

Public Document Pack



RUSHMOOR BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

*at the Council Offices, Farnborough on
Tuesday, 30th June, 2026 at 7.00 pm*

To:

Cllr Gareth Williams, Leader of the Council
Cllr Sophie Porter, Deputy Leader and Healthy Communities & Active Lives Portfolio Holder

Cllr Gaynor Austin, Finance & Resources Portfolio Holder
Cllr Keith Dibble, Housing, Planning & Property Portfolio Holder
Cllr Christine Guinness, Pride in Place / Neighbourhood Services Portfolio Holder
Cllr Julie Hall, Economy, Skills & Regeneration Portfolio Holder

Enquiries regarding this agenda should be referred to Chris Todd, Democratic Support Officer, on 01252 398825 or e-mail: chris.todd@rushmoor.gov.uk

A G E N D A

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

Under the Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors, all Members are required to disclose relevant Interests in any matter to be considered at the meeting. Where the matter directly relates to a Member's Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or Other Registrable Interest, that Member must not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless they have been granted a dispensation (see note below). If the matter directly relates to 'Non-Registrable Interests', the Member's participation in the meeting will depend on the nature of the matter and whether it directly relates or affects their financial interest or well-being or that of a relative, friend or close associate, applying the tests set out in the Code.

NOTE:

On 27th May, 2021, the Council's Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee granted dispensations to Members appointed by the Council to the Board of the Rushmoor Development Partnership and as Directors of Rushmoor Homes Limited.

2. **MINUTES** – (Pages 1 - 8)

To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 2nd June, 2026 (copy attached).

3. **EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (EDI) POLICY AND EQUALITY ACTION PLAN** – (Pages 9 - 34)

(Cllr Sophie Porter, Healthy Communities & Active Lives Portfolio Holder)

To consider Report No. ED2610 (copy attached), which sets out a new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy and Equality Action Plan for the Council.

4. **PLAYGROUND RENEWALS 2026-28** – (Pages 35 - 42)

(Cllr Christine Guinness, Pride in Place/Neighbourhood Services Portfolio Holder)

To consider Report No. OS2616 (copy attached), which sets out a proposed priority renewal / refurbishment priority list for Council-owned playgrounds.

5. **PRIDE IN PLACE PROGRAMME** – (Pages 43 - 48)

(Cllr Sophie Porter, Healthy Communities & Active Lives Portfolio Holder)

To consider Report No. ED2609 (copy attached), which sets out information relating to the Council's Pride in Place funding programme.

CABINET

Meeting held on Tuesday, 2nd June, 2026 at the Council Offices, Farnborough at 7.00 pm.

Voting Members

Cllr Gareth Williams, Leader of the Council

Cllr Keith Dibble, Housing, Planning & Property Portfolio Holder

Cllr Christine Guinness, Pride in Place / Neighbourhood Services Portfolio Holder

Cllr Julie Hall, Economy, Skills & Regeneration Portfolio Holder

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of the Deputy Leader of the Council (Councillor Sophie Porter) and Councillor Gaynor Austin.

The Cabinet considered the following matters at the above-mentioned meeting. All executive decisions of the Cabinet shall become effective, subject to the call-in procedure, from **15th June, 2026**.

92. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –**

Having regard to the Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors, no declarations of interest were made.

93. **MINUTES –**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 21st April, 2026 were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

94. **COUNCIL PLAN AND RISK REGISTER QUARTERLY UPDATE AND YEAR END 2025/26 –**

(Cllr Gareth Williams, Leader of the Council)

The Cabinet received Report No. ED2606, which set out the performance monitoring information for the Council Delivery Plan and key service measures for the fourth quarter and end of year of 2025/26. Members were informed that key projects and activities from the Council Plan and key service indicators and measures used by the Council to monitor how the Council runs services were included in the report. The Cabinet heard that the Council's Corporate Risk Register identified factors that could impact on the future delivery of the Council's services and key priorities. A summary of those risks was provided in the report for discussion.

In discussing the report, Members were satisfied that good progress had been made by the Council towards delivering the Council Delivery Plan and that the Risk Register represented an accurate summary of the most significant risks faced by the Council.

The Cabinet RESOLVED that

- (i) the progress made towards delivering the Council Delivery Plan and the

latest performance information in relation to Council services, as set out in Report No. ED2606, be noted; and,

- (ii) the changes to the Corporate Risk Register, as set out in Section 6 of the Report, be approved.

95. **ALDERSHOT AND FARNBOROUGH (RUSHMOOR BOROUGH) LOCAL PLAN SCOPING CONSULTATION –**
(Cllr Keith Dibble, Housing, Planning & Property Portfolio Holder)

The Cabinet considered Report No. PG2610, which set out the next stage in relation to the production of a new local plan for Rushmoor.

Members were informed that, in order to comply with Local Plan Regulations, it would be necessary to carry out a scoping consultation exercise. It was proposed that this would run for six weeks between 19th June and 31st July, 2026. The consultation would combine online and in person engagement and would focus on what the local plan should include and how future engagement should be carried out.

In discussing the report, Members expressed support for the proposed approach and requested to be informed if consultation responses were low in any particular area or demographic. In response, it was confirmed that there would be a review halfway through the exercise and that any such discrepancies would be identified and communicated to Members.

The Cabinet RESOLVED that

- (i) the undertaking of the scoping consultation, as set out in Report No. PG2610, be approved;
- (ii) the Executive Head of Property and Growth be authorised to finalise the Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping and Habitats Regulations Assessment Pre-Screening for consultation; and
- (iii) the Executive Head of Property and Growth, in consultation with the Housing, Planning & Property Portfolio Holder, be authorised to finalise the Consultation and Engagement Strategy following the scoping consultation to reflect the feedback received.

96. **ARMED FORCES DAY NATIONAL EVENT 2026 - UPDATE –**
(Cllr Sophie Porter, Healthy Communities & Active Lives Portfolio Holder)

The Cabinet considered Report No. ED2608, which set out an update on progress with planning for the Armed Forces Day National Event 2026, along with a revised budget position that was required to ensure the safe and successful delivery of the event.

Members were reminded that the Council, working in partnership with the Ministry of Defence and local shareholders, had secured the opportunity to host this prestigious event, bringing significant economic, social and community benefits to the Borough. The Cabinet, at its meeting in November, 2025, had agreed to

underwrite the cost of the event and had approved proposals for seeking sponsorship to cover the costs of running the event. The Cabinet had received a further report in April, 2026 which had set out revised cost projections and Members had agreed to underwrite an anticipated budget gap. Since this time, planning had progressed further and Police and Armed Forces leads had become more involved and this had resulted in a more thorough understanding of the safety, security and specialist infrastructure that was required to deliver an event of national significance. This has resulted in an updated forecast budget that more accurately reflected the safety and logistical demands involved. It was reported that considerable commercial sponsorship and in-kind supports had already been secured, with further opportunities still being actively pursued. At the time of writing, however, there was a funding gap between current income and expenditure of around £431,736, which the Council would need to underwrite for the event to be delivered.

The Cabinet continued to express strong support for this event, which Members considered would be of significant benefit to the Borough, despite the costs escalating to a level considerably higher than was indicated when the Council initially discussed the possibility of hosting the event.

The Cabinet RESOLVED that

- (i) the current financial position, as set out in Report No. ED2608, be noted and the underwriting of the current budget gap of £431,736 be approved, to be funded from any forecast underspend in the events budget, broader service budget savings, the community recovery fund and, as a last resort, the stability and resilience reserve;
- (ii) the adding of a contingency of 10% to the forecast event budget be approved;
- (iii) the proposals for seeking additional commercial income to cover the remaining costs and to close the budget gap, as set out in the Report, be noted; and
- (iv) officers be requested to identify options to achieve the required level of savings following the budget outturn, Medium Term Financial Strategy review and final event account.

97. APPOINTMENTS TO CABINET WORKING GROUPS 2026/27 –

The Cabinet RESOLVED that

- (i) the following Cabinet Working Groups be appointed for the 2026/27 Municipal Year based on the memberships as set out below:

(1) Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) Working Group

Leader of the Council
(Cllr Gareth Williams)

Deputy Leader of the Council
(Cllr Sophie Porter)

One Labour Member
(Cllr Tom Day)

Two Conservative Members
(Cllrs Steve Harden and Gareth Lyon)

One 'Others' Group Member
(Cllr Craig Card)

One Reform Member
(Vacancy)

(2) Strategic Housing and Local Plan Working Group

Cabinet Member with responsibility for the Local Plan
(Cllr Keith Dibble)

Chairman of Development Management Committee
(Cllr Calum Stewart)

Economy, Skills & Regeneration Portfolio Holder
(Cllr Julie Hall)

Chairman or Vice-Chairman of Policy and Project Advisory Board
(Cllr Tom Day)

One 'Others' Group Member
(Cllr Leola Card)

Two Conservative Members
(Cllrs Jib Belbase and Steve Masterson)

One Reform Member
(Vacancy)

(3) Member Development Group

Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Member Development
(Cllr Sophie Porter)

Two Labour Members
(Cllrs Bill O'Donovan and Rhian Jones)

One Conservative Member
(Cllr Sue Carter)

One 'Others' Group Member
(Cllr Halleh Koohestani)

One Reform Member
(Vacancy)

(4) **SERCO Waste Contract Extension Group**

Pride in Place / Neighbourhood Services Portfolio Holder
(Cllr Christine Guinness)

Cabinet Champion for Pride in Place
(Cllr Lisa Greenway)

One Labour Member
(Cllr Tom Day)

Two Conservative Members
(Cllrs Steve Harden and Martin Tennant)

One 'Others' Group Member
(Cllr Leola Card)

One Reform Member
(Vacancy)

(5) **National Armed Forces Day Working Group**

Healthy Communities & Active Lives Portfolio Holder
(Cllr Sophie Porter)

Two Labour Members
(Cllrs Lisa Greenway and Dhan Sarki)

Two Conservative Members
(Cllrs Steve Masterson and Martin Tennant)

One 'Others' Group Member
(Cllr Leola Card)

One Reform Member
(Vacancy)

- (ii) the Corporate Manager - Democracy, in consultation with Group Leaders, be authorised to finalise the named appointments to the Groups as required.

98. **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
99	3	Information relating to financial or business affairs

**THE FOLLOWING ITEM WAS CONSIDERED
IN THE ABSENCE OF THE PUBLIC**

99. **PROPOSED SURRENDER OF LEASE - BRIDGE HOUSE, EELMOOR ROAD, FARNBOROUGH –**
(Cllr Keith Dibble, Housing, Planning & Property Portfolio Holder)

The Cabinet considered Exempt Report No. PG2611, which sought approval to agree a strategy for the lease at Bridge House, Eelmoor Road, Farnborough.

Members were reminded that the Council had purchased Bridge House in 2019 as an investment property to generate income to support the Council's revenue account. The Cabinet was informed that the current tenant had expressed a wish to exit the lease early and this would provide the Council with the opportunity to address dilapidations issues and consider the future of this asset in the context of a wider review of its commercial investment portfolio. The exempt report set out details of the proposed lump sum settlement that had been negotiated in respect of the early surrender of the lease.

The Cabinet expressed support for the proposed approach as being the best available to the Council at the current time.

The Cabinet RESOLVED that

- (i) in principle and subject to legal documentation, the early surrender of the lease in respect of Bridge House, Eelmoor Road, Farnborough, as set out in Exempt Report No. PG2611, be approved, on the basis of a negotiated lump sum settlement for the figure set out in the Exempt Report;
- (ii) the Executive Head of Property and Growth, in consultation with the Executive Head of Finance and the Executive Head of Governance and Law, be authorised to confirm the final terms of the surrender and settlement;
- (iii) officers be authorised to attempt to relet the property whilst also putting the property up for sale with or without vacant possession; and
- (iv) a further detailed options appraisal be brought back to the Cabinet once feasible let and/or disposal options are secured.

The Meeting closed at 7.58 pm.

CLLR GARETH WILLIAMS, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

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CABINET

COUNCILLOR SOPHIE PORTER
HEALTHY COMMUNITIES & ACTIVE LIVES
PORTFOLIO HOLDER

30 JUNE 2026

REPORT NO. ED2610

KEY DECISION? NO

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY AND ACTION PLAN**SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS:**

This report presents the finalised Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy and supporting Equality Action Plan for consideration and approval by Cabinet.

The policy has been developed through engagement with stakeholders, analysis of local insight (resident feedback, ward data, service complaints) and organisational learning. It aligns with the Equality Framework for Local Government and fulfils the Council's duties under the Equality Act 2010.

The action plan delivers the policy's five strategic goals (EP1–EP5) covering community insight, accessible services, community cohesion, an inclusive workforce, and governance/accountability. A phased approach to 2028 is proposed, with early 'quick wins' to be implemented within six months.

- ii. Agree the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy (Appendix 1).
- ii. Note the quality, Diversity, and Inclusion Action Plan (Appendix 2)
- iii. Note that the annual Public Sector Equality Duty Update report will be published on the council website, with the next report due in October 2026.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This report presents the Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy and supporting Action Plan for approval.
- 1.2. The Policy sets out the Council's strategic approach to promoting equality, reducing inequality and ensuring that services, decision-making and organisational culture are inclusive and responsive to the needs of the borough's diverse communities.
- 1.3. The Policy has been developed using a range of evidence, including workforce data, service insight, resident feedback and engagement activity. This ensures that the approach is informed by a clear understanding of community need and organisational experience.

- 1.4. The Policy is supported by an Equality Action Plan which sets out specific actions, responsibilities and monitoring arrangements to support delivery over time.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. Rushmoor Borough Council serves a diverse population and recognises that people experience services and opportunities differently depending on their circumstances, including protected characteristics and wider factors such as language, income and digital access.
- 2.2. The Council has a statutory duty under the [Equality Act 2010](#) and the Public Sector Equality Duty to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between communities.
- 2.3. Previous engagement and service insight have identified a number of key challenges, including the need to improve access to services, strengthen the use of data to understand inequalities, and ensure that equality is consistently considered in decision-making.
- 2.4. The development of the EDI Policy provides an updated and consolidated framework to address these issues, ensuring that equality, diversity and inclusion are embedded across governance, service delivery and organisational culture.
- 2.5. The Policy also aligns with the Council's [wider priorities](#) and prepares the organisation for future changes, including Local Government Reorganisation, by strengthening governance, accountability and evidence-based decision-making).

3. THE EDI POLICY AND ACTION PLAN

- 3.1. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy, attached in Annex 1, sets out the Council's strategic direction and principles for equality. It establishes five priorities:
 - EP1 – Understanding Inequality and Community Experience
 - EP2 – Accessible, Inclusive and Fair Services
 - EP3 – Inclusive Communities and Community Cohesion
 - EP4 – Inclusive Workforce and Organisational Culture
 - EP5 – Leadership, Governance and Accountability
- 3.2. The Equality Action Plan, attached in Annex 2, supports delivery of the Policy and includes more than 30 actions. These actions are assigned to service leads and supported by defined timescales, measures and data sources to enable monitoring and accountability.

- 3.3. Actions are phased to support delivery:
- Early actions (within 0–6 months) focus on establishing key foundations and quick wins improvements to website accessibility and delivery of Staff Connect sessions.
 - Medium and longer-term actions (through to 2028) focus on more substantive changes, including refreshing the Young People’s Plan, increasing the use of social value in procurement and improving workforce representation and progression.
- 3.4. The Policy and Action Plan apply across all Council services and functions, including decision-making, procurement and partnership working. They cover the whole borough and reflect the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, alongside locally identified priorities.

Consultation

- 3.5. The EDI Policy has been developed through targeted engagement with internal and external stakeholders. This included 23 staff members through workshops, surveys and discussions, 4 elected Members, and 4 voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations.
- 3.6.
- 3.7. In addition, discussions were held with 3 neighbouring councils to review good practice and benchmark approaches.
- 3.8. The development of the Policy has been supported by analysis of [workforce data](#), service insight, complaints data and [resident feedback, alongside existing consultation findings](#).
- 3.9. Consultation identified several consistent themes, including the need to strengthen leadership and accountability for equality, improve the use of data and evidence, ensure more consistent application of [Equality Impact Assessments](#), and improve the accessibility of services and communication.
- 3.10. Feedback from staff highlighted the importance of maintaining an inclusive organisational culture, including clearer development opportunities, stronger leadership expectations and continued focus on wellbeing and inclusion.
- 3.11. Additionally, feedback from the Policy and Projects Advisory Board on 09 June highlighted the importance of strengthening the policy’s coverage of neurodiverse residents and recognising communities supported under the Armed Forces Covenant. Members also emphasised the need for outcome-based measures within the Action Plan to ensure that progress is clearly demonstrated and that improvements in equality outcomes are visible to residents. The Action Plan will be updated to reflect this feedback in due course.

4. IMPLICATIONS (of proposed course of action)

Risks

- 4.1. There is a risk that the Council does not meet its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 if equality considerations are not embedded effectively. The Policy strengthens governance, accountability and decision-making processes to mitigate this.

Legal Implications

- 4.2. While the policy itself does not create additional statutory duties beyond those already imposed by law, failure to meet duties under the Equality Act 2010 or demonstrate due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty risk legal challenge and complaints.
- 4.3. Adopting the policy strengthens the Council's compliance with the Equality Act, Public Sector Equality Duty and duties relating to service accessibility and employment. It also creates a clear framework to evidence due regard in decision-making through equality impact assessments and mitigates the risk of discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act.

Abi Khan, Deputy Head of Legal Services & Deputy Monitoring Officer, abi.khan@rushmoor.gov.uk

Financial Implications

- 4.4. There are no direct financial implications from this report. Delivery of the action plan will be met from current council resources. If further financial resource is required, further approvals will be sought.

Rosie Plaistowe-Melham, Financial Services Manager & Deputy S151

Resource Implications

- 4.5. There are no additional staffing or resource implications arising directly from this report. Delivery of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Action Plan will be met from existing officer capacity across services. The Action Plan allocates responsibility to service leads and will be delivered through existing work programmes.

Equalities Impact Implications

- 4.6. A screening assessment was undertaken, and it was determined that a full Equalities Impact Assessment is not required because the impacts are positive or neutral. See Annex 3.

LIST OF APPENDICES/ANNEXES:

- Annex 1 - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Annex 2 - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan
- Annex 3 - Equality Impact Assessment

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

- [The Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Workforce Data](#)
- [Results from Consultations](#)
- [Council Delivery Plan](#)
- [Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion](#)

CONTACT DETAILS:

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Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Our Policy

Rushmoor Borough Council is committed to putting diversity and inclusion at the heart of everything it does. This policy reflects engagement with stakeholders, analysis of local insight and organisational learning, and has been informed by the Equality Framework for Local Government. It sets out how we will strengthen trust with our diverse communities, improve access to services, and create a culture where fairness and inclusion are central to how decisions are made.

The Council's policy goals are to:

- To be compliant with the Public Sector Equality Duty
- To be an inclusive employer of a diverse workforce that reflects the local community
- To deliver accessible, inclusive, and responsive services to all residents in the borough
- To foster a welcoming and inclusive community where all residents feel their voices are heard and can influence decision-making

To achieve these goals, the Council will:

- Understand the experiences of residents across the borough so that services and policies respond to the needs of different communities.
- Design and deliver council services to be inclusive, accessible and fair.
- Work with partners, community organisations and residents to support inclusive communities where people feel connected, respected and able to participate in local life.
- Have a workplace culture where colleagues feel supported, respected and able to succeed.
- Have clear roles and responsibilities for equality across services, ensuring that accountability for equality is clearly understood and embedded within service delivery and decision making.

This policy supports the Council to meet its Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010 to:

- eliminate discrimination and reduce inequality
- advance equality of opportunity
- foster good relations between communities

The Council also recognises that some groups may experience barriers that are not explicitly covered within the Equality Act 2010. The Council will continue to strengthen its understanding of these

groups through data, engagement and service insight to ensure services are inclusive and responsive to need.

This Policy may be supplemented by a series of Codes of Practice which provide further support and guidance in specific areas.

EP1 – Understanding Inequality and Community Experience

The Council will strengthen its understanding of the experiences of residents across the borough, so that services and policies respond to the needs of different communities.

This will involve improving how insight from residents, partners and community organisations is gathered. By bringing together survey findings, engagement feedback and local data, the Council will build a clearer picture of how people experience life in Rushmoor and where inequalities exist.

Key areas of focus will include:

- use resident feedback and consultation insight to inform decision-making
- use ward level data and demographic insight to identify inequalities affecting different areas
- engage with groups whose voices may be under-represented to ensure a broad range of perspectives are considered
- use feedback, complaints and service demand data to identify emerging issues and inequalities
- improve understanding of how different characteristics and circumstances can combine to affect people's experiences and outcomes

This will ensure that decisions are informed by a strong evidence base and a better understanding of lived experience.

EP2 – Accessible, Inclusive and Fair Services

The Council will ensure that council services are designed and delivered in ways that are inclusive, accessible and fair.

This includes considering equality early stage in service design and ensuring that residents can access support through clear, flexible and appropriate routes

Key areas of focus will include:

- have accessible digital services and council communications
- provide clear, consistent, easy-to-understand and culturally appropriate information about services and decisions
- improve how residents interact with customer services
- use service data, complaints and customer insight to identify barriers to access

- improve the availability of translated and culturally appropriate communications to ensure information is accessible and relevant to different communities.

This will result in services that are easy to access, better understood by residents and responsive to the needs of different communities.

EP3 – Inclusive Communities and Community Cohesion

The Council will work with partners, community organisations, and residents to support inclusive communities where people feel connected, respected and able to take part in local life.

This work will focus on strengthening relationships between communities and supporting initiatives that promote integration and well-being.

Key areas of focus include:

- support community cohesion activity and partnerships across the borough
- strengthen relationships with voluntary, community and faith organisations
- support refugee resettlement and integration programmes
- address health inequalities and improving access to wellbeing opportunities
- support opportunities for young people to engage in community life
- strengthen long-term partnerships with voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations and moving from one-off consultation towards ongoing collaboration

This will support stronger, more connected communities where residents feel included, represented and able to take part.

EP4 – Inclusive Workforce and Organisational Culture

The Council will continue to develop a workplace culture where colleagues feel supported, respected and able to succeed.

An inclusive workforce enables the Council to better understand the communities it serves and to deliver services that reflect the needs of residents.

Key areas of focus include:

- strengthen equality awareness and inclusive leadership practices
- support staff wellbeing and resilience
- ensure staff have the skills and confidence to work effectively with diverse communities
- support staff through organisational change
- use workforce data and staff feedback to understand employee experience.

This will contribute to a more inclusive workplace where staff feel valued, supported and able to progress.

EP5 – Leadership, Governance and Accountability

The Council will improve clarity of roles and responsibilities for equality across services, ensuring that accountability for equality is clearly understood and embedded within service delivery and decision making.

This includes ensuring that equality considerations are integrated at an early stage in the development of policies, strategies and projects supported by clear oversight and monitoring arrangements.

Our approach will include:

- strengthen the consistency and quality of Equality Impact Assessments and ensuring they are considered at an early stage in policy and decision making
- improve the use of equality information and service data to inform decisions
- strengthen governance arrangements and accountability for equality across services
- ensure procurement and partnership work support inclusive outcomes
- publish equality information and monitoring progress.
- support elected members to consider equality in their roles and in representing the diverse communities of the borough

This will ensure that equality is consistently considered in decision making and that accountability is clear across the organisation.

Delivering Change Over Time

This Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy sets the overall direction and principles that guide the Council's approach to equality. It is supported by an Equality Action Plan, which sets out the specific actions, measures and responsibilities for delivery.

The Council will take a phased approach to implementation:

- Early actions and quick wins will focus on strengthening foundations, improving clarity, and addressing known barriers. These will be progressed within the next six months and communicated separately to support pace and visibility.
- Medium- to longer-term actions will be delivered through the Equality Action Plan, with outcomes monitored regularly and activity continuing through to 2028, aligning with the transition to new unitary councils following Local Government Reorganisation.

This approach recognises that some improvements can be made quickly, while others require sustained effort to embed inclusive practice, strengthen governance, and support long-term culture change.

The Framework therefore provides continuity and direction, while the Action Plan enables flexible, accountable delivery as organisational structures evolve.

Additionally, the Equality Action Plan will continue to evolve to reflect feedback from stakeholders, including strengthening outcome-based measures and improving understanding of specific groups, to ensure that progress is clearly demonstrated and that improvements in equality outcomes are visible to residents.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan

EP1 — Understanding Inequality and Community Experience

The Council will strengthen its understanding of the experiences of residents across the borough, so that services and policies respond to the needs of different communities.

Ref	Action	Service Lead	Timescale	Measure	Data Source (Location)
1.1	Conduct the Residents Survey and analyse equality related findings, including differences between groups where data is available	Policy, Strategy & Transformation	2026/27 survey cycle	% of residents satisfied with the way the council runs things	Residents Survey dataset
1.2	Analyse community cohesion indicators within the Residents Survey	Policy, Strategy & Transformation	Annual following survey publication	% residents who feel they belong to their local area	Residents Survey dataset
1.3	Analyse perceptions of relationships between communities	Policy, Strategy & Transformation	Annual following survey publication	% residents who feel people from different backgrounds get on well	Residents Survey dataset
1.4	Monitor democratic confidence indicators	Policy, Strategy & Transformation	Annual following survey publication	% residents who think the council acts on their concerns	Residents Survey dataset
1.5	Maintain and update ward data profiles to support equality analysis	Policy, Strategy & Transformation	Ongoing	Ward profiles updated and published on the council website	Council ward profile datasets

EP2 — Accessible, Inclusive and Fair Services

The Council will ensure that council services are designed and delivered in ways that are inclusive, accessible and fair.

Ref	Action	Service Lead	Timescale	Measure	Data Source (Location)
2.1	Improve accessibility of the council website and digital services	Communications	Ongoing	Website accessibility score	Silktide accessibility monitoring platform
2.2	Improve website content accessibility and clarity to ensure information is easy to understand.	Communications	Ongoing	Website content accessibility score	Silktide content monitoring system
2.3	Improve accessibility and flexibility of customer services for residents with different needs.	Customer Services	Quarterly monitoring	Customer satisfaction score (1–5 scale)	Customer Services satisfaction survey dataset
2.4	Improve access to funding and business support opportunities for Nepali residents by ensuring key communications are clear, culturally appropriate, and available in Nepali where needed.	Economy and Growth	Ongoing	Qualitative feedback from Nepali businesses or community groups	Economy and Growth Team

EP3 — Inclusive Communities and Community Cohesion

The Council will work with partners, community organisations, and residents to support inclusive communities where people feel connected, respected and able to take part in local life.

Community cohesion and integration

Ref	Action	Service Lead	Timescale	Measure	Data Source (Location)
3.1	Manage the Rushmoor Together partnership	Community & Partnerships	Ongoing	Number of Rushmoor Together activities delivered	Community & partnerships monitoring
3.2	Deliver community cohesion events in areas with lower engagement	Community & Partnerships	Ongoing	Number of cohesion events delivered	Community cohesion
3.3	Manage the Belong Network contract and programme	Community & Partnerships	Ongoing	Number of Belong Network activities delivered	Belong Network
3.5	Coordinate engagement with faith communities	Community & Partnerships	Ongoing	Number of Rushmoor Faith Leaders meetings held	Community & partnerships monitoring
3.6	Establish and support the Farnborough Together Churches group	Community & Partnerships	2026–2027	Number of Farnborough Together Churches meetings held	Community & partnerships monitoring

Refugee resettlement and integration

Ref	Action	Service Lead	Timescale	Measure	Data Source (Location)
3.7	Continue work on the Afghan Resettlement Programme, including delivery and project management of the Afghan resettlement scheme	Community & Partnerships	Ongoing	Completion of the programme	Community & partnerships monitoring

3.8	Continue work on the Refugee Integration Programme, including delivery of cohesion and integration activity across the borough	Community & Partnerships	Ongoing	Completion of the programme	Community & partnerships monitoring
3.9	Continue work on Ukraine Resettlement Programme, including project management of the Homes for Ukraine scheme and supporting Ukrainian residents to integrate into the local community.	Community & Partnerships	Ongoing	Completion of the programme	Community & partnerships monitoring

Health Inequalities and Wellbeing

Ref	Action	Service Lead	Timescale	Measure	Data Source (Location)
3.10	Deliver the Healthy Weights programme with Public Health partners	Community & Wellbeing	Ongoing	Participation in Healthy Weights programme activities	Healthy Weights programme monitoring (Community & partnerships monitoring)
3.11	Deliver the Active in Rushmoor campaign	Community & Wellbeing	Annual campaign	Delivery of 'Active in Rushmoor' campaign in Rushmoor	Active in Rushmoor monitoring dataset (Community & partnerships monitoring)
3.12	Promote access to sport and physical activity	Community & Wellbeing / Commercial Services	Ongoing	Leisure centre attendance and membership levels	Leisure centre management system (Leisure services software system)
3.13	Promote mental health awareness initiatives	Community & Wellbeing	Ongoing	Increase awareness of mental health provision	Community & partnerships monitoring
3.14	Deliver wellbeing events including Men's Mental Health Day	Community & Wellbeing	Annual	Delivery of Men's Mental Health Day	Community & partnerships monitoring

Youth Engagement and Participation

Ref	Action	Service Lead	Timescale	Measure	Data Source (Location)
3.15	Develop and implement the Young People's Plan	Community & Partnerships	2026–2027	Refreshed Young People's Plan	Young People's Plan monitoring records (Community & Partnerships Team)
3.16	Deliver youth club activities at Prospect Youth Club and Aldershot Youth Club	Community & Partnerships	Ongoing	Youth attendance at clubs	Youth club attendance database (Community & Partnerships Team)
3.17	Deliver youth engagement through the Rushmoor Voices programme	Community & Partnerships	Ongoing	Number of youth engagement sessions delivered	Rushmoor Voices programme monitoring
3.18	Deliver work experience placements across council services	People Team	Ongoing	Maintain number of placements and receive positive feedback from participants	HR workforce monitoring

EP4 — Inclusive Workforce and Organisational Culture

The Council will continue to develop a workplace culture where colleagues feel supported, respected and able to succeed.

Ref	Action	Service Lead	Timescale	Measure	Data Source (Location)
4.1	Support staff through Local Government Reorganisation	People Team	Ongoing	Staff feedback on transition experience	Staff pulse survey dataset
4.2	Deliver Staff Connect engagement sessions	People Team	Ongoing	Number of Staff Connect sessions delivered	HR engagement monitoring
4.3	Deliver resilience and change support sessions for staff	People Team	Ongoing	Delivery of resilience sessions	HR training monitoring system
4.4	Monitor staff wellbeing through Health and Wellbeing Survey	People Team	Survey cycle	Staff wellbeing survey results	Staff Health and Wellbeing Survey dataset
4.5	Provide equality and diversity learning opportunities	People Team	Ongoing	Participation in EDI learning sessions	HR training monitoring
4.6	Maintain mandatory training completion levels	People Team	Quarterly monitoring	% mandatory training completed	HR learning management
4.7	Monitor workforce recruitment, retention and progression trends across the organisation, with a focus on improving representation and progression for Nepali staff and other under-represented groups	People Team	Annual monitoring	Identified actions to address progression gaps/Workforce equality data reviewed annually	HR workforce monitoring
4.8	Monitor sickness absence trends	People Team	Quarterly monitoring	Working days lost due to sickness per FTE	HR workforce monitoring dataset

EP5 — Equality Governance and Evidence-Based Decision Making

The Council will improve clarity of roles and responsibilities for equality across services, ensuring that accountability for equality is clearly understood and embedded within service delivery and decision making.

Ref	Action	Service Lead	Timescale	Measure	Data Source (Location)
5.1	Deliver and implement the Equality Policy	Policy, Strategy & Transformation	By June 2026	Equality Policy approved by Cabinet	Cabinet decision records
5.2	Support Equality Impact Assessments for Cabinet decisions and ensure equality considerations are clearly presented to elected members	Policy, Strategy & Transformation	Ongoing	Number of Equality Impact Assessments completed Development of Policy and Strategy intranet page to help with equality impact assessments and policy guidance	Equality Impact Assessments (Policy Team)
5.3	Publish annual equality information	Policy, Strategy & Transformation	Annual	Equality information report published	Council website equality information pages
5.4	Increase use of social value weighting in procurement processes	Risk, Resilience & Procurement	Annual monitoring	% procurement activity over £5k with ≥10% social value weighting	Procurement contract register
5.5	Increase procurement opportunities for SMEs and VCSE organisations	Risk, Resilience & Procurement	Annual monitoring	% contracts awarded to SMEs or VCSE organisations	Procurement monitoring
5.6	Increase procurement opportunities for regional organisations	Risk, Resilience & Procurement	Annual monitoring	% contracts awarded to organisations in the Southeast region	Procurement contract monitoring

Equality Impact Assessment: Screening Tool

The **Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Tool** should be completed for any new proposal, plan or project. It helps staff check if their proposal will positively, neutrally, or negatively affect residents, staff, or service users. If the impact is positive or neutral, a full EIA isn't needed.

A **full EIA** is required if the screening shows a negative impact on specific groups. We also advise that a full EIA should be completed when a [key decision](#) is being made. Key decisions are executive actions likely to:

- Significantly affect Council tax, budget balances, or contingencies.
- Have a major impact on communities across two or more Borough wards.
- Expenditure or savings over £100,000 qualify as significant, with a £250,000 threshold for property transactions.

Furthermore, for staff, we generally consider the impact on more than 25 people as significant, which would require a full EIA. If you're unsure, you can seek guidance from the Policy Team.

***After screening, if you identify the need for a full Equality Impact Assessment, you can use your existing answers as a foundation for the full assessment.**

Name of Project	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Action Plan 2026–2028
Reference number (if applicable)	
Service Area	Policy, Strategy and Transformation
Date screening completed	05/06/26
Screening author name	Martin Iyawo
Policy Team sign off	Alex Shiell
Authorising Director/Head of Service name	Karen Edwards

1. Please provide a summary of the proposal

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy sets out Rushmoor Borough Council's strategic approach to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion across its services, workforce and communities. The policy supports the Council in meeting its Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010 and establishes five priority themes:

- Understanding Inequality and Community Experience
- Accessible, Inclusive and Fair Services
- Inclusive Communities and Community Cohesion
- Inclusive Workforce and Organisational Culture
- Leadership, Governance and Accountability

The policy is supported by an accompanying Action Plan which sets out specific actions, measures and responsibilities for delivery through to 2028. The policy builds on the excellent work currently underway at the councils, consolidating it into one solid framework. The proposal does not deliver financial savings. Instead, it provides a framework for improving equality outcomes, increasing accessibility of services, strengthening community cohesion, supporting an inclusive workforce and ensuring equality considerations are embedded within decision making.

The policy applies across all council services and has relevance to residents, businesses, community organisations, staff, elected members and partner organisations across the borough.

2. Who will the proposal impact? Please indicate Yes or No

Group of people	Impacted?
Residents	Yes
Businesses	Yes
Visitors to Rushmoor	Yes
Voluntary or community groups	Yes
Council staff	Yes
Trade unions	Yes
Other public sector Organisations	Yes
Others	Please specify:

3. What impact will this change have on staff? Please complete where relevant:

The policy applies to all council staff and seeks to strengthen equality awareness, inclusive leadership, staff wellbeing and workforce diversity.

The proposal does not involve organisational restructuring, reductions in staffing levels, changes to employment contracts or relocation of staff. Any impact on staff is expected to be positive through improved support, development opportunities, inclusive working practices and greater consideration of equality issues within the workplace.

The policy affects all services across the council as equality considerations will be embedded into service delivery and decision making.

4. What consultation or engagement will you be leading (with residents, staff, or other stakeholders) as part of this project?

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy were developed through a consultation and engagement process involving internal and external stakeholders.

The consultation process included engagement with:

- 23 staff members through an internal equality survey, workshops and discussions.
 - 4 councillors through an internal equality survey.
 - 4 Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisations through an internal equality survey, workshops and discussions.
 - 3 neighbouring councils through consultation discussions.
 - Review of organisational data, workforce information and service insight.
 - Consideration of resident feedback and existing consultation findings.
- In total, this represented engagement with 34 stakeholders across the organisation and borough.
- Feedback from consultation informed the development of the policy objectives, priorities and actions. Stakeholders highlighted the importance of improving accessibility, strengthening community engagement, embedding equality considerations within decision-making processes, supporting workforce inclusion and ensuring accountability for delivery. The policy itself does not require further consultation. Ongoing engagement and monitoring will take place through delivery of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan, resident surveys, workforce monitoring, customer feedback and engagement with community partners.

5. What impact will this change have on people with protected characteristics and/or from disadvantaged groups?

Direct and indirect impacts

When completing this table, please consider both **direct and indirect impacts**, see helpful guidance.

Direct discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a **protected characteristic**. This includes:

- **Actual possession** of a protected characteristic.
- **Perceived possession** of a protected characteristic (discrimination by perception).
- **Association** with someone who has a protected characteristic (discrimination by association).

A valid comparison must show that someone without the protected characteristic would have been treated better in similar circumstances. It can still be direct discrimination even if the person treating you unfairly shares the same characteristic.

Note: Age discrimination may be lawful if it can be objectively justified. For other protected characteristics, direct discrimination is unlawful regardless of intent or justification.

Indirect discrimination happens when a **policy, rule, or practice** applies to everyone but puts people with a protected characteristic at a **particular disadvantage**. It occurs when:

- A policy is applied equally to all.
- It disadvantages a group sharing a protected characteristic.
- You are personally disadvantaged by it.
- The organisation cannot justify the policy as a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

If the policy can be objectively justified, it is not considered indirect discrimination.

For example: Closing public toilets may be an example of indirect discrimination, as it affects everyone but disproportionately disadvantages women, due to toilet frequency, alternative options and safety/hygiene factors.

Likely impact

For the groups identified earlier, tick the likely impact (both direct and indirect) on people with protected characteristics (e.g., age, disability, race, etc.):

- **Neutral:** No impact.
- **Positive:** Benefits people with protected characteristics.
- **Negative:** Harms people with protected characteristics.
- **Not Sure:** It's unclear how this affects people with protected characteristics, or more information is needed.

Rate the negative impact as **low, medium, or high**. Also, consider whether the proposal may be seen as controversial or negative by some groups. See the guidance for help.

Protected characteristic - Age

(for example, young people under 25, older people over 65)

Positive impact	Neutral impact	Negative impact	Not Sure	Description of the impact (if applicable) <i>Consider both direct and indirect impacts when completing this table</i>
Yes		Choose an item.		The policy commits to improving understanding of inequalities, supporting youth engagement and ensuring services are accessible and responsive to residents of all ages. This is likely to have a positive indirect impact.

Protected characteristic – Disability

(include people with physical disabilities, people with learning disabilities, blind and partially sighted people, Deaf or hard of hearing people, neurodiverse people. This also includes carers.)

Positive impact	Neutral impact	Negative impact	Not Sure	Description of the impact (if applicable) <i>Consider both direct and indirect impacts when completing this table</i>
Yes		Choose an item.		The policy includes commitments to accessible services, accessible communications and improved customer access arrangements. This is likely to have a positive direct and indirect impact on disabled residents.

Protected characteristic - Gender reassignment and identity

(Include people who identify across the trans* umbrella, not only those who have undergone gender reassignment surgery. This is inclusive of girls and or/women, men and/or boys, non-binary and genderfluid people and people who are transitioning) *Trans is an umbrella term to describe people whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were assigned at birth.

Positive impact	Neutral impact	Negative impact	Not Sure	Description of the impact (if applicable) <i>Consider both direct and indirect impacts when completing this table</i>

Yes		Choose an item.		The policy promotes an inclusive culture, equal treatment and reduced discrimination for all protected groups. Positive indirect impact.
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Protected characteristic - Marriage and Civil Partnership

Positive impact	Neutral impact	Negative impact	Not Sure	Description of the impact (if applicable) <i>Consider both direct and indirect impacts when completing this table</i>
	Yes	Choose an item.		No specific direct or indirect impacts identified.

Protected characteristic – Pregnancy and Maternity

(Include people who are pregnant in or returning to the workplace after pregnancy. Could also include working parents.)

Positive impact	Neutral impact	Negative impact	Not Sure	Description of the impact (if applicable) <i>Consider both direct and indirect impacts when completing this table</i>
Yes		Choose an item.		Improved accessibility, workforce inclusion and fair service delivery may benefit people who are pregnant or have caring responsibilities. Positive indirect impact.

Protected characteristic – Race or ethnicity

(include on the basis of colour, nationality, citizenship, ethnic or national origins)

Positive impact	Neutral impact	Negative impact	Not Sure	Description of the impact (if applicable) <i>Consider both direct and indirect impacts when completing this table</i>
Yes		Choose an item.		The policy includes commitments to engage under-represented groups, improve culturally appropriate communications and strengthen community cohesion. Positive direct and indirect impact.

Protected characteristic – Religion or belief

(include no faith)

Positive impact	Neutral impact	Negative impact	Not Sure	Description of the impact (if applicable) <i>Consider both direct and indirect impacts when completing this table</i>
Yes		Choose an item.		The policy supports engagement with faith communities and community cohesion activity. Positive direct and indirect impact.

Protected characteristic - Sex

(Under the Equality Act 2010 and following the 2025 Supreme Court ruling on 15 April 20205, a person’s legal sex is defined as their biological sex as recorded at birth. Trans individuals are still protected from discrimination under the characteristic of gender reassignment.)

Positive impact	Neutral impact	Negative impact	Not Sure	Description of the impact (if applicable) <i>Consider both direct and indirect impacts when completing this table</i>

Yes		Choose an item.		The policy promotes fair access to services, equality of opportunity and inclusive employment practices. Positive indirect impact.
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Protected characteristic - Sexual Orientation

(Include people from across the LGBTQ+ umbrella, for example, people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, pansexual or asexual.)

Positive impact	Neutral impact	Negative impact	Not Sure	Description of the impact (if applicable) <i>Consider both direct and indirect impacts when completing this table</i>
Yes		Choose an item.		The policy promotes inclusion, dignity and respect for all individuals. Positive indirect impact.

Protected characteristic - Other

(e.g. people on low incomes, people living in poverty, looked after children, people with care experience, people who are homeless, people with mental health problems, people who are prison leavers, people affected by menopause, people affected by menstruation and/or period poverty)

Positive impact	Neutral impact	Negative impact	Not Sure	Description of the impact (if applicable) <i>Consider both direct and indirect impacts when completing this table</i>
Yes		Choose an item.		The policy seeks to understand and address wider inequalities experienced by disadvantaged residents, including refugees, people on low incomes and those experiencing poor wellbeing. Positive indirect impact.

6. Screening Decision

Outcome	Yes or No
Neutral or Positive – no full EIA needed*.	Yes
Negative – Low Impact – full EIA at the service director’s discretion*.	No
Negative – Medium or High Impact – must complete a full EIA.	No
Is a full EIA required? Service decision:	No
Is a full EIA required? [Policy Team] sign off recommendation:	No
Flag for DPIA (will include engagement that collects personal data). [Policy Team]:	No
Flag for ethics (high risk/ will involve engagement with vulnerable residents):	No

Once you've completed the screening tool and determined that the proposal is likely to have a positive or neutral impact on people with protected characteristics, the following can be included in the 'Equality Impact Assessment' part of the report. ***'An equality impact check found that this proposal would have a positive or neutral impact on people with protected characteristics. Therefore, a full assessment is not required.'***

Please send this completed EIA Screening Tool to Policy@rushmoor.gov.uk for quality checking by the policy team.

If required, please continue to the full assessment below.

CABINET**COUNCILLOR CHRISTINE GUINNESS
PRINDE IN PLACE/NEIGHBOURHOOD
SERVICES PORTFOLIO HOLDER****DATE: 30TH JUNE 2026****REPORT NO. OS2616****KEY DECISION? YES****PLAYGROUND RENEWALS 2026-28****SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The Council has secured £400k of capital finance over the next two financial years (£200k for 2026-27 and £200k for 2027-28) to allow renewals/refurbishment of Council owned playgrounds.

The Cabinet is recommended to agree and endorse the priority renewal/refurbishment priority list as set out in this report.

The Cabinet is recommended to note the playgrounds on the Playground Priority Upgrade Order List that should be considered by the new authority for future investment from 2028-29 onwards.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This report is to set out the order in which the Council owned playgrounds are considered for capital investment and therefore renewal/refurbishment by virtue of priority order. Those sites most in need to be prioritised first. It must be understood that the £400k allocated will not be sufficient to finance all the high-priority sites needing investment.
- 1.2. This is a key decision as impacts across the borough and wards and councillors will be keen that their playground benefits. However, there is insufficient finance to achieve all that is likely desired, therefore, the priority action plan set out will be an important key decision.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The Council has 40 playgrounds within its ownership and historically we have funded from S106 collected from developers seeking to build homes within the borough. Only those sites where development has taken place within a geographical proximity have attracted sufficient S106 and been able to benefit. This funding of playground renewal/refurbishment will continue but sites that benefit is dependent upon the location, speed and volume of local housing development within the borough.

- 2.2. For 2026-27 and 2027-28 finance years the Council has secured £400k (£200k for each finance year) to renew/refurbish playgrounds so some of those sites which are in the most need of refurbishment will benefit.
- 2.3. Playground renewals/refurbishment is a main activity under the Council's priority; Pride in Place: Clean, Safe and Vibrant Neighbourhoods – Invest in refreshing our playgrounds. Additionally good quality playground provision will have a positive impact under the Council's priority; Community and Wellbeing: Active Lives, Healthier and Stronger Communities - Make sure all residents have access to opportunities for physical exercise.

3. DETAILS OF THE PROPOSAL

- 3.1. The playground action plan updated for 2026 is attached at appendix 1. In summary the sites to be renewed/refurbished are listed in order of action below. There are 16 sites at high priority for renewal/refurbishment, the order below has been based on a scale of need factored by the overall condition of the site and the hierarchy of provision (size of site and catchment it serves).

2026-27

Keith Lucas Road
Sunnybank Road & Dart Road

2027-28

Aspen Grove
Montgomery Road
Cumbria Court

Future Years (Assuming additional funding is secured)

Curly Bridge Close, Herrett Street & Fleming Close - pending land ownership being resolved
Shelly Rise
Dene Road
Richmond Close
Irvine Drive
Howard Cole Way/Greys Court
Tarn Close
The Lawns

- 3.2. All the playgrounds mentioned above have equipment which is now 25 to 30 years old and the condition is such that keeping them in safe operational condition is challenging. They need renewal/refurbishment to ensure safe and appealing playground provision is maintained.
- 3.3. Cabinet should consider future renewals/refurbishment from 2028-29 as it is important that the Council owned sites are continually refreshed and renewed to keep our playground facilities in good overall favourable condition.

Alternative Options

- 3.4. Given that one of the Councils priorities is to invest in our playgrounds to provide newer and more inclusive equipment there is no other practical alternative.
- 3.5. The only other option would be to remove playground equipment from sites and not replace. This has been discussed at previous PPAB meetings (2020) and the desire to close playgrounds was not generally supported.

Consultation

- 3.6. The Council produced a playground strategy in 2020 that was considered through PPAB; however, no overall agreement was reached. This working document has therefore not been formally adopted, however, forms the basis of the priority action plan proposed.
- 3.7. The priority order for investment was presented to PPAB on 9th June with the remit to 'consider and make recommendations in support of the prioritisation of the renewal/refurbishment of Council owned playgrounds that will benefit from the £400k investment over the next two years. The board endorsed the proposed approach, agreeing the first steps to commence renewal of the sites as listed.

4. IMPLICATIONS (of proposed course of action)

Risks

- 4.1. Playground renewals/refurbishments are well received by the local communities that immediately benefit from the improved provision; however, those sites that remain in poor condition can generate enquires and complaint as the local community desire for their local site to be renewed. This is not really a risk, more a consequence but without a time framed response for such sites this can generate dissatisfaction.
- 4.2. Individual ward councillors will likely seek that their local ward playground(s) benefit from this investment but the £400k is not sufficient to cover all high-priority sites of which there are 16.

Resource Implications

- 4.3. The Council has a playground maintenance budget of c£65k and older sites with equipment that is reaching end-of-life will at some point need to be removed for reasons of safety. Such removals would need to be funded from the maintenance budget placing significant strain and risk of overspend. The maintenance budget would not be sufficient to cover replacement of equipment resulting in the loss of facilities and the overall decline of the Council's playground provision. Therefore, the renewal/refurbishment of older sites is a positive step for keeping our sites safe and serviceable within

existing financial resources. Notwithstanding the above, it is not envisaged that this programme will return financial savings.

- 4.4. The renewal/refurbishment of the high-priority sites will require a supported procurement process for each site undertaken. As this is a process that has been previously undertaken, and documentation can adapt between sites it is envisaged that this can be accommodated within the existing resources available to the Council.
- 4.5. The renewals/refurbishment of playground sites is led by the Council's Parks, Play & Open Spaces Manager supported by the Projects Officer which is a part-time resource utilised for specific projects and either funded from developer contributions (S106) where appropriate or existing revenue budget allocations.

Legal Implications

- 4.6. The Council can be held liable for injuries sustained due to the condition of the playground equipment. Renewal and improvement of the equipment at the identified sites will mitigate the risk of injury which will in turn reduce the likelihood of claims being made against the Council.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 4.7. Current approved playground capital projects funded from S106 include the following:

Project	26/27 Budget £
Playground Renewals	38,055
Breakdown as below	
Keith Lucas Road	20,313.02
Sunnybank Road	10,665.38
Aspen Grove	1,745.00
Curly Bridge Close	5,331.36
Queens Road	48,875

Further S106 funds for playgrounds are held within the balance sheet. However, these funds are held for specific projects as per the Unilateral Agreement in place with developers. Once the full funds are collected, projects can be brought forward to deliver.

The £200,000 playground budget for 2026/27 was approved at February 2026 Council and is to be funded from Capital Receipts. Therefore, there is no ongoing financing cost impact on the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

Maintenance costs of playground sites are part of the Council's revenue budget approved each at February Council. Renewal of sites is unlikely to see savings through revenue budgets as detailed above.

Replacing unsafe or deteriorating equipment may minimise future risk to members of the public and potential insurance claims.

Equalities Impact Implications

- 4.8. New playground equipment within the old sites to be renewed will improve accessibility and therefore be a positive impact on accessibility and equalities.

Other

- 4.9. The current condition of some of these older playgrounds is such that they negatively impact the Council's reputation for providing high-quality services and facilities. Sites that look degraded and broken are generally not valued or cared for by their local community and as such can move into a negative spiral.

5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1. The Council has secured £400k over the next two finance years for playground renewal/refurbishment and this paper sets out the priority order of which sites will benefit.
- 5.2. This decision forms an integral part of the Council's priority action to refresh children's playground provision within the borough.
- 5.3. The Council has 40 playgrounds that it owns and manages and many of these sites are not in the best condition owing to the age of the equipment and safer surfacing therein. This investment is a significant positive step towards better managing our playground provision and improving the playground facilities available to our residents.

LIST OF APPENDICES/ANNEXES:

Appendix 1 – Playground Strategy & Action Plan and Playground Upgrade Priority Order

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Playground Strategy 2020-30 Oversight Document

CONTACT DETAILS:

Report Author – Andy Ford (Parks, Play and Open Spaces Manager)

Head of Service – David Phillips – Interim Executive Head of Operations

Site	Heirarchy of Provision	Life Expectancy (Years)	Usage	Play Value	Cost to renew / refurbish	Date refurbished	Notes
Keith Lucas Road	3LEAP	0	1High	1Low	£100,000.00		Welding repairs have needed to be undertaken to retain main unit (end of practical life)
Sunnybank Road	3LEAP	0	2Medium	2Medium	£100,000.00		Welding repairs have been needed & safer surfacing tiles are degrading causing potential safety issues
Montgomery Road	4LeAP	0	2Medium	1Low	£60,000.00		Safer surfacing is shrinking & degrading, causing potential safety issues
Curly Bridge Close	4LeAP	0	3Low	1Low	£50,000.00		Ownership resides with Thames Valley Housing, seeking to work in partnership (on hold pending further developments)
Meon Close/Dart Road	4LeAP	0	3Low	1Low	£30,000.00		Needs to be done at same time as Sunnybank due to close proximity. Main unit at end of practical life
Fleming Close /Ship Lane	4LeAP	0	3Low	1Low	£30,000.00		Seeking to resolve land ownership (land in private ownership) cannot renew equipment until resolved
Herrett Street /Highclere Road	4LeAP	0	3Low	1Low	£50,000.00		Seeking to resolve land ownership (transfer from Crown & extinguishing Highway) cannot renew equipment until resolved
Cumbria Court	3LEAP	1	2Medium	2Medium	£60,000.00		Safer surfacing tiles are shrinking & degrading, causing potential safety issues
Aspen Grove	4LeAP	1	3Low	1Low	£60,000.00		Safer surfacing is shrinking & degrading, causing potential safety issues
Dene Road	4LeAP	2	3Low	2Medium	£60,000.00		Welding repairs have needed to be undertaken to retain main units (end of practical life)
The Lawns	3LEAP	3	2Medium	2Medium	£80,000.00		Wooden fencing & gates degraded & beyond practical lifespan
Shelley Rise	4LeAP	3	2Medium	1Low	£50,000.00		Equipment was rubbed down & repainted within recent years removing some urgency
Irvine Drive	4LeAP	3	3Low	1Low	£60,000.00		Equipment was rubbed down & repainted within recent years removing some urgency
Richmond Close	4LeAP	3	3Low	1Low	£60,000.00		Welding repairs have needed to be undertaken to retain main unit (end of practical life)
Tarn Close	4LeAP	3	3Low	1Low	£50,000.00		Main unit is no longer manufactured & no spares available
Howard Cole Way/Greys Court	4LeAP	3	3Low	1Low	£50,000.00		Equipment was rubbed down & repainted and general surface reinstated within recent years removing some urgency
Queens Road Recreation Ground	2NEAP	5	1High	3High	£150,000.00	2005	Dynamic items have had renewed safer surfacing in 2025
Pinewood Park	3LEAP	5	1High	2Medium	£100,000.00		A new roundabout has been installed in recent years
Kingsway	3LEAP	5	2Medium	2Medium	£80,000.00	2006	Safer surfacing renewals in 2025
Prince Charles Crescent	3LEAP	5	2Medium	2Medium	£80,000.00		Main unit has had minor refresh to replace timbers on bridge in recent years
Calton Gardens	4LeAP	5	3Low	1Low	£50,000.00	2019	Equipment was rubbed down & repainted within recent years removing urgency
Water Lane Open Space	3LEAP	8	1High	3High	£80,000.00	2025	Toddler zone was renewed in 2025 & new slide and swings installed in 2024
Fairfax Road	3LEAP	8	2Medium	2Medium	£100,000.00	2008	Safer surfacing is wearing & beginning to fail
Green Way	3LEAP	8	2Medium	2Medium	£100,000.00	2006	Safer surfacing is wearing & beginning to fail
Queen Elizabeth Park (woodland site)	4LeAP	8	2Medium	2Medium	£60,000.00	2021	Installed as a 'temporary' site during ESSO works, retaining whilst in safe operational condition
Aldershot Park	1Destination	12	1High	3High	£200,000.00	2010	Loose fill bark safer surfacing is maintenance burden and needs renewing or replacing with rubber mulch surface
King George V Playing Fields	1Destination	12	1High	3High	£200,000.00	2009	Safer surfacing is wearing & beginning to fail, some areas have been replaced
Blunden Road Recreation Ground	2NEAP	12	1High	3High	£150,000.00	2021	Wooden units have been damaged and causing increased maintenance costs
Moor Road Recreation Ground	2NEAP	12	1High	3High	£200,000.00	2020	High use is resulting in higher maintenance costs
Municipal Gardens	2NEAP	12	1High	3High	£150,000.00	2017	High use is resulting in higher maintenance costs
Osborne Road Recreation Ground	2NEAP	12	1High	3High	£150,000.00	2017	Safer surfacing is wearing
Manor Park	2NEAP	12	1High	3High	£200,000.00	2017	High use is resulting in higher maintenance costs
Rectory Road Recreation Ground	2NEAP	12	1High	3High	£150,000.00	2013	Safer surfacing is wearing & beginning to fail
Pyestock Crescent	3LEAP	12	1High	3High	£100,000.00	2016	Safer surfacing is wearing & beginning to fail
Southwood Country Park	1Destination	15	1High	3High	£200,000.00	2022	High use is resulting in higher maintenance costs. New gates have been installed in 2025.
Queen Elizabeth Park	2NEAP	15	1High	3High	£150,000.00	2024	Safer surface detached due to ground water (site was not installed as per RBC recommendation by ESSO)
Cove Green Recreation Ground	2NEAP	15	1High	3High	£150,000.00	2024	
Redan Hill Gardens	2NEAP	15	2Medium	3High	£150,000.00	2024	
Ivy Road Recreation Ground	3LEAP	15	2Medium	2Medium	£100,000.00	2023	Equipment was refreshed and new safer surface installed 2023
Elles Close	3LEAP	15	2Medium	3High	£100,000.00	2024	

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CABINET

COUNCILLOR SOPHIE PORTER
HEALTHY COMMUNITIES & ACTIVE LIVES
PORTFOLIO HOLDER
REPORT NO. ED2609

30 JUNE 2026

KEY DECISION YES

PRIDE IN PLACE PROGRAMME**SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The purpose of this report is to:

- Provide Cabinet with an overview of the Pride in Place funding programme
- Identify the proposed governance and delivery arrangements;
- Set out the progress so far
- Identify the financial implications for the Council; and
- Seek approval to accept and administer the funding in accordance with programme requirements

Recommendation

Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Note the objectives and progress of the Pride in Place funding programme.
2. Note the financial implications and agree that expenditure will be managed in accordance with the approved funding conditions and the Council's financial procedures.
3. Agree the Council will accept the grant and administer the funding in accordance with programme requirements.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This report provides an overview of the Pride in Place programme for Mayfield, including the progress made to date and the proposed governance arrangements required to support the delivery of the programme.
- 1.2. Mayfield, has been identified by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) as a priority place for investment through the Pride in Place funding programme (Phase 2)

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The Pride in Place Programme is aimed at revitalising communities that have faced long-term challenges and empower local people to shape the future of their neighbourhoods. It is designed to be community led with communities at the core of making decisions.
- 2.2. The programme has three core objectives: to build stronger communities; to create thriving places; and, to empower people to take back control.
- 2.3. The Government launched Phase One of the Pride in Place Programme in September 2025 targeting the UK's most deprived and socially disconnected neighbourhoods.
- 2.4. In February 2026, the Government announced that Mayfield, Farnborough had been awarded £20 million over a ten-year period as part of Phase Two of the Pride in Place programme.
- 2.5. In March 2026, the Council received an initial allocation of £150,000 to support the mobilisation of the Pride in Place programme. To facilitate this work, the funding will be used to recruit a Pride in Place Programme Manager and a Community Engagement Officer (both fixed term 2-year posts) and to support the appointment of an independent Chair to lead the Neighbourhood Board.

3. GOVERNANCE & DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS

- 3.1. A Pride in Place Neighbourhood Board is required to provide strategic oversight of the programme, engage with local communities and stakeholders, and lead the development of a 10-year Pride in Place Plan. The Plan will set out the community's priorities and determine how the funding will be invested to deliver sustainable improvements and positive outcomes for Mayfield.
- 3.2. The independent Chair will provide leadership and strategic oversight of the Neighbourhood Board, working closely with the Council and the MP. The Chair role is a voluntary position that requires an individual with a strong connection to Mayfield, a commitment to improving outcomes for local residents, and the ability to bring together a diverse range of stakeholders.
- 3.3. MHCLG recommends that the Board should have between 8 and 12 members and that at least 51% of the Board should live or work within the area to ensure the Board is resident-led. Membership must include key partners, residents, the MP and a minimum of one ward Councillor.
- 3.4. Given the importance of ensuring that the Pride in Place Board remains resident and partner-led, and in recognition of the limited membership of 12 Board members, it is proposed that Council representation be limited to one Councillor. The appointment of the Rushmoor Councillor will be subject to endorsement by the Council's Licensing and Corporate Business Committee. Where more than one Councillor expresses an interest in serving on the Board, the Committee will determine the appointment.

- 3.5. The programme requires Neighbourhood Board membership, including any proposed changes to the designated boundary, to be finalised by 28 August 2026. Once the Board is established it will be responsible for developing and submitting a Pride in Place Plan by 27 February 2027.
- 3.6. The Plan must set out a shared 10-year vision for the area, together with the Board's proposals for further inward investment and the allocation of funding to deliver long-term improvements and positive outcomes for residents.
- 3.7. The Council, through the Programme Manager, will act as the Secretariat for the Board and work with the Chair to develop the plan and convene the meetings. As the accountable body for the programme the Council will oversee the financial management, monitoring, and reporting requirements.
- 3.8. Community engagement will form a central element of programme delivery to ensure all projects reflect local priorities and generate long-term community ownership.
- 3.9. To encourage community engagement The Board may consider establishing a wider community group as an alternative delivery model. This could help strengthen community engagement and participation, while enabling the Board to retain a clear strategic focus and maintain effective decision-making arrangements.

PROGRESS SO FAR

- 3.10. Following the initial announcement of the fund, The MP's office delivered a survey to every household in the area seeking views about what improvements residents would like to see and what issues residents would like addressed. The survey had a relatively low response but identified parking, anti social behaviour and better local facilities.
- 3.11. The Council has undertaken initial engagement with a range of local partners to gauge interest in participating in the Neighbourhood Board and to gather early views on local priorities and potential investment opportunities. These partners are listed as follows:
 - Citizens Advice
 - Rushmoor Voluntary Services
 - Cherrywood Primary, Bohunt School, Grange Junior School and Samuel Cody School
 - Sixth Form College
 - Mayfield Medical centre
 - Farnborough Football Club
 - Vivid Housing
 - Church of the Good Shepherd
 - Prospect Youth Club
 - Local Scout groups

- Mental Health charity
 - Gurkha Welfare Trust
- 3.12. Interviews for the The Programme Manager and Engagement Officer are set for June and July. The response to the advert for the Chair role was very low. Due to the low level of interest in the role, alternative recruitment arrangements are being progressed. This includes a targeted approach to key partners and a proposal to appoint an interim Chair, with a recommendation for a permanent Chair to be brought to the Board for approval in due course.
- 3.13. The Council and MP's office are currently meeting every 3 weeks to share engagement and partner co-ordination and prepare the groundwork prior to the Board being established.

4. IMPLICATIONS

Risks

- 4.1. Key risks to the programme include: Insufficient stakeholder or resident engagement, failure to secure an appropriate and skilled Chair for the neighbourhood Board, and potential reputational risk arising from underperformance/project delivery.

Legal Implications

- 4.2. There are no direct legal implications arising from the content of this report.
Abi Khan, abi.khan@rushmoor.gov.uk Deputy Head of Legal Services & Deputy Monitoring Office

Financial and Resource Implications

- 4.3. Mayfield community will receive funding up to £20 million over ten years. The funding will be split 63% capital and 37% revenue.
- 4.4. Revenue funding will be paid across two tranches in Year One (26/27) 50% will be made at the start of the financial year and the remaining 50% on approval of the Chair, Board Membership and (if applicable) any boundary change.
- 4.5. For the purpose of planning the programme is divided into 3 investment periods.
- Period One: the 2026 to 2027 financial year to the 2029 to 2030 financial year (4 years)
 - Period Two: the 2030 to 2031 financial year to the 2032 to 2033 financial year (3 years)
 - Period Three: the 2033 to 2034 financial year to the 2035 to 2036 financial year (3 years)

- 4.6. In March 2026 the Council received £150k to support Board establishment and high-quality engagement. In May 2026 the Council received a further £117k capital and £135k revenue funding.
- 4.7. As the accountable body for the programme the council will oversee the financial management, monitoring, and reporting requirements. The council is therefore taking on the responsibility for the effective financial and legal administration including risks, such as prevention of mal administration and fraud for example, whilst also fulfilling its legal duty to secure value for money. This is a specific challenge and risk for the council because the scheme will be independent of the Council's Constitution and outside of the jurisdiction of Cabinet decision making. Only one Councillor will represent the council on the board consisting of between 8 and 12 members.
- 4.8. An appropriate oversight and reporting structure is required to oversee the administration of the scheme to ensure the council fulfills its stewardship responsibilities.
- 4.9. There will be a cost in officer time beyond the programme manager. Such as significant finance and procurement team resources. These costs will have to be recovered from the funding and agreed with the scheme board a part of their business and delivery plan. The Chief Finance Officer recommends that sufficient capacity of a suitably qualified and experienced accountant is engaged to support the project, funded by the project.
- 4.10. It is important to ensure the council has appropriate insight and influence on the expenditure incurred by the Board to ensure no contractual commitments are incurred beyond the available funding timeline and restricted to the certainty of receipt of funds, these commitments will otherwise be the council's responsibility and unbudgeted expenditure.
- 4.11. A key risk is the split between capital and revenue funding and creation of ongoing revenue expenditure commitments such as maintenance resulting from capital expenditure, that will ultimately fall to the council.
- 4.12. Specific scheme administration rules such as a Memorandum of Understanding have not been sighted or reviewed by finance and legal. These will require a detailed review prior to the scheme going ahead.

Finance commentary by Peter Vickers CFO s151 17/06/2026

Equalities and Climate Impact Implications

- 4.13. An Equalities Impact Assessment screener found positive impacts for the community. The programme is designed to generate positive community outcomes and consider opportunities for all residents. Equality considerations will be incorporated into the project plan and engagement activity to ensure projects are inclusive and accessible.

- 4.14. An initial Climate Change Impact Assessment has identified the potential for positive environmental and community benefits. The programme provides an opportunity to enhance the local natural environment and support the creation of a more sustainable place to live for residents. As the programme develops, all proposed projects, particularly capital schemes, will be required to consider environmental impacts and, where possible, contribute to the Council's wider climate change objectives.

5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1. The Pride in Place programme represents a significant opportunity to deliver longstanding improvements to Mayfield and the local community.
- 5.2. The Neighbourhood Board will provide the appropriate governance and delivery arrangements to develop a robust Pride in Place Plan, ensuring that investment is targeted towards projects that deliver long lasting community benefits, improve local infrastructure and public spaces, and support initiatives that enhance quality of life for residents.
- 5.3. The programme supports the Councils priorities with a specific focus on Skills, economy and regeneration, Community and wellbeing and Pride in place.

6. RECOMMENDATION

6.1 Cabinet is recommended to:

- Note the objectives and progress of the Pride in Place funding programme.
- Note the financial implications and agree that expenditure will be managed in accordance with the approved funding conditions and the Council's financial procedures.
- Agree the Council will accept the grant and administer the funding in accordance with programme requirements

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