Holder (Cllr Jules Crossley) on the Pathways to Work Green Paper.

In the absence of Cllr Crossley, the response to this question would be made in writing.

- (4) Cllr Lisa Greenway had submitted a question for response by the Housing and Planning Portfolio Holder (Cllr Keith Dibble) on the Housing Register.

Cllr Dibble advised that 232 homes had been made available during 2025. This number included the units at Union Yard, Aldershot, identified specifically for NHS workers. It was noted that rental costs had been set at £800 for a one bed, £1,000 for a two bed, £1,295 for a three bed and £1,699 for a four bed property. There were currently 1,958 families looking for a home in Rushmoor. It was recognised that the number was not good, but the team were working hard to address it.

- (5) Cllr Steve Harden had submitted a question for response by the Healthy Communities and Active Lives Portfolio Holder (Cllr Sophie Porter) on the Farnborough Leisure Centre.

The Portfolio Holder advised that the Council's pre-planning consultation related to the new Farnborough leisure centre, which included two pools, a 110-station gym

facility, fitness studio, spin studio, soft play and café. The survey provided a range of questions relating to the building and its design, with opportunities for free text responses. Since the launch of the consultation, there had been over 220 responses and around 100 attendees at the drop in events. In accordance with good consultation practice, as with all of the Council's surveys, the Council had used a range of standard demographic questions that helped the Council to understand survey respondents better. It was also reported that a number of separate on-line and face to face consultation sessions with key user groups (e.g.: RAAG/skate park users) had taken place, all of which had been very well received. The survey would close on 25 July and the Council were still very keen to hear from all residents and future users of the new facility.

Cllr Porter advised that a track was being kept of social media commentary and had noted that some residents were disappointed. However, it was noted that the Council could not afford to replace all the facilities in the old leisure centre but were committed to providing a new facility within the limits of the funding available and through listening to residents' views. The survey feedback would be important in shaping any changes to the Leisure Centre planning application and she would encourage anyone who wanted to influence this to respond to the survey.

Cllr Harden asked a supplementary question regarding extending the closing date of the survey and was the new facility going to be like the one in Camberley?

Cllr Porter advised that the plans were for a fully costed facility, and the Council were unable to fund everything that the public wanted.

- (6) Cllr Gareth Lyon had submitted a question for response by the Housing and Planning Portfolio Holder (Cllr Keith Dibble) on the delivery of housing units.

Cllr Dibble advised that the unverified number of housing units delivered in Rushmoor in 2025 was 412 units. The Council's aim was to deliver communities with decent housing for all, ensuring homes were designed to last a lifetime.

- (7) Cllr Mike Smith had submitted a question for response by the Pride in Place and Neighbourhood Services Portfolio Holder (Cllr Christine Guinness) on progress towards a police shop unit in Farnborough Town Centre.

In the absence of Cllr Smith, the response to this question would be made in writing.

- (8) Cllr Paul Taylor had submitted a question for response by the Healthy Communities and Active Lives Portfolio Holder (Cllr Sophie Porter) on the cost of security.

In the absence of Cllr Taylor, the response to this question would be made in writing.

- (9) Cllr Lisa Greenway had submitted a question for response by the Pride in Place and Neighbourhood Services Portfolio Holder (Cllr Christine Guinness) on fly tipping fines.

Cllr Guinness confirmed that, fines had been issued for fly tipping in the last quarter.

In addition, it was noted that there had been a steady increase in enforcement since 2023/24, when 27 fines were issued and only three had been paid. In 2024/25, 45 fines were issued, of which 32 were paid. The Place Protection Team continued to pursue those responsible and followed up with enforcement. Performance was also monitored closely.

13. **REPORTS OF CABINET AND COMMITTEES**

RESOLVED: That the Reports of the following meetings be received:

Cabinet	8th April 2025
Cabinet	22nd April 2025
Cabinet	3rd June 2025
Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards	2nd April 2025
Development Management	9th April 2025
Development Management	21st May 2025
Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards	22nd May 2025
Development Management	25th June 2025

14. **REPORTS OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AND POLICY AND PROJECT ADVISORY BOARD**

RESOLVED: that the Reports of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 27th March and 12th June, 2025 and the Policy and Project Advisory Board meeting held on 25th March and 10th June, 2025 be noted.

The meeting closed at 10.15 pm.
