



BOROUGH OF RUSHMOOR

To the Mayor and Members of the Council,

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED to attend a Meeting of the Council to be held at the Council Offices, Farnborough on **Thursday, 26th February, 2026 at 7.00 pm** for the transaction of the business set out on the Agenda given below.

Under Standing Order 6(2), the Mayor has varied the usual Order of Business to ensure that matters related to the setting of Council Budget and Council Tax 2026/27 are prioritised.

A G E N D A

1. **MINUTES –** (Pages 1 - 16)

To confirm the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 4th December, 2025 and the Extraordinary Meeting of the Council held on 29th January, 2026 (copy attached).

2. **MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS –**

3. **QUESTIONS –**

(1) To receive any questions by Members submitted in pursuance of Standing Order 8 (3).

Public Questions

- (2) To answer any questions from the public submitted under Standing Order 9 in accordance with the Procedure Note.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CABINET AND COMMITTEES - PART ONE –

To consider the recommendations of the Cabinet and Committees in relation to the following items:

1) Council Delivery Plan 2026-28 – (Pages 17 - 78)

To receive a report from the Cabinet (copy attached – Annex 1) which recommends the Council Delivery Plan 2026-28 for approval. Cllr Gareth Williams, Leader of the Council will introduce this item.

2) Annual Capital Strategy 2026/27 – (Pages 79 - 92)

To receive a report from the Audit and Governance Committee, (copy attached – Annex 2) which recommends the approval of the Council's Annual Capital Strategy for 2026/27 and Prudential Indicators for 2026/27. Cllr Bill O'Donovan, Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee, will introduce this item.

3) Annual Treasury Management and Non-Treasury Management Strategy 2026/27 – (Pages 93 - 130)

To receive a report from the Audit and Governance Committee (copy attached – Annex 3) which recommends the approval of the Treasury Management Strategy 2026/27, Annual Borrowing Strategy 2026/27, Annual Non-Treasury Management Investment Strategy 2026/27 and the Minimum Revenue Provision Statement. Cllr Bill O'Donovan, Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee, will introduce this item.

4) General Fund Budget 2026/27 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2026/27 to 2029/30 – (Pages 131 - 172)

To receive a report from the Cabinet (copy attached – Annex 4) which recommends the approval of the General Fund Budget for 2026/27 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2026/27 to 2029/30. Cllr Gaynor Austin, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources, will introduce this item.

5. THE COUNCIL TAX 2026/27 – (Pages 173 - 178)

To fix the level of Council Tax for the financial year 2026/27 taking into account precepts of Hampshire County Council, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Hampshire and Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority. (A copy of the appropriate draft resolution is attached – Annex 5).

6. **NOTICES OF MOTION –**

(1) **Rights of Rivers**

To consider the following Notice of Motion, which has been submitted by Cllr Jules Crossley pursuant to Standing Order 10 (1):

“This Council notes that Basingstoke and Deane Council agreed to recognise the rights of the River Loddon, which the Blackwater is a tributary of, in May 2025, and committed to developing a ‘Declaration on the Rights of the River’ by Spring 2026.

The Council recognises that environmental laws and regulations have failed to protect the quality of our rivers and further protections are needed.

This Council will:

- 1) Consult with Basingstoke and Deane, Hart Council and other relevant stakeholders with the aim of mutual support in the implementation of the Rights of Rivers.
- 2) Write to the Environment Agency to express the Council’s concerns about the poor ecological and chemical health of the Blackwater and Cove Brook, requesting that the EA explain how they have been, and how they plan to further protect and enhance our local rivers.
- 3) Ensure that within the scope of existing law and agreed policy, officers and the development control process shall, where they are able, take account of the Rights of Rivers within individual planning decisions, including consideration of the imposition of planning conditions to have no adverse impact on the health, water quality or ecological integrity of the Blackwater River and Cove Brook.”

(2) **National Year of Reading**

To consider the following Notice of Motion which has been submitted by Cllr Steve Harden pursuant to Standing Order 10 (1):

“This Council notes that:

1. 2026 has been designated the National Year of Reading, UK-wide initiative encouraging people of all ages to engage with reading for pleasure and learning.
2. Reading improves educational attainment, mental wellbeing, social connection and lifelong learning, yet national evidence shows a decline in reading for pleasure, particularly among children and young people.
3. Local councils have an important role in supporting literacy through libraries, schools, community groups and cultural activities.

This Council believes that:

1. Promoting reading supports the Council’s wider priorities around education, wellbeing, inclusion and opportunity.

2. Rushmoor's libraries, schools, councillors and community organisations are well placed to help residents "go all in" on reading.

This Council resolves to:

1. Formally endorse the National Year of Reading 2026.
2. Request that the Council Leader writes to the campaign organisers confirming Rushmoor's support and interest in promoting reading.
3. Encourage Council services, libraries and partner organisations to promote and participate in reading-related activities during 2026.
4. Invite Members, schools, voluntary organisations, and community groups to feedback on sustainable and viable options for implementing community book sheds and informal book sharing initiatives within the Borough to help maximise local participation."

7. **RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEES - PART TWO –**

- 1) **Extension of Term of Office for the Designated Independent Person –**
(Pages 179 - 182)

To receive a report from the Licensing and Corporate Business Committee (copy attached – Annex 6) which recommends the approval of an extension to the term of office of Mr Matt Smith as the Council's Designated Independent Person, for the period from July 2026 to the end of April 2028. Cllr Jacqui Vosper, Chair of the Licensing and Corporate Business Committee, will introduce this item.

8. **REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TASK AND FINISH GROUP –** (Pages 183 - 204)

To receive a report from the Community Engagement Task and Finish Group (copy attached – Annex 7), which provides details of the activities delivered to understand and address community concerns following a Council motion in 2024, and setting out plans to support cohesion and integration activity. Cllr Sophie Porter, Portfolio Holder for Healthy Communities and Active Lives, will introduce this item.

9. **QUESTIONS FOR THE CABINET –**

To receive any questions by Members to Cabinet Members submitted in accordance with the Procedure Note.

10. **REPORTS OF CABINET AND COMMITTEES –** (Pages 205 - 240)

To receive and ask questions on the Reports of the following Meetings (copy reports attached):

Cabinet

25th November, 2025
15th December, 2025
13th January, 2026
20th January, 2026
10th February, 2026

Committees

Audit and Governance	26th November, 2025
Special Audit and Governance	11th December, 2025
Licensing and Corporate Business	15th January, 2026
Audit and Governance	28th January, 2026

11. **REPORTS OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AND POLICY AND PROJECT ADVISORY BOARD – (Pages 241 - 256)**

To note the Reports of the following meetings (copy reports attached):

Policy and Project Advisory Board	9th December, 2025
Overview and Scrutiny Committee	11th December, 2025
Overview and Scrutiny Committee	5th February, 2026

IAN HARRISON
Managing Director

Council Offices
Farnborough
Hampshire GU14 7JU

Wednesday 18 February 2026