POLICY AND PROJECT ADVISORY BOARD

Meeting held on Tuesday, 9th June, 2026 at the Council Offices, Farnborough at 7.00 pm.

Voting Members

Cllr Thomas Day (Chair)

Cllr A. Adeola
Cllr Leola Card
Cllr Lisa Greenway
Cllr Uttar Gurung
Cllr Sharon Harvey
Cllr Rhian Jones
Cllr Mara Makunura
Cllr Rob Matthews
Cllr Mike Roberts

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Cllr Calum Stewart.

1. **APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRS**

RESOLVED: That Cllrs Ade Adeola and Lisa Greenway be appointed as Vice-Chairs for the 2026/27 Municipal Year.

2. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 24th March, 2026 were agreed as a correct record.

3. **EQUALITY POLICY**

The Board welcomed Mr Alex Shiell, Service Manager – Policy, Strategy and Transformation and Martin Iyawe, Policy and Projects Officer, who provided information on the Council's new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Action Plan, prior to its consideration by the Cabinet.

The Board was advised that the policy aimed to deliver outcomes in many areas, including better access to services for customers and helping to develop stronger and more inclusive communities. Members were assured that the Council already demonstrated an equality approach in many areas, including:

- Housing and homelessness prevention

- Cost of living support.

- Nepali-speaking staff available at service desk
- Community cohesion initiatives
- Community safety work
- Accessible leisure opportunities
- Refugee and resettlement support
- Support for local businesses
- Resident engagement and consultation

It was explained that the Equality Act protected certain characteristics, such as:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Members heard that the approach was to strengthen existing work rather than create a new programme. A consultation exercise had taken place between December, 2025 and February, 2026 and this had provided useful information that had been factoring into the policy. Delivery of the policy would be split between early actions / quick wins over the coming six months and medium to longer-term actions through to 2028. The Board was invited to:

- Note the consultation findings
- Review the Equality Policy and Action Plan
- Consider whether the five priorities reflected local needs
- Identify any gaps or overlooked groups

- Provide feedback before Cabinet consideration

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

- Q – Who to contact if complaints in respect to equality matters?
  A – General enquiries through normal Council channels but if a complaint needed to use the formal complaints process

- Evidence of good engagement with Nepali businesses but what about other ethnic groupings?

- Language barriers exist, such as no Nepali speakers at Job Centre

- Consultation aimed at as many community groups as possible but if Members aware of underrepresented group(s), please tell the Policy Team

- 70-80% of respondents did this via website as opposed to other channels

- Accessibility of resources to the young and the neuro diverse are areas where more work is required

- Gender Pay Gap is a driver to support recruitment of women to more senior positions within the organisation

- Armed Forces not a protected characteristic as such but is subject to the provisions of the Armey Forces Covenant

- How will we measure success in relation to the Action Plan? Should be outcome-based

- Resources to be offered to this hindered by the significant impact of LGR on senior management capacity - offer from Members to be involved in the delivery of this

In summarising the views of the Board, the Chair proposed that the following recommendations should be made to the Cabinet:
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- Consider neuro-diversity to ensure this plan covers people with those needs and obtain data on difficulties neuro-diverse individuals may have had in accessing our services

- Military families should be covered (possibly by reference to the Armed Forces Covenant) even though this is not a protected characteristic in the Act

- Measures in the action plan should focus on outcomes rather than actions taken e.g. numbers of meetings. This will ensure that we are addressing key inequalities, with outcomes that are visible to residents

The Board voted and **AGREED** to the above recommendations.

The Chair thanked Mr Shiell and Mr Iyawe for their input and guidance.

4. PLAYGROUND IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT

The Board welcomed Mr Andy Ford, Play & Open Spaces Manager and Ms Ruth Whaymand, Service Manager Environmental Contracts, who provided information in relation to the proposed prioritisation of the refurbishment or renewal of Council-owned playgrounds that would benefit from investment of £400,000 over the following two years.

The Board was advised that, recently, any playground refurbishments or renewals had been carried out using developers' S106 contributions for the relevant area. However, in each of the 2026/27 and 2027/28 financial years, the sum of £200,000 had been allocated to allow for extensive renewals and refurbishments. It was acknowledged, however, that this sum would not allow for the refurbishment or renewal all 40 of the Council-owned sites, so a prioritisation exercise had been required and a proposed order was presented to Members. The Board's view was sought on whether this prioritisation order was correct or should be changed.

Officers had considered the site based on the relative level of dilapidation coupled with usage. Based on this, the following sites were proposed for attention in the 2026/27 financial year:

1) Keith Lucas Road, Farnborough

2) Sunnybank Road / Dart Road, Farnborough (although two separate sites their close proximity would mean that work on both at same time would make economic sense)

It was expected that these two sites would utilise the entirety of the 2026/27 budget and, should further funding be required, S106 contributions would be used. In relation to 2027/28, the following priority order was suggested:

1) Aspen Grove, Aldershot

2) Montgomery Road, Farnborough

3) Cumbria Court, Farnborough

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

- Lack of public conveniences at some sites a problem

- Confirmed Council looking at reopening Cove Green and Rectory Road toilets – no budget to build new toilets

- Confirmed that relevant local communities consulted on proposals to update playground and local residents invited to be involved in project if they would like to be

- Where sites not directly owned by the Council, e.g. Curly Bridge Close, Council seeks to work in partnership with owning organisation

- Confirmed that accessible play equipment could only be fitted at supervised sites.

The Board voted and **AGREED** that the priority order, as set out by Mr Ford in the presentation and as set out above, was correct and was, therefore, recommended for approval by the Cabinet.

The Chair thanked Mr Ford and Ms Whaymand for their input and guidance for this item.

5. **APPOINTMENTS TO ELECTIONS GROUP 2026/27**

RESOLVED: That the following members be appointed to serve on the Elections Group for the 2026/27 Municipal Year:

Cabinet Member with responsibility for Electoral Issues	Cllr Sophie Porter
Chair of Licensing and Corporate Business Committee	Cllr Sarah Spall
Chair of PPAB	Cllr Tom Day
Conservative Group (2)	Cllrs Steve Harden and Gareth Lyon
'Others' Group (1)	Cllr C.W. Card
Reform Group (1)	Cllr Kevin Betsworth

6. **WORK PLAN**

The Board noted the current Work Plan.

The Chair invited Members to submit any possible items for consideration by the Programme Management Board by email.

The meeting closed at 8.21 pm.

CLLR THOMAS DAY (CHAIR)
