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RUSHMOOR BOROUGH COUNCIL

POLICY AND PROJECT ADVISORY BOARD

*To be held at the Council Offices, Farnborough on
Tuesday, 24th March, 2026 at 7.00 pm*

To:

Cllr S.J. Masterson (Chair)
Cllr Abe Allen (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Lisa Greenway (Vice-Chair)

Cllr A. Adeola
Cllr Steve Harden
Cllr Rhian Jones
Cllr Mara Makunura
Cllr T.W. Mitchell
Cllr M.J. Roberts
Cllr Dhan Sarki
Cllr Ivan Whitmee

Standing Deputies:

Cllr C.W. Card
Cllr Leola Card
Cllr A.H. Crawford
Cllr Thomas Day
Cllr G.B. Lyon
Cllr Becky Williams

Enquiries regarding this agenda should be referred to the Administrator, Chris Todd,
Democracy Team, Tel. (01252) 398825, Email. chris.todd@rushmoor.gov.uk.

A G E N D A

1. **MINUTES –** (Pages 1 - 6)

To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on 9th December, 2025 (copy attached).

2. **FREE PARKING FOR SHOPPERS –** (Pages 7 - 8)

Following the approval of a Motion at the Council meeting in October, 2025 and the initial discussion at the Board's December 2025, meeting, to consider offering free or discounted car parking for shoppers in Aldershot and Farnborough town centres (copy of Motion wording attached).

Lee McQuade, Economy and Growth Service Manager, will be in attendance at the meeting to provide a short presentation and to guide the discussion.

3. **MAINTENANCE OF UNATTACHED LAND –** (Pages 9 - 14)

Following the approval of a Motion at the Council meeting in December, 2025, to consider matters relating to the maintenance of unattached land (copies of Motion minute wording and document outlining process and cost of acquiring Crown Land attached).

James Duggin, Executive Head of Operations, will be in attendance at the meeting to provide a presentation and to guide the discussion.

4. **WORK PLAN –** (Pages 15 - 20)

To discuss the Policy and Project Advisory Board Work Plan (copy attached).

MEETING REPRESENTATION

Members of the public may ask to speak at the meeting on any of the items on the agenda by writing to the Panel Administrator at the Council Offices, Farnborough by 5.00 pm two working days prior to the meeting.

Applications for items to be considered for the next meeting must be received in writing to the Panel Administrator fifteen working days prior to the meeting.

POLICY AND PROJECT ADVISORY BOARD

Meeting held on Tuesday, 9th December, 2025 at the Council Offices, Farnborough at 7.00 pm.

Voting Members

Cllr S.J. Masterson (Chair)
Cllr Lisa Greenway (Vice-Chair)

Cllr A. Adeola
Cllr Steve Harden
Cllr Rhian Jones
Cllr Mara Makunura
Cllr M.J. Roberts
Cllr Dhan Sarki

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Cllrs Abe Allen, T.W. Mitchell and Ivan Whitmee.

Cllr C.W. Card attended the meeting as a Standing Deputy.

24. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 18th November, 2025 were agreed as a correct record.

25. FREE PARKING FOR SHOPPERS

The Board welcomed Mr Lee McQuade, Economy and Growth Service Manager, who provided information that had been established in response to the approval of a Motion at the October, 2025 Council meeting that had called upon the Board to consider whether free or discounted car parking might be offered to shoppers in Aldershot and Farnborough town centres. The wording of the agreed Motion was attached to the agenda and requested that officers, under guidance from PPAB, should develop a suitable method of consulting residents, local businesses and potential investors about the likely impact of free or discounted parking and how it might work best. Furthermore, it was requested that the Portfolio Holder should present the findings to PPAB to allow it to make recommendations to the Cabinet in time for next year's budget.

The Board was advised that the evidence showed that parking cost could influence behaviour and that high charges could discourage short visits, impulse shopping and the use of cafes and other hospitality outlets but it was also acknowledged that cost was not the only factor. In terms of cost, charges in Aldershot and Farnborough town centres appeared to be comparable to or lower than those levied in Camberley, Basingstoke and Guildford town centres. Research showed that visiting shoppers valued a range of factors including:

- Retail and leisure offer
- Ease of parking / availability of spaces
- Proximity to shops
- Safety and attractiveness of the town
- Cost - though evidence suggested that convenience, relative to what the visitor wanted to purchase or experience, mattered more than price of parking

Mr McQuade explained that the Welsh Government had commissioned a report called 'Assessing the impact of car parking charges on town centre footfall' and that this had concluded that parking cost was only 'one aspect of a complex interplay' influencing visitor behaviour and that the evidence linking changes in parking charges to changes in footfall was 'very weak'. The report added that towns performed best when parking policy was combined with:

- Strong retail and leisure mix
- Events and animation
- Attractive public spaces
- Market and place branding

Other evidence had come to similar conclusions; that parking costs were a factor in town centre performance but not the main one. In concluding his presentation, Mr McQuade explained that some parking in town centres was already free, such as the privately owned car park at Morrisons' in Aldershot. It was also pointed out that any reduction in car parking income would have a negative impact on the Council's revenue position, which would need to be evaluated and considered. The proposed approach to progress this matter was to;

- Assess the impact of limited / targeted changes e.g. time limited offers at specific car parks
- Test those approaches with businesses and residents (would require resources)
- Come back to PPAB with options, possibly at the meeting in March

In discussing the content of the presentation, the Board raised the following points:

- Promotion to local resident and visitors of any parking offers would be key
- Infrastructure within town centres would also need to be in place, such as working escalators and lifts at the Wellington Centre in Aldershot

- Should consider reducing cost of parking at periods before and after school run / work, such as 9am to midday and 3pm to 6pm
- Must remember the green agenda and encourage alternative forms of transport, such as busses, ensuring that public transport services are joined up
- Recall that free parking was offered in High Street Multi Storey in Aldershot in late 90s/early 00s – thought to have had some effect on footfall but not much
- If wanting to support local businesses, should the Council look at rent and rates instead? It was considered that these would be likely to have a greater impact in supporting businesses than changes to parking costs and it was important to consider what outcomes any policy changes were trying to achieve
- PPAB would need to understand revenue implications of free parking to make an informed recommendation
- Requested that Mr McQuade should share the data used for presentation with PPAB members
- Important that PPAB focusses on the wording of the Motion in relation to free parking as opposed to other initiatives, such as the suggested refund of parking charges as a result of spending a certain amount in town – the motion requested that only changes to parking charges be considered, not any other interventions to support town centre businesses
- Should Council be encouraging residents to park outside of town centres and walk in, whilst protecting blue badge holders?
- ‘Pop in bays’ appeared to work well elsewhere
- What events / special days could be hosted / supported to bring footfall into town centres?
- Could any initiatives be advertised on Council Tax bills?

The Chair thanked Mr McQuade for his input and confirmed that this item would be programmed to be discussed again at the Board’s meeting on 24th March, 2026.

26. **WORK PLAN**

The Board noted the current Work Plan. Further to Minute No. 25 above, it was agreed that ‘Free Parking for Shoppers’ would be added to the agenda for the meeting on 24th March, 2026.

It was further agreed that the work plan would be updated following the next meeting of the Programme Management Group. The Chair invited Board members to submit any items for consideration by email.

27. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That, taking into account the public interest test, the public be excluded from the meeting during the discussion of the under mentioned item to avoid the disclosure of exempt information within the paragraph of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act, 1972 indicated against the item:

Minute No.	Schedule 12A Para. No.	Category
28	3	Information relating to an individual, financial or business affairs and labour relations

THE FOLLOWING ITEM WAS CONSIDERED IN THE ABSENCE OF THE PUBLIC

28. COUNCIL BUDGET 2026/27 - SERVICE REVIEWS

The Board welcomed Mr Ian Harrison, Interim Managing Director, Mr Peter Vickers, Executive Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer and Mr Alex Shiell, Service Manager – Policy, Strategy and Transformation, who provided a briefing on the options under consideration by the Cabinet to improve the Council’s financial sustainability, with a view to enabling the Board to make recommendations to the Cabinet if it wished. Cllr Gareth Williams, Leader of the Council had also been invited to attend the meeting for this item.

The Board was advised that work to set the Council’s budget for 2026/27 was well underway, with final proposals going to the Council meeting on 26th February, 2026. There were a number of areas of uncertainty, such as the impact of Fairer Funding arrangements this year, along with a reset of business rates. After many years of finding ways of delivering sufficient savings to deliver a balanced budget without cutting services, it was felt that it would now be necessary to review expenditure on staffing, being a major cost centre that had not shown much change over the previous decade. It was explained that the Cabinet had worked through the base budget on a line-by-line basis with a view to a redesign in the new year that would look to identify savings of £2 million. The Board was informed that, given the influence of local government reorganisation, the need for financial sustainability and the achievement of political priorities, the Council would need to:

- Refocus budgets to support political priorities
- Reduce budgets to achieve a prudent minimum reserves balance
- Achieve financial sustainability

- Have a clear Council Delivery Plan that focussed activity on the most desired outcomes to produce improvements in residents' lives and places, with a framework for accountability and performance monitoring

The Cabinet had provided the following steer in relation to the service review process in the context of its political priorities:

- **Grow** – relevant to services producing a net income
- **Sustain** – services or activity that would not provide any financial benefit from review
- **Refocus / retreat** – services where there were options to achieve a budget reduction and / or improved value for money through doing something different or less
- **Stop** – services or activity that had no statutory implication and were not a political priority or offered poor value for money

It was noted that growth in base budget cost, namely the expansion of a service, would be dealt with outside of this process. The Cabinet had provided a list of areas to grow income from current net income and this was included in the presentation. Also listed within the presentation were cost centres where it was recommended to sustain at the current budget level and areas where it was recommended to refocus to achieve either a budget reduction or better outcomes.

The Board was being asked for its views on:

- Approach to service reviews
- Categorisation of service budgets – grow income / sustain / refocus
- Implementation priority order
- Strategy to get to unitary council vesting day

In discussing the content of the presentation, the Board raised the following points:

- Will continue to be a challenge to explain the Council's complex financial challenges to the public
- Acknowledged that staffing reductions would have an effect on service delivery
- Council is ensuring services are provided to a required standard by benchmarking with neighbouring authorities
- Clarified that this would be a managed process over time, with the opportunity to reshape as the process goes on and, dependent on the budget position and

savings requirement at the time, compulsory redundancy would be a last resort

- Councillors suggested some areas where more information would be required before a view could be taken
- Where areas had been identified for reduce/refocus, teams have been asked to carry out their own review and bring forward proposals for how the service could be delivered in future – no targets for reductions set at this stage of the process
- Could maintenance of Council assets, including skateparks, be incorporated into one budget?

In thanking Mr Harrison, Mr Vickers and Mr Shiell for their contributions to the meeting, the Chair asked Members to submit any further views on this subject to Mr Shiell via email.

The meeting closed at 9.00 pm.

CLLR S.J. MASTERSON (CHAIR)

Notice of Motion – Town Centre Parking – FINAL VERSION

This Council:

- Recognises the huge challenges facing local businesses, particularly those in our town centres.
- Acknowledges that with alternative shopping options available in other town centres, as well as the growth of online shopping, parking charges may discourage people from visiting Farnborough and Aldershot.
- Observes that forthcoming option of setting up town councils could lead to changes which allow for more support to be provided to town centres and local economies, making consideration of the matter timely.
- Believes that any discussions or consultations on this issue need to be informed by detailed evidence.
- Recognises the heavy workload placed upon Council Officers and the desirability to avoid duplication of effort.

Therefore, this Council:

- Requests officers, under guidance from PPAB, to develop a suitable method of consulting residents, local businesses and potential investors about the likely impact of free or discounted parking and how it could work best.
- Requests the Portfolio Holder to present the findings of feasibility investigations to PPAB to allow it to make recommendations to the Cabinet in time for next year's budget.

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Unattached Land

The Council considered a Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr Steve Harden under Standing Order 10 (1) on the topic of unattached land:

“This Council resolves to write to the local Member of Parliament and to the Chancellor to raise concerns regarding the management and maintenance of unattached land, and to request appropriate support and guidance.

This Council also resolves that the Policy and Project Advisory Board be requested to consider, and report to Cabinet on:

- the feasibility and associated costs of undertaking an urgent review of all parcels of unattached or unregistered land within the Borough, in order to confirm the appropriate owners and clarify responsibility for their maintenance
- the extent of emergency works needed to address neglected areas, and the funding requirements for this
- the projected costs, resource implications, and legal considerations of the Council assuming ongoing responsibility for maintaining such areas on a permanent basis
- proposals for the establishment of a formal working partnership with Crown land authorities, Hampshire County Council, and other relevant bodies including, where appropriate, Rushmoor agencies to coordinate land management and ensure clarity of ownership and responsibility.”

In PROPOSING the Motion Cllr Harden advised that the borough was plagued by unattached land, which in some cases was unsightly and dangerous due to landowners refusing to take responsibility for its upkeep. Through the proposed Working Group, members would be able to draw attention to unattached land in their areas, and the Group could liaise with landowners to determine ways forward for each area to protect residents from harm due to lack of responsibility. In SECONDING the Motion, Cllr Allen advised that the inconsistent and piecemeal approach wasn't working effectively, and this Motion could enable a better route for dealing with the issue.

In discussing the Motion, Members spoke of the complaints that they received regarding damage caused by trees on unattached land that weren't maintained properly, and the overgrown nature of the sites which caused an eyesore in their communities. Potential outcomes for the pockets of land going forward were discussed: these included creating areas to encourage biodiversity, making areas into community assets and selling pockets to residents who live adjacent to unattached land for a nominal fee. However, it was noted that, financially, there was little the Council could do to maintain these areas going forward, but the Council could act as a facilitator between residents and landowners.

The Motion was put to the meeting. There voted FOR: 32; AGAINST: 0; ABSTAIN: 2 and the Motion was **DECLARED CARRIED**.

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Purchasing Crown Land: Process and Cost (*Legal*)

The ways that the Council can take ownership of this type of land are:

- (1) **Negotiated Purchase:** Direct negotiation with the Crown Estate to acquire land
- (2) **Bona Vacantia Process:** Acquisition of land from dissolved companies through formal application to the Bona Vacantia Division (BVD) of the Government Legal Department.
- (3) **Adverse Possession:** Obtaining of ownership by the uninterrupted use of land for 30 years without the owner's consent.
- (4) Compulsory Purchase generally cannot be used against the Crown

(1) Negotiated Purchase Process

- **Title and Plans:** Accurate plans prepared and title information collated. There is likely to be a cost for plan preparation given these are unlikely to exist considering the status of the land.
- **Purchase price and costs:** A negotiated purchase requires a land valuation to establish the price which could range from a nominal fee to market value, plus our own legal and surveyor's costs. This work is not currently resourced and it is likely external support will be required), payment of the Crown's legal, surveyor and possibly valuation costs.
- **Timing:** this depends on agreement with the Crown on terms. The Crown may refuse to sell. If the land is unregistered the Crown would also need to register its legal title with the Land Registry first which is likely to increase the time taken to acquire the land.
- **Land of community benefit or land that is unsafe:** The Crown may look favourably on a land transfer that may benefit the community or land which is currently dangerous or unsafe, however this will be at its discretion and will be on a case by case basis.

(2) Bona Vacantia Process

- **Title and Plans:** Accurate plans prepared and title information gathered. There is likely to be a cost for plan preparation given these are unlikely to exist considering the status of the land.
- **Purchase price and costs:** A minimum price of £1,000 per parcel, plus the BVD's legal surveying and possibly valuation fees. The Council will incur its own legal and surveyor costs. This work is not currently resourced and it is likely external support will be required.
- **Timing:** this depends on agreement with the BVD on terms. The BVD may refuse to sell.

- **Land of community benefit or land that is unsafe:** The BVD may look favourably on a land transfer that would benefit the community or for land which is currently dangerous or unsafe, however this will be at its discretion and will be on a case by case basis

(3) Adverse Possession Process

- **Title and Plans:** Accurate plans prepared and title information gathered. There is likely to be a cost for plan preparation given these are unlikely to exist considering the status of the land.
Statutory declaration: Application to the Land Registry demonstrating the uninterrupted use of the land, without the owner's consent, for at least 30 years.
- **Costs:** The Council will incur legal and surveyor costs. This work is not currently resourced and it is likely external support will be required.
- **Timing:** These applications can take the Land Registry months to years to process

- Purchasing Non-Crown Land: Process and Cost (*Legal*)

There are several ways that the Council can take ownership of this type of land:

- (1) **Negotiated Purchase:** If the land is registered with the Land Registry, then direct negotiation with the owner to acquire land, with variable cost and timing depending on how quickly terms are agreed. This option can be used for unregistered land if we know the current owner.
- (2) **Adverse Possession:** Application to the Land Registry demonstrating the uninterrupted use of the land, without the owner's consent, for 10+ years if the land is registered, and 12 years if the land is unregistered. These applications can take the Land Registry months to years to process

(1) Negotiated Purchase

- **Title and Plans:** Accurate plans prepared and title information collated. There is likely to be a cost for plan preparation given these are unlikely to exist considering the status of the land.
- **Purchase price and costs:** A negotiated purchase requires a land valuation to establish the price which could range from a nominal fee to market value, plus the Council's legal, surveyor and possibly valuation fees costs. This work is not currently resourced and it is likely that external support will be required).
- **Compulsory Purchase:** While compulsory purchase is possible, we would not advise this route due to the cost and time involved

(2) Adverse Possession

- **Title and Plans:** Accurate plans prepared and title information gathered. There is likely to be a cost for plan preparation given these are unlikely to exist considering the status of the land.
- **Statutory declaration:** Application and statutory declaration to the Land Registry with strong evidence that the Council has had uninterrupted use of land for 10+ years without the owner's consent. The preparation of evidence will require legal and property resources that are not currently available. There is likely therefore to be a cost for external support.

Summary of expected costs

Task	Cost of application
Requesting title documents	Minimum £14 (for x 1 Title Plan and x 1 Register). More may be required depending on the type of land.
Additional historical deeds/mapping	Variable
Statutory declarations	Officer time + possible legal drafting fees (if external support is required)
Valuation	Variable 000's+
Minimum sale price	Nil value - variable
Registration Fees	£20 to £1,105
Legal and Surveyors (external support) and legal and surveyor costs for Crown/BVD/Seller	Variable depending on the complexity Surveyor fees £75+ per hour Legal fees £175+ per hour

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POLICY AND PROJECT ADVISORY BOARD WORK PLAN

SECTION 1 – WORKFLOW 2025/26 (dates of meetings and work allocated to each)

DATE	ITEMS	DELIVERY PLAN PRIORITY
10 June 2025	LGR – approach to public engagement and involvement - KE/AS Potential future changes to Integrated Care Boards - KE Pathways to Work consultation - JC/AS	Future and Financial Sustainability Community and Wellbeing Skills, Economy and Regeneration
22 July 2025	LGR – options for councillor ratios and warding patterns and engagement update - KE Implications of the Supreme Court judgement on the interpretation of the Equality Act – AS (deferred)	Future and Financial Sustainability
17 September 2025	Community Governance Review – consultation responses Permitting scheme for automated passenger services consultation	Future and Financial Sustainability Skills, Economy and Regeneration
18 November 2025	Rushmoor Cultural Strategy – review and next steps - LM Review of events programme - PPAB to look at events programme (measures of success, which events to retain) – LM/AS	Community and Wellbeing Community and Wellbeing

Last Updated
03/03/2026

<p>9 December 2025 <i>(rearranged from 20/1/26)</i></p>	<p>Council Budget 2025/26 - Service Reviews – To receive a briefing on the options under consideration by Cabinet to improve financial sustainability and consider making recommendations to Cabinet – AS/IH/PV (considered in private)</p> <p>Consider offering free parking for shoppers (Motion from Council) (introduction) - LM</p>	<p>Future and Financial Sustainability</p> <p>Skills, Economy and Regeneration</p>
<p>24 March 2026</p>	<p>Consider offering free parking for shoppers (Motion from Council) (return with evidence) – LM</p> <p>Maintenance of unattached land (Motion from Council) - JD</p>	<p>Skills, Economy and Regeneration</p> <p>Pride in Place</p>
<p>Potential Future Items for the Committee in 2026/27</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>9 June 2026 - Equalities Review – PPAB to review and provide feedback/ recommendations to Cabinet on the proposed draft Equalities Policy (Alex Shiell/Martin Iyawe)</i> 2. <i>9 June 2026 - Aldershot & Farnborough Growth Partnership – PPAB to review aims of partnership (Lee McQuade)</i> 3. <i>LGR</i> 4. <i>Civil Society Covenant programme – how we support voluntary sector</i> 5. <i>9 June 2026 - Indices of Multiple Deprivation – setting context for year</i> 	<p><i>Community and Wellbeing</i></p> <p><i>Skills, Economy and Regeneration</i></p> <p><i>Future and Financial Sustainability</i></p> <p><i>Community and Wellbeing</i></p> <p><i>Community and Wellbeing</i></p>

SECTION 2 – ISSUE LOG
(recent updates on running topics)

SKILLS ECONOMY AND REGENERATION	
ISSUE	CURRENT WORK
Pathways to Work consultation	Reviewed the Council’s response to the consultation at its June 2025 meeting. Board was keen to track progress of this topic.
Permitting scheme for automated passenger services consultation	Board requested by Portfolio Holder to consider response to a Government consultation on the introduction of a pilot for driverless taxis. Feedback provided and expected that Board will be involved once pilot has direct effect on Borough.
Consider free car parking for shoppers	Council Motion passed for PPAB to consider possibility of offering free parking in town centres to encourage footfall in shopping areas. Introduction at December 2025 meeting with follow up with further evidence in March 2026.
Aldershot & Farnborough Growth Partnership	Item planned for June 2026 – look at aims/Terms of Reference for Partnership.
HOMES FOR ALL: QUALITY LIVING, AFFORDABLE HOUSING	
ISSUE	CURRENT WORK
COMMUNITY AND WELLBEING: ACTIVE LIVES, HEALTHIER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES	
Future changes to Integrated Care Boards	In June 2025, the Board discussed potential changes and expected to be involved as firmer proposals unfold.
Review of events programme	In November 2025, the Board considered which events should continue to be funded now that UKSPF funding is coming to an end. Further information to be provided to assist review going forward.

Rushmoor Cultural Strategy	In November, 2025, the Board heard of plans to refresh the current strategy. This work has now been delayed until summer, 2026.
PRIDE IN PLACE: CLEAN, SAFE AND VIBRANT NEIGHBOURHOODS	
ISSUE	CURRENT WORK
Maintenance of unattached land	Notice of Motion at December Council meeting – agreed that Board would consider this matter in a number of areas set out in the Motion.
THE FUTURE AND FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY	
ISSUE	CURRENT WORK
Local Government Reorganisation	Elements discussed at June and July 2025 meetings and expected to return to PPAB once next stage underway.
Community Governance Review	Discussed at September 2025 meeting and expected to return to PPAB once next stage underway.
Council Delivery Plan and Service Reviews outcome	Board provided feedback to the Cabinet in these areas at its meeting in December.
OTHER	
Equalities Policy	Board to look at process for Council to produce an Equalities Policy – planned for June 2026 meeting.
Elections Group	Well-established Group that meets regularly for Members to consider pertinent electoral matters.

SECTION 3 – Criteria for selection of items for the work programme

The Panel's work programme to align with the Panel's purpose:

- to provide policy and project support to the Cabinet and Council which helps to deliver Council Plan priorities. This may include consideration of how policies and service provision is framed based on resident need/demand, pressures and constraints, and risks and other strategic factors;
- to undertake research, consultation and reviews for the purpose of advising the Cabinet on the delivery of priorities in the Council Plan (usually through the task and finish groups);
- to assist the Cabinet in reaching decisions on specific issues;
- to assist and advise the Cabinet on budget preparation; and
- to develop and maintain a work programme, in co-ordination with OSC and AGC, which engages with the Cabinet Work Programme and ensures that there is efficient use of time.

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