

Public Document Pack



RUSHMOOR BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

*at the Council Offices, Farnborough on
Tuesday, 3rd March, 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 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 - 6)

To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 10th February, 2026 (copy attached).

3. **LOCAL PLAN TIMETABLE AND NOTICE TO COMMENCE PLAN-MAKING** – (Pages 7 - 26)

(Cllr Keith Dibble, Housing & Planning Portfolio Holder)

To consider Report No. PG2602 (copy attached), which sets out both an update to the timetable for the new local plan for Rushmoor and a notice to commence plan-making for approval.

4. **NEW ENGAGEMENT OF AGENCY WORKERS AND CONSULTANTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE** – (Pages 27 - 48)

(Cllr Gaynor Austin, Finance & Resources Portfolio Holder)

To consider Report No. PEO2603 (copy attached), which sets out a new Engagement of Agency Workers and Consultants Policy and Procedure for approval.

5. **FARNBOROUGH LEISURE CENTRE - CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT AWARD** – (Pages 49 - 374)

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

To consider Report No. REG2601 (copy attached), which sets out an update on the Farnborough Leisure Centre projects and seeks approval to enter into a Development Management Agreement for RIBA Stage 5 (construction and handover) onwards.

6. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC** –

To consider resolving:

That, subject to the public interest test, the public be excluded from this meeting during the discussion of the undermentioned items to avoid the disclosure of exempt information within the paragraph of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act, 1972 indicated against such items:

Item Nos.	Schedule 12A Para. No.	Category
7 and 8	3	Information relating to financial or business affairs

7. **DISPOSAL OF NO. 168 HIGH STREET, GUILDFORD** – (Pages 375 - 388)
(Cllr Julie Hall, Economy, Skills & Regeneration Portfolio Holder)

To consider Exempt Report No. PG2603 (copy attached), which seeks authority to dispose of the freehold interest in No. 168 High Street, Guildford.

8. **NOS. 16-18 THE MEADS, FARNBOROUGH - BUDGET APPROVALS** – (Pages 389 - 400)
(Cllr Julie Hall, Economy, Skills & Regeneration Portfolio Holder)

To consider Exempt Report No. REG2602 (copy attached), which seeks authority to increase the capital budget allocation in respect of proposed building works at Nos. 16-18 The Meads, Farnborough.

This page is intentionally left blank

CABINET

Meeting held on Tuesday, 10th February, 2026 at the Council Offices, Farnborough at 7.00 pm.

Voting Members

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 Portfolio Holder
Cllr Christine Guinness, Pride in Place / Neighbourhood Services Portfolio Holder
Cllr Julie Hall, Economy, Skills & Regeneration Portfolio Holder

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 **23rd February, 2026**.

58. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –**

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

59. **MINUTES –**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 13th January and 20th January, 2026 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

60. **ANNUAL PEOPLE REPORT AND OTHER PEOPLE MATTERS –** (Cllr Gaynor Austin, Finance & Resources Portfolio Holder)

The Cabinet considered Report No. PEO2601, which set out a number of updates in relation to the Council's workforce.

Members were informed that the report contained updates on the implementation of elements of the Council's People Strategy implemented in 2021, which had since been reviewed to reflect the new Council Delivery Plan and the future effects of devolution and Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). The Cabinet were advised that a new two-year People Plan 2026-28, had been developed to strengthen support to staff. It also provided key data on the Council's workforce for 2025, the latest Pay Policy Statement and Gender Pay Gap and Ethnicity Pay Gap calculations, which would be considered by the Licensing and Corporate Business Committee and the Council.

In discussing the Report, Members acknowledged the great job the People Team did in supporting the wider staff cohort and expressed their thanks to all staff.

The Cabinet RESOLVED that

- (i) the People Plan 2026/28, be agreed,
- (ii) the Annual People Report 2025, as set out in Report No. PEO2601, be noted; and,
- (iii) the Pay Policy Statement, Gender Pay Gap and Ethnicity Pay Gap report to the Licensing and Corporate Business Committee and the Council, as set out in Appendix 3 of the Report, be noted.

61. COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN, PERFORMANCE AND RISK REGISTER QUARTERLY UPDATE Q3 OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2025/26 –
(Cllr Gareth Williams, Leader of the Council)

The Cabinet received Report No. ED2601, which set out the performance monitoring information for the Council Delivery Plan and key service measures for the third quarter 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. At the request of the Cabinet an additional data set had been provided, which set out the largest risk gap (residual vs target).

In discussing the report, Members were satisfied that good progress was being made by the Council towards delivering this year's Council Delivery Plan.

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. ED2601, be noted; and,
- (ii) the changes highlighted in the Corporate Risk Register, as set out in Section 5 of the Report, be noted.

62. GENERAL FUND BUDGET 2026/27 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2026/27 TO 2029/30 –
(Cllr Gaynor Austin, Finance & Resources Portfolio Holder)

The Cabinet considered Report No. FIN2603, which set out the draft General Fund Budget for 2026/27 and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) up to 2029/30.

The Cabinet were advised that the MTFS sets out the financial context of the Council over the next two years and beyond into the new council after Vesting Day on 1st April 2028.

It was reported that the Council could set a balanced budget, with the use of reserves, to Vesting Day. There was a deficit of £11.94 million over the MTFS term,

but this could be resolved through capital receipts, which would reduce capital charges in the revenue accounts whilst during down reserves to fund the balance of the current deficit of £3.962 million.

The Cabinet discussed the report and felt that it was a sensible and appropriate budget, based on factual assumptions, that supported the Council's Delivery Plan and protected services. Members expressed their gratitude for the hard work of the finance team.

The Cabinet

- (i) **RECOMMENDED TO THE COUNCIL** that approval be given to:
 - (a) the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and the strategy, set out in this report, to mitigate the 2026/27 and 2027/28 MTFFS deficit;
 - (b) the General Fund Revenue Budget Estimates Summary 2026/27 Appendix 1;
 - (c) the Council Tax Requirement of £8,324,717 for this Council;
 - (d) the Council Tax level for Rushmoor Borough Council's purposes of £246.87 for a Band D property in 2026/27 (an increase of £7.17);
 - (e) the Capital Programme as per Appendix 1; and
 - (f) the Strategy for the Flexible use of Capital Receipts as per paragraph 3.16 of this report.
- (ii) **RESOLVED** that the requested earmarked reserves and delegations, as set out in paragraph 3.05 – 3.07 of Report No. FIN2603, specifically:
 - (a) supplementary approvals in respect of legal, finance and planning expenditure that may not be managed within existing budget, such as Interim professional capacity, advice and consultation up to a total of £400k from useable reserves, delegated to the Senior Leadership team in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder; and
 - (b) supplementary approvals in respect of activity to deliver the Council Delivery Plan priorities amounting to £237k to be funded as one off activities from useable reserves, delegated to the Senior Leadership Team in as per itemised scheduled in Appendix 1, be approved.

63. COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2026-28 – (Cllr Gareth Williams, Leader of the Council)

The Cabinet considered Report No. ED2602, which set out a Council Delivery Plan for 2026-28.

Members were informed that the plan set out the Council's priorities and the key projects and activities that the Council would undertake over the following two years

to contribute to delivering the new strategic priorities. The plan was structured across five themes:

- Skills, Economy and Regeneration
- Homes for All: Quality Living, Affordable Housing
- Community and Wellbeing: Active Lives, Healthier and Stronger Communities
- Pride in Place: Clean, Safe and Vibrant Neighbourhoods
- The Future and Financial Sustainability

In discussing this matter, the Cabinet were very pleased that the Council Delivery Plan was delivering on priorities that residents wanted and that the financial sustainability of the Council had settled and funds were available to achieve the priorities set out.

The Cabinet **RECOMMENDED TO THE COUNCIL** that the Council Delivery Plan 2026-28, as set out in Report No. ED2602, be approved.

64. **NATIONAL ARMED FORCES DAY JUNE 2026 - FORMATION OF WORKING GROUP –**
(Cllr Sophie Porter, Healthy Communities & Active Lives Portfolio Holder)

The Cabinet received Report No. ED2603, which set out the background to the Council's successful bid to host the National Armed Forces Day event in June 2026, a launch for which had been held on 5th December, 2025.

A multi-agency Project Delivery Board (PDB) was being established and an event director, to support the delivery of the event, had been sought. However, in addition, to ensure good governance around the event, it was being proposed that a cross-party, politically balanced, Cabinet Working Group be established to meet on a four weekly cycle to receive updated from the PDB.

The Cabinet RESOLVED to establish a National Armed Forces Day Working Group to oversee the delivery of the National Armed Forces Day Event 2026.

65. **MATTERS ARISING FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING - 5TH FEBRUARY, 2026 –**

It was noted that no recorded recommendations had been made as a result of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 5th February 2026, in respect of Farnborough Leisure Centre - Leisure Operator Procurement and Union Yard, Aldershot - Disposal of Blocks C & D.

66. **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
67	3	Information relating to financial or business affairs

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

67. LEISURE OPERATOR CONTRACT AWARD –
(Cllr Sophie Porter, Deputy Leader and Healthy Communities & Active Lives Portfolio Holder)

The Cabinet considered Report No. OS2603 and the Exempt Appendices, which sought approval to award the operator contract to run the existing and proposed new leisure facilities in the Borough.

The Cabinet were appraised of the procurement process based on a 60% quality and 40% cost criteria and were provided with a summary of the outcomes.

The Cabinet RESOLVED that

- (i) the successful completion of the procurement process to secure a leisure operator for the Council's existing leisure facilities and the proposed new centre in Farnborough, be noted;
- (ii) the implications of the risks highlighted in sections 3.1 – 3.4 of the Report, be noted;
- (iii) the award of the leisure operating contract be made to the highest scoring bidder, as outlined in Exempt Appendix 1, subject to the completion of the standstill period. The contract was on the basis of an agency agreement and covered a 15 year term, (with an option to extend by five years), plus an additional interim phase whilst the new centre was under development, be agreed;
- (iv) the adjustment to budgets from 2026/27 to reflect the proposed contract requirements as detailed in Exempt Appendix 2, be approved;
- (v) a feasibility study revenue budget for the Alpine Snowsports Centre of £30,000 to be funded from the remaining balance of the 2025/26 ski centre revenue budget, as referenced in section 3.6, be approved, and;
- (vi) authority be delegated to the Executive Head of Operations, in consultation with the Corporate Manager – Legal Services, to finalise and enter into the leisure operating contract with the successful bidder, be approved.

The Meeting closed at 8.41 pm.

CLLR GARETH WILLIAMS, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

CABINET

COUNCILLOR KEITH DIBBLE
HOUSING & PLANNING PORTFOLIO HOLDER

3 MARCH 2026

KEY DECISION? YES

REPORT NO. PG2602

LOCAL PLAN TIMETABLE AND NOTICE TO COMMENCE PLAN-MAKING**SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The Local Development Scheme (LDS) containing the local plan timetable published in February 2025 is now out-of-date. This report therefore presents an updated timetable for the new local plan for Rushmoor. It also sets out a notice to commence plan-making which is required to be published four months before the Council intends to commence the 30-month plan preparation period for the new local plan.

Recommendation(s) requiring decision.

1. It is recommended that the Cabinet approves the publication of the Local Plan Timetable and delegates authority to amend or add any information to the timetable to ensure compliance with guidance and/or regulations to the Executive Head of Property and Growth in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Planning.
2. It is recommended that the Cabinet approves the publication of the Notice to Commence Plan-Making in May 2026 and delegates any changes to the wording of the notice to ensure compliance with guidance and/or regulations to the Executive Head of Property and Growth in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Planning.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to present an updated timetable for the new Rushmoor local plan to replace the one contained in the Local Development Scheme adopted in February 2025. It also presents a notice to commence plan-making which must be published four months before the Council intends to begin the formal plan preparation process. The report seeks approval from the Cabinet to publish the timetable immediately and to publish the notice to commence plan-making in May 2026.
- 1.2. This is a key decision because it will be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards within the Borough, as the new Local Plan will be a Borough-wide document.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The Rushmoor Local Plan was adopted on 21 February 2019 and it was therefore required to make an assessment on whether the Local Plan needed updating before 21 February 2024. In November 2023, the Cabinet agreed with the conclusions of this review and decided that an update of the Local Plan policies is required and that, as this is expected to affect one or more strategic policies, a full review of the plan would be necessary. The consequence of this decision is that a new Local Plan will need to be prepared for Rushmoor.
- 2.2. The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (LURA) 2023 paves the way for reforms to the plan-making process and the form and content of local plans. The Government has therefore set a deadline by which local plans prepared under the current (also now referred to as “legacy”) local plan system must be submitted for examination, which is 31st December 2026. The previous Rushmoor Local Plan took around 5 years to prepare, and the average time taken to prepare Local Plans is understood to be around 7 years. It was therefore not considered achievable to prepare a new local plan for Rushmoor under the current/legacy local plan system.
- 2.3. In February 2025 a Local Development Scheme (LDS) was approved by the Cabinet containing a timetable to prepare a new local plan under the new local plan system. At this time the Government was intending to introduce the new local plan system from Autumn 2025 and so the timetable in the adopted LDS aligns with this timing. The new system was not introduced in Autumn 2025, and the adopted LDS is therefore out of date.
- 2.4. In November 2025 the Government published a guidance document setting out what the regulations on the new local plan system would contain alongside a suite of draft guidance setting out more detail on certain parts of the process. This allows the Council to now progress with the new local plan with certainty.

3. DETAILS OF THE PROPOSAL

General

- 3.1. The new local plan system replaces the requirement to prepare and publish a Local Development Scheme (LDS) with a requirement to prepare and publish a local plan timetable. It also introduces a requirement to publish a notice setting out the Council’s intention to commence plan-making at least four months before formally commencing plan-making. Plan-making is formally commenced when the Gateway 1 self-assessment is published on the Council’s website.

Local Plan Timetable

- 3.2. Under the new local plan system, planning authorities will be expected to prepare a local plan within 30 months. Some parts of the plan preparation process have set timescales, such as a four-month notice period before the 30 months begins, six months for examination and one month for adoption. It is for the

planning authority to set out the timetable for the remaining 23 months of the 30-month process, but there are set activities which must take place within this time and in a set order. These are:

- A six-week consultation on the proposed content of the local plan and evidence
- A Gateway 2 assessment
- An eight-week consultation on the proposed plan
- A Gateway 3 assessment
- Submission of the proposed plan to the Planning Inspectorate

3.3. The proposed timetable for the new local plan for Rushmoor is set out in Appendix 1.

3.4. It should be noted that the 30-month timetable extends beyond the proposed vesting day for the new unitary authorities covering Hampshire and the Solent. This means that Rushmoor Borough Council will be able to approve the proposed local plan ahead of the eight-week consultation period, but submission for Gateway 3 and for examination and the adoption of the final local plan will need to be undertaken by the unitary council which covers Rushmoor. The timetable has also been set out so that consultation can be undertaken outside of pre-election periods.

Local Plan Notice to Commence

3.5. The draft guidance sets out how and where to publish the notice and what it should include. The notice must be published in HTML (text on a webpage) on the Council's website and must be easy to find and published alongside other information about the local plan. The notice must include:

- The name of the planning authority
- The title that will be used to refer to the plan throughout plan-making
- Specify if all or part of a minerals and waste plan will be incorporated into the local plan
- Details of the area the plan will cover – communicated as both a written description and a map showing the boundary
- The date the notice is published
- Where the local plan timetable is published and the date the 30-month plan preparation process will start

3.6. During the four-month period between publishing the notice to commence and publishing the Gateway 1 self-assessment, the Council must undertake a scoping consultation. Between 25th March and 6th April, the Council will be in a pre-election period ahead of the elections to be held on 7th May 2026. It is not advisable to undertake such consultation during the pre-election period. Therefore, it is proposed that the Council publishes the notice to commence in May so that the consultation can take place outside of the pre-election period.

Alternative Options

- 3.7. The Council could delay publishing an up-to-date Local Plan Timetable and delay publishing the Notice to Commence. However, it is a priority in the Council Delivery Plan that the preparation of a new local plan for Rushmoor is progressed and delaying the publication of an up-to-date timetable and/or Notice to Commence would delay progress on the new local plan.
- 3.8. An alternative timetable could be proposed. However, the timetable set out in Appendix 1 represents the earliest achievable commencement of plan preparation to reflect the Council's priority to progress a new local plan. It also reflects the requirements of the new plan-making system to prepare a local plan within 30 months.
- 3.9. The risks associated with these alternative options are set out below in section 4 of this report.

Consultation

- 3.10. The proposed timetable for the local plan has been shared with the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Planning and at a meeting of the Strategic Housing and Local Plan Working Group on 3rd February 2026.

4. IMPLICATIONS (of proposed course of action)

Risks

- 4.1. The risk associated with the implementation of the report recommendations is that the final regulations and guidance for the new plan-making system are not yet available. However, the current transitional arrangements for the new plan-making system require certain local planning authorities (LPAs) to publish their notice to commence plan-making by June 2026 and pass through Gateway 1 by October 2026 (although not Rushmoor). We therefore anticipate that the regulations and guidance will be in place in the near future to allow these LPAs to meet these deadlines. In the interim the Government has published a document setting out what the regulations will contain and a series of draft guidance documents so that LPAs can continue to make progress on local plans.
- 4.2. There are also risks associated with the preparation of a local plan itself and a project-level risk register will be prepared and maintained throughout the preparation of the local plan. This will include any delays to the adopted timetable.
- 4.3. There are several risks associated with not implementing the report recommendations and/or implementing the alternative options. The first is that the Council is required by law to review its local plan every five years and determine whether it needs to be updated. In November 2023, the Cabinet agreed with the conclusions of the review and decided that an update of the local plan policies is required. There is therefore an expectation that the Council

prepares a new local plan. Furthermore, there is clear emphasis from the Government on LPAs continuing plan-making despite the challenges of change brought about by the new plan-making system and local government reorganisation. The Government has set out that LPAs are encouraged to start to prepare a plan as soon as possible in the new system to get an ambitious and up-to-date plan in place.

- 4.4. Secondly, as a result of changes to the standard methodology in the revised NPPF, the Council's 'Local Housing Need' has increased from 265 dwellings per year to 599 dwellings per year, which has impacted on the Council's five-year housing land supply position and increases the risk of being subject to the presumption in favour of sustainable development. The Council will need to prepare a new local plan without delay to identify additional sites for housing delivery.
- 4.5. Finally, the Council's recently adopted Delivery Plan for 2026-28 sets out the Council's aim to develop and consult on a new Local Plan setting out location, scale and type of future development. If the timetable and notice to commence plan-making are not approved and published as set out in this report, the risk is that the Council will not be able to progress far enough with a new local plan to develop and consult on the plan before the Council is replaced by a new unitary council in April 2028. The unitary council would therefore have the final decision on the content of a new local plan.

Legal Implications

- 4.6. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires the Local Planning Authority to produce a Local Plan and keep that plan under regular review. The Plan must consider matters which may be expected to affect development in the Authority's administrative area.
- 4.7. A Local Plan which is not reviewed regularly, and updated when required, may result in uncertainty relating to conflicts between local and national planning policies. This ambiguity can lead to increased levels of challenge to planning decisions resulting in significant cost implications and reputational damage for the Local Planning Authority. The delay in progressing the delivery of a new Local Plan may increase the risks in this instance.
- 4.8. However, advancing and adopting a new Local Plan before the regulations arising from the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 are confirmed could expose the Local Planning Authority to significant and costly legal challenges, both to the Local Plan itself and to planning decisions made under its policies.
- 4.9. Balancing these risks, it is essential for the Local Planning Authority to publish a new local plan timetable. This will enable continued progress on the Local Plan while ensuring alignment with the forthcoming regulations.

Financial Implications

- 4.10. There are no direct financial implications from this report. Delivery of the local plan project will span multiple years, for which £200k has been provided within the 2026/27 budget to be approved by Council on 26 February 2026.

Resource Implications

- 4.11. Two additional posts have been created in the Planning Policy Team to support the preparation of the local plan – an additional Principal Planning Policy Officer and a Planning Policy Technical Officer. Recruitment to these posts is in progress to ensure that there are sufficient staff resources to support the local plan preparation.

Equalities Impact Implications

- 4.12. An Equalities Impact Assessment Screening has been undertaken and concludes a neutral impact as the timetable and notice do not contain policy. A full Equalities Impact Assessment will be undertaken for the new local plan.

Other

- 4.13. There are not considered to be any other implications.

5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 The Local Development Scheme (LDS) containing the local plan timetable published in February 2025 is now out-of-date. Before formally starting on a new local plan, the Council must first publish an up-to-date Local Plan Timetable and then publish a Notice to Commence Plan-Making. This report therefore presents an updated timetable for the new local plan for Rushmoor and a draft Notice to Commence Plan-Making for Cabinet's approval. The proposed timetable and publication of the notice are supported by the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Planning, Cllr Keith Dibble.
- 5.2 The recommendations will enable the Council to move towards the development of a new local plan that maximises delivery of new homes, which is a priority under the Homes for All section of the recently adopted Delivery Plan for 2026-2028.

LIST OF APPENDICES/ANNEXES:

Appendix 1 – Rushmoor Local Plan 2025-2045 Timetable

Appendix 2 – Draft Notice of Intention to Commence Rushmoor Local Plan 2025-2045

Appendix 3 – Equalities Impact Assessment Screening

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

There are no background documents.

CONTACT DETAILS:

Report Author – Alice Barella (Acting Service Manager – Planning Policy) / alice.barella@rushmoor.gov.uk / 01252 398142

Head of Service – Tim Mills (Executive Head of Property and Growth) / tim.mills@rushmoor.gov.uk / 01252 398542

Appendix 1 - Rushmoor Local Plan 2025-2045 Timetable

Preparation stage	When we expect to reach it
Publication of notice to commence plan-making	May 2026
Early engagement/scoping consultation	June-July 2026
Gateway 1 (start of 30-month process)	September 2026
Consultation on proposed content and evidence (6 weeks)	February – March 2027
Gateway 2	August – September 2027
Consultation on proposed plan (8 weeks)	January – March 2028
Gateway 3	June – July 2028
Examination	August 2028 – January 2029
Adoption	February 2029

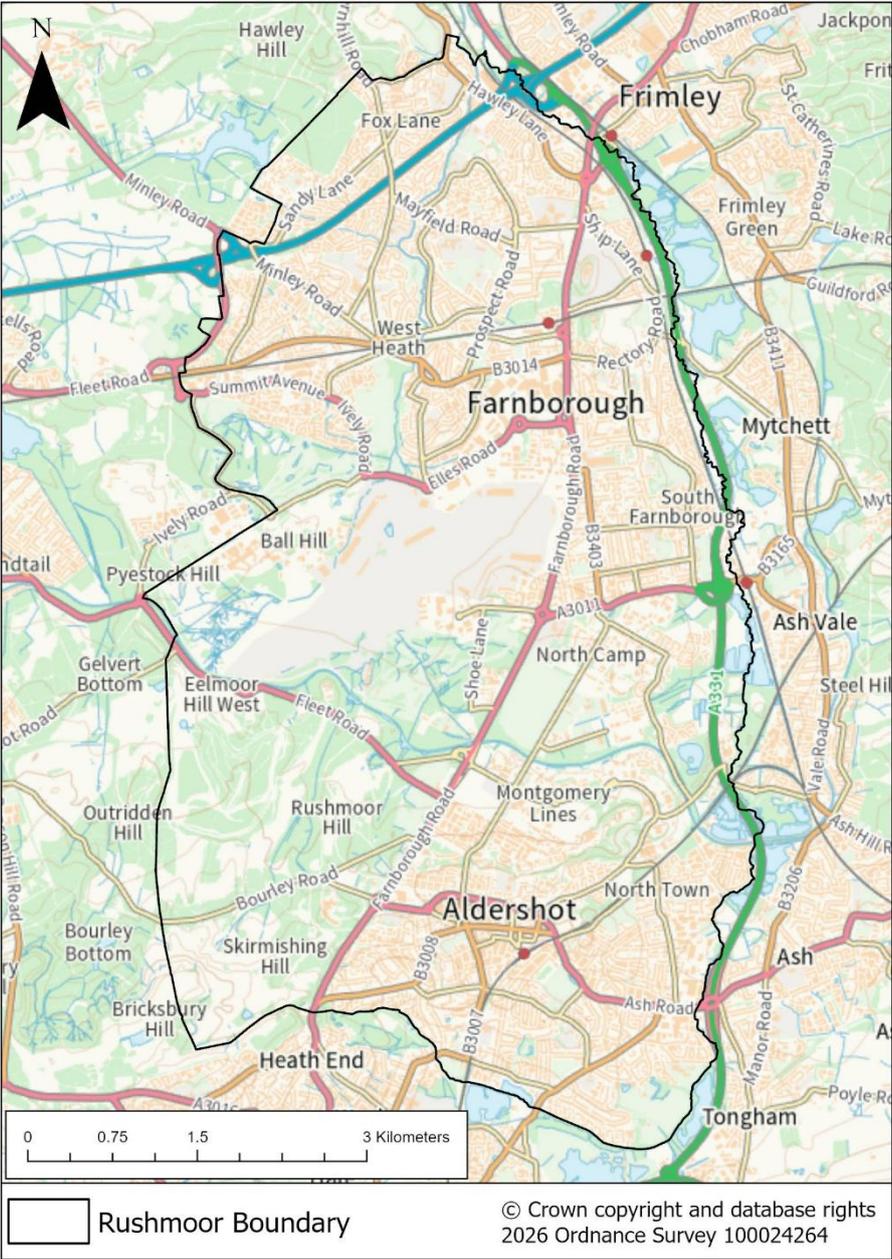
Appendix 2 - Draft Notice to Commence Rushmoor Borough (Aldershot & Farnborough) Local Plan 2025-2045

Rushmoor Borough Council is giving notice of its intention to prepare the Rushmoor Borough (Aldershot & Farnborough) Local Plan 2025-2045.

This notice was published on XX May 2026.

The local plan timetable sets out when we expect to meet each stage of the plan preparation process. We expect to pass through Gateway 1 and begin the 30-month plan preparation process in September 2026.

The Rushmoor Local Plan 2025-2045 will cover the administrative area of Rushmoor Borough. The boundary is shown on the map below.



Appendix 3 – Equalities Impact Assessment Screening

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	Local Plan Timetable and Notice to Commence Plan-Making
Reference number (if applicable)	PG2602
Service Area	Planning Policy (Property & Growth)
Date screening completed	26 th January 2026
Screening author name	Alice Barella
Policy Team sign off	Martin Iyawe/Louise Ansell
Authorising Director/Head of Service name	Tim Mills

1. Please provide a summary of the proposal

In order to formally commence work on a new local plan for Rushmoor, the Council is required to first publish an up-to-date timetable and then publish a notice of the Council's intention to begin plan-making. These are procedural processes to ensure that the public is aware of the preparation of the local plan.

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	No
Trade unions	No
Other public sector Organisations	Yes
Others	Please specify: anyone who lives, works in or visits Rushmoor

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

There will be no impact on staff.

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

Consultation will be undertaken as part of the preparation of the local plan. A Communications & Engagement Strategy will be prepared and will set out what consultation and engagement will be undertaken during the formal plan preparation period.

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>
No	Yes	N/A	No	<p>The Local Plan Timetable and Notice to Commence do not set out planning policy. The new local plan will progress through project-specific evidence preparation, consultation and approval processes, including an Equalities Impact Assessment.</p> <p>On this basis, groups with specific, protected characteristics are not considered to be affected by the recommendation to approve and publish the Local Plan Timetable and Notice to Commence.</p>

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>
No	Yes	N/A	No	<p>The Local Plan Timetable and Notice to Commence do not set out planning policy. The new local plan will progress through project-specific evidence preparation, consultation and approval processes, including an Equalities Impact Assessment.</p> <p>On this basis, groups with specific, protected characteristics are not considered to be affected by the recommendation to approve and publish the Local Plan Timetable and Notice to Commence.</p>

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>
No	Yes	N/A	No	<p>The Local Plan Timetable and Notice to Commence do not set out planning policy. The new local plan will progress through project-specific evidence preparation, consultation and approval processes, including an Equalities Impact Assessment.</p> <p>On this basis, groups with specific, protected characteristics are not considered to be affected by</p>

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>
				the recommendation to approve and publish the Local Plan Timetable and Notice to Commence.

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>
No	Yes	N/A	No	<p>The Local Plan Timetable and Notice to Commence do not set out planning policy. The new local plan will progress through project-specific evidence preparation, consultation and approval processes, including an Equalities Impact Assessment.</p> <p>On this basis, groups with specific, protected characteristics are not considered to be affected by the recommendation to approve and publish the Local Plan Timetable and Notice to Commence.</p>

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>
No	Yes	N/A	No	<p>The Local Plan Timetable and Notice to Commence do not set out planning policy. The new local plan will progress through project-specific evidence preparation, consultation and approval processes, including an Equalities Impact Assessment.</p> <p>On this basis, groups with specific, protected characteristics are not considered to be affected by the recommendation to approve and publish the Local Plan Timetable and Notice to Commence.</p>

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>
No	Yes	N/A	No	The Local Plan Timetable and Notice to Commence do not set out planning policy. The new local plan will progress through project-specific evidence

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>
				preparation, consultation and approval processes, including an Equalities Impact Assessment. On this basis, groups with specific, protected characteristics are not considered to be affected by the recommendation to approve and publish the Local Plan Timetable and Notice to Commence.

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>
No	Yes	N/A	No	The Local Plan Timetable and Notice to Commence do not set out planning policy. The new local plan will progress through project-specific evidence preparation, consultation and approval processes, including an Equalities Impact Assessment. On this basis, groups with specific, protected characteristics are not considered to be affected by the recommendation to approve and publish the Local Plan Timetable and Notice to Commence.

Protected characteristic - Sex

(Under the Equality Act 2010 and following the 2025 Supreme Court ruling on 15 April 2025, 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>
No	Yes	N/A	No	The Local Plan Timetable and Notice to Commence do not set out planning policy. The new local plan will progress through project-specific evidence preparation, consultation and approval processes, including an Equalities Impact Assessment. On this basis, groups with specific, protected characteristics are not considered to be affected by the recommendation to approve and publish the Local Plan Timetable and Notice to Commence.

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>
No	Yes	N/A	No	<p>The Local Plan Timetable and Notice to Commence do not set out planning policy. The new local plan will progress through project-specific evidence preparation, consultation and approval processes, including an Equalities Impact Assessment.</p> <p>On this basis, groups with specific, protected characteristics are not considered to be affected by the recommendation to approve and publish the Local Plan Timetable and Notice to Commence.</p>

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>
No	Yes	N/A	No	<p>The Local Plan Timetable and Notice to Commence do not set out planning policy. The new local plan will progress through project-specific evidence preparation, consultation and approval processes, including an Equalities Impact Assessment.</p> <p>On this basis, groups with specific, protected characteristics are not considered to be affected by the recommendation to approve and publish the Local Plan Timetable and Notice to Commence.</p>

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:	Yes
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 GAYNOR AUSTIN
FINANCE & RESOURCES
PORTFOLIO HOLDER**

3 MARCH 2026

KEY DECISION: NO

REPORT NO. PEO2603

**NEW ENGAGEMENT OF AGENCY WORKERS AND CONSULTANTS POLICY
AND PROCEDURE**

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

This report seeks Cabinet's approval for the implementation of the new Engagement of Agency Workers and Consultants Policy and Procedure.

This policy and procedure includes process stage notifications, compliance and authorisation requirements for the engagement of agency workers and consultants working at the Council.

It is recommended that Cabinet approve the proposed Engagement of Agency Workers and Consultants Policy and Procedure as set out at Appendix 1 of the report.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Council's use of agency workers and external consultants plays an important role in maintaining service delivery, providing access to specialist expertise, and supporting workforce flexibility. However, to ensure these engagements are consistent, transparent and compliant with organisational and legislative requirements, a formal policy and procedure is required.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Southern Internal Audit Partnership (SIAP) conducted a review of the use of agency staff and produced an audit report which included the observation that there were no formal policies or procedures in place for governing the engagement or use of agency staff.
- 2.2 In response to the audit a policy and procedure for engaging a temporary worker (agency and consultants) has been created and this management action has been agreed by SIAP as an acceptable response to the audit findings.

3. POLICY PURPOSE

- 3.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that managers have clear procedures to follow and that they understand their responsibilities in the process so that the Council meets the legislative requirements and compliance together with organisational needs.
- 3.2 This policy also seeks value for money by ensuring that the use of agency workers and consultants is appropriate, time limited and monitored.

4. ENGAGEMENT OF AGENCY WORKERS AND CONSULTANTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

- 4.1 This new policy and procedure outlines the roles and responsibilities for the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), Managers, Finance, the People Team, IT Services, Procurement and Legal Services (where applicable).
- 4.2 A digital system (with notification alerts) will be implemented to include the policy process workflows for authorisation for the stages required before the temporary worker starts at the Council. These stages include the following:
- SLT must authorise the request and budget spend for the engagement of an agency worker or consultant.
 - Finance will be notified of the approved budget spend to be included in the budget forecasts and for processing invoices.
 - IT Services are notified so that can provide relevant access to equipment and system applications
 - The People Team are notified as they need to:
 - Keep a centralised record of engagements as a summary of each hire to ensure all processes have been completed
 - Raise individual files for each hire to save all documentation and information as and when it may be required
 - Complete Right to Work checks
 - Complete and send a Status Determination Statement for Off Payroll (IR35) confirming who is responsible for Tax and National Insurance payments
 - Ensure records are kept within the retention guidelines
 - Add new starters to the Learning Management System (LMS) and assign all mandatory learning required
 - Ongoing monitoring of mandatory training and follow up where required
 - Procurement are notified so that they can ensure the necessary procurement processes have been followed.
 - Legal are notified so that they can check contracts or prepare a contract where necessary.

- 4.3 All current and future Hiring Managers will receive mandatory training and guidance regarding this new policy and procedure.

Alternative Options

- 4.4 The introduction of this formal policy and procedure is in response to the SIAP audit observation and agreed management action. Although we could take a view to implement a less robust option that is not considered appropriate given the audit and the views of the Audit and Governance committee.

Consultation

- 4.5 This new policy and procedure has been shared with SLT and Unison for comment. Any response received from Unison will be reported to the Cabinet meeting.

5 IMPLICATIONS

Risks

- 5.1 The Council could choose to not approve the Engagement of Agency Workers and Consultants Policy and Procedure but this would present a risk of not complying with the management action which has been agreed by SIAP.

Legal implications

- 5.2 Should the Council not implement the Engagement of Agency Workers and Consultants Policy and Procedure, this would present the risk of the Council not complying with its legal requirements including those relating to having the right to work, taxation and application of the correct worker status, which also translate into adverse financial and reputational risk for the Council.

Financial Implications

- 5.3 There are no direct budgetary implications to implement this policy. The strengthened governance does improve the financial and legal governance through compliance and oversight that minimises unbudgeted costs that can result from getting these processes wrong.

Resource Implications

- 5.4 There are no resource implications associated with this policy and procedure.

Equalities Impact Implications

- 5.5 An equality impact check found that this policy and procedures would have a positive or neutral impact on people with protected characteristics. Therefore, a full assessment is not required.

Other

5.6 There are no other implications associated with this policy.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The implementation of the new Engagement of Agency Workers and Consultants Policy and Procedure will provide a consistent process for hiring managers to follow which will strengthen governance, accountability and meet legal and financial obligations.

Appendices

- 1 Engagement of Agency Workers and Consultants Policy and Procedure
- 2 Equality Impact Assessment Screening Tool

Contact Details:

Report author: Belinda Tam – Corporate Manager – People
Belinda.tam@rushmoor.gov.uk
01252 398427

Head of Service: Karen Edwards – Executive Director
Karen.edwards@rushmoor.gov.uk
01252 398800

Legal Implications: Abi Khan – Deputy Head of Legal Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer
Abi.khan@rushmoor.gov.uk
01252 398151

Financial Implications: Peter Vickers - Executive Head of Finance & Section 151 Officer
Peter.vickers@rushmoor.gov.uk
01252 398099

Engagement of Agency Workers and Consultants Policy and Procedure

January 2026

Table of Contents

Engaging Agency Workers and Consultants Policy and Procedure	7
1 Introduction	7
2 Purpose and Objectives	7
3 Definitions	7
4 Roles and Responsibilities	8
5 Policy workflow	11
6 Legal implications	11
7 Financial Implications	12
Impact assessment (IA) record	13
Appendix i	14

Engaging Agency Workers and Consultants Policy and Procedure

1 Introduction

It is recognised that there may be occasions where the engagement of an Agency Worker or Consultant (**referred to as external resource in this policy**) may be required to support tasks or projects within Rushmoor Borough Council (RBC).

Taking the step of engaging an external resource involves careful consideration as to the aim of the engagement, the length of engagement, the cost of this service, whether there are more efficient resource opportunities and the budget to fulfill an engagement of this nature.

External resources will only be engaged where it has been established that the required skills, capacity, or expertise are not available within the existing workforce. Before pursuing the use of an Agency Worker or Consultant, managers must explore all internal resourcing options, including offering additional hours to part-time employees, considering secondment opportunities, reviewing the potential for fixed-term contracts, and assessing whether the work could support an apprenticeship. Only when these avenues have been fully considered and found unsuitable or unavailable should the engagement of external resource be progressed.

2 Purpose and Objectives

The aim of this policy is to ensure that managers have clear procedures to follow and that they understand their responsibilities in the process so RBC meet legislative requirements and compliance as well as organisational needs.

When a Service requires the assistance of an external resource there are processes the manager and other teams in the organisation need to follow to reduce any potential risks. It is recognised that an external resource may be required urgently. Examples include long-term sickness absence, short-term specialist support or deadlines for tasks that are at risk due to other unscheduled factors. There could be cost implications for the organisation for such events as these, so the process to engage an external resource must be timely. For this reason, it is vital that communication and processes are clear between relevant services to assist with onboarding the external resource.

3 Definitions

The table below details the different types of external resource.

External resource	Description
-------------------	-------------

Agency	An Agency is an organisation that facilitates the hiring process by sourcing, screening and presenting qualified candidates.
Consultant	<p>A consultant is a person who provides professional or expert advice in a particular field to either an organisation or individual. Despite the broad definition that can be subsumed under the term consultant, there are in essence three characteristics that distinguish a consultant from other professions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A consultant provides expertise that a client lacks or support that a client is unable to fulfill. In return for their professional services, the consultant charges a fee. 2. A consultant operates independently from the client, implying that, from the respective consultant, there is no conflict of interest between the client's issue and the services. 3. A consultant operates in a professional manner, which ranges from having the right qualifications to ensuring high quality service delivery and a solid internal operation. <p>They may work within the scope of IR35 or outside scope. It is crucial the determination of who is responsible for paying HMRC tax and NI, the consultant or organisation. The completion of the HMRC CEST Tool is imperative.</p>
Contractor (included as there can sometimes be confusion with the term contractor and consultant)	A contractor in the UK is typically a self-employed professional who works through their own limited company, providing specialised services to clients on a project or temporary basis. Understanding who is a contractor involves recognising they handle their own tax affairs, National Insurance contributions, and must comply with IR35 legislation while managing company registration and accounting. They may also have a team of workers who may substitute others working on a project within an organisation.

4 Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 The manager is responsible for ensuring the processes in this policy and procedure are followed and understand the risks associated with non-compliance. These risks include financial, reputation and failure to meet government legal requirements.

4.2 Prior to sourcing any external resource, the manager must have received authorisation from the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), by completing and submitting an [Approval to Recruit form](#), for the budget spend.

4.3 Appendix i shows a workflow for managers to follow which includes links to processes to further assist with ensuring compliance. There is a link within the workflow for a manager to complete a form that will automatically notify and provide each relevant service lead with the information they require to enable them to authorise each stage of the process:

- **Finance** are notified of the approved budget spend to be included in the budget forecasts and can process invoices when they are submitted. Budget codes and purchase order numbers would have already been allocated. A purchase order must be raised for the value of the spend.
- **IT Services** are notified so they can provide relevant access to equipment and system applications.
- **People Team** are notified as they need to:
 - keep a centralised record of engagements as a summary of each hire to ensure all processes have been completed
 - raise individual files for each hire to save all documentation and information as and when it may be required.
 - complete Right to Work checks for the workers
 - complete and send a Status Determination Statement for Off Payroll (IR35) confirming who is responsible for Tax and National Insurance payments
 - ensure records are kept within retention guidelines.
 - add new starters to the Learning Management System (LMS) and assign all mandatory learning required
 - Ongoing monitoring of mandatory training and follow up where required
- **Procurement** are notified so they can ensure necessary procurement processes have been followed as detailed in [Contract Standing Orders document](#) and record details accordingly to ensure procurement regulations are followed.
- **Legal** will check contracts or prepare a contract where necessary. All contracts should include a clause stating that the final invoice will not be paid until all RBC equipment has been safely returned.

4.4 In addition to the processes in the workflow, the manager is also responsible for the following:

- a) Giving full consideration of what the requirements of the external resource are, including the time required to complete the tasks/projects.
- b) Having considered point a) above, reflect and review as to whether this can be achieved in any other way which may be more efficient and/or effective.
- c) Consider the qualifications, specialisms, knowledge and experience needed to fulfill what has been determined in point a) above.

- d) When shortlisting and interviewing candidates for the work required, ensure suitable questions are asked to confirm that any candidate hired has the abilities to deliver what has been determined in point a) above.
- e) Managers have a duty of care to all staff whether they are employed by RBC or through an external resource, there should be no difference.
- f) Invest time when an external resource starts with RBC from day one. Clearly define the task/projects to be completed and the timescale for completion. Make sure they have all the tools they need and know where to seek assistance to help them complete their tasks.
- g) Meet with the external resource on day two to check if they need any assistance and confirm they have all they require to continue with the work. It is important to ask and address any problems they may have encountered so far. Notes of the meeting should be made including actions discussed, who is responsible for moving the actions forward and by when. The notes can be bullet points or more comprehensive, but they should be shared with the external resource after this and each meeting moving forward.
- h) Meet with the external resource again at the end of week one. This is to check if they have all they require and address any possible problems they may have encountered.
- i) Regular meetings should be made after week one, which should ideally be bi-weekly for approximately six weeks and thereafter, if the manager is satisfied with the work delivered to date and progress made to ensure deadlines are or will be met, meetings could be monthly. Monthly meetings should be the minimum a manager has with the external resource but the decision on whether it should be more frequent must be made by the manager to ensure that work is satisfactorily completed.
- j) The contract may be charged by the hour or by the day, either way it is the manager's responsibility to carefully check and sign off timesheets in a timely manner. Ensure hours do not exceed those agreed in the contract. **Timesheets should accompany all invoices produced.**
- k) Managers should update their Line Manager or Head of Service on the progress of the work that an external resource is delivering. Any concerns should be raised as soon as they are identified as any delay could be costly and deadlines may be at risk.
- l) Extensions to any contract should be avoided where possible but if required then this should be considered a minimum of 6 weeks prior to the end date of the contract. Managers must follow the workflow by firstly completing the [Approval to Recruit form](#) to obtain SLT approval then continuing with the workflow as instructed.
- m) If the contract ends as expected then all services in point 4.4 must be notified and the [Leavers form](#) completed.

- n) It is the manager's responsibility to ensure that all RBC equipment is returned on the last day of the contract. **The final invoice from the external resource will not be paid until all items are returned in good order.**

5 Policy workflow

5.1 The policy workflow is available on the People Portal, and a copy is provided at **Appendix i**. This workflow must be followed for all engagements of an external resource as detailed in this policy. The process must also be followed when extending external resource contracts and/or engagement periods.

5.2 It is important to note that a manager completing the workflow will be notifying the services detailed in points 4.4 above. However, the manager engaging the external resource should still communicate with services to ensure all is on track for the proposed start date and that the services have all the necessary information to allow them to meet the date. Delays in appointment could be costly so communication remains important and it is the manager's responsibility to commence these conversations then follow through with any further actions.

6 Legal implications

6.1 [HMRC Off Payroll Working](#) (IR35) - Payment of HMRC tax and National Insurance needs to be paid for external workers the same as for employees. Who is responsible for paying it needs to be clearly defined in contracts and the issue of [Statement of Determination](#) where applicable. Guidance on Off Payroll Working is detailed in links on the Managers Workflow (see **Appendix i** and is available on the People Portal). It is important that RBC complies with HMRC instructions as HMRC can complete spot checks and deliver hefty fines if RBC is found to not be adhering to this legislation. The People Team will issue a Statement of Determination but only once the manager has completed the [HMRC CEST tool](#).

6.2 [Right to Work](#) - The right to work in the UK is a legal requirement for anyone seeking employment. The People Team must follow checks for externally sourced workers the same as if they were going to be directly employed by RBC.

6.3 [Contract Standing Orders](#) (CSO)- The Local Government Act 1972 section 135 requires Public Bodies to have standing orders for how they enter into contracts. These Contract Standing Orders ("Rules"), which form part of Rushmoor Borough Council's Constitution, set out how the Council will deliver against this obligation. At section 1.6 of Rushmoor BC CSO, roles and responsibilities are detailed within the organization. At section 1.6.2 the responsibilities for the contracting officers is

listed. It is important that managers understand their responsibilities and approach Procurement for guidance where necessary.

6.4 Public Sector Compliance - Public sector compliance involves ensuring that government organisations follow established laws and regulations that govern their operations. This compliance is crucial for maintaining public trust, protecting public resources, and avoiding legal and financial penalties. It encompasses a wide range of requirements, including financial regulations, data protection laws, environmental regulations, and health and safety standards.

6.5 [Agency Workers Regulations 2010](#) - Agency Workers are entitled from day one to [workers employment rights](#) and should be treated equally to a comparable worker with access to facilities and have the ability to view any job advertisements. After 12 weeks of continuous engagement with an organisation they are entitled to more workers' employment rights. These include equal pay and annual leave. It is important that managers consult with the People Team when the Agency Workers Regulation (AWR) is presented for completion as failure to comply can lead to equal treatment breaches and possible tribunal claims, financial penalties, and reputational harm.

7 Financial Implications

7.1 Agency workers and Consultants can be an expensive resource to use albeit it is recognised that there are situations which warrant such an appointment.

7.2 It is crucial that managers are efficient with the use of these resources. Managers need to monitor the work closely to ensure the work is completed to the standard RBC requires and within the timescales provided. Section 4.5 outlines expectations of what a manager should prepare to do when they have external resource, and they should never underestimate how much of their time they should invest.

7.3 Requests for the extension of the external resource must include clear reasons as to why the original timescales and budget were not sufficient and again full consideration should be given as to whether there are alternative options.

Impact assessment (IA) record

[Please refer to the [Governance navigator](#) for further information on IAs]

Data Privacy IA required?	(Yes/No)
Equalities IA required?	(Yes/No)
Climate Change IA required?	(Yes/No)
Document control information	
Title	Engagement of Agency Workers and Consultants
Topic/Service	People Team
Version	1.0
Next review date	
Last reviewed by	Belinda Tam
Last reviewed date	
Approving authority	Cabinet
Approval date	

Council Offices,
Farnborough Road,
Farnborough,
Hants, GU14 7JU

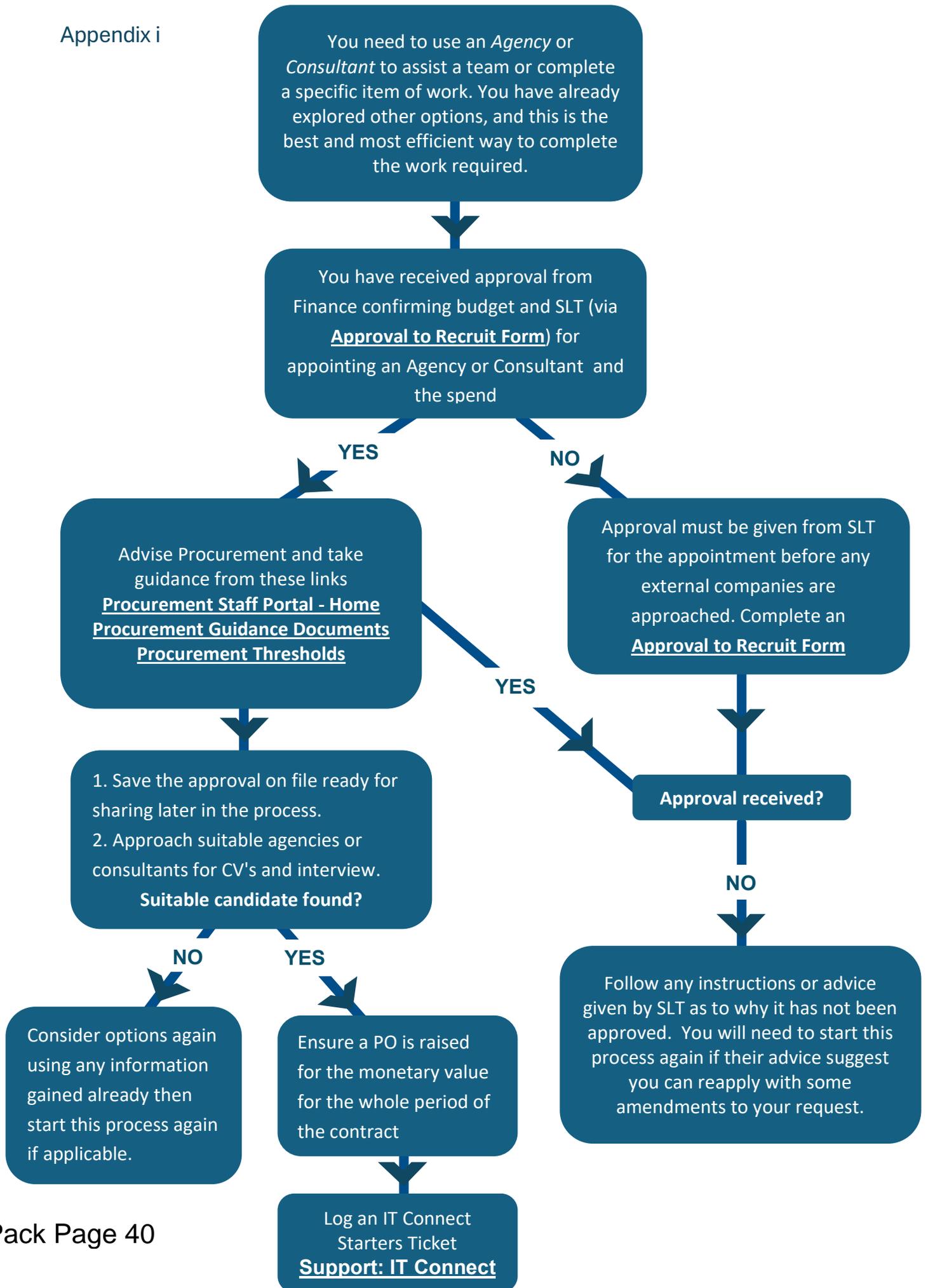
www.rushmoor.gov.uk

01252 398 326

Optional email

 @rushmoorcouncil

 Rushmoor Borough Council



You must now check to see if the successful candidate is inside or outside IR35 for tax and NI payments. Go to [IR35 Checking Process](#) for guidance.
Ensure you complete the HMRC CEST for IR35 determination if applicable
[Check employment status for tax - GOV.UK](#)

Complete this Agency/Consultant Appointment Form
which will notify the People Team, ICT, Finance and Legal (if appropriate) of the appointment for them to prepare and complete their processes.
Is the successful candidate from an Agency or a Consultant?

Consultant

Advise Legal of the appointment and liaise with them so they can either prepare a contract or review contract supplied

Completion of the Agency/Consultant Appointment form will automatically advise the People Team of the appointment and enable them to complete their processes.
No laptop or ICT access will be given until the People Team have completed their checks

Agency

Completion of the Agency/Consultant Appointment form will automatically advise the People Team of the appointment and enable them to complete their processes.
No laptop or ICT access will be given until the People Team have completed their checks

Equality Impact Assessment: Screening Tool

Name of Project	Engaging Agency Workers and Consultants
Reference number (if applicable)	
Service Area	People Team
Date screening completed	21/01/26
Screening author name	Belinda Tam
Policy Team sign off	Martin Iyawe
Authorising Director/Head of Service name	Karen Edwards

1. Please provide a summary of the proposal

What are the aims / objectives of this proposal?

The aim of this proposal is to introduce a clear, consistent and compliant policy and procedure for the engagement of agency workers and consultants across the Council. The policy is intended to strengthen governance and oversight when external resources are required, ensuring that decisions are properly authorised, risks are managed, and legal and financial obligations are met.

The objectives are to provide recruiting managers with a clear workflow to follow when engaging external resources, improve coordination between key services (People, Finance, Procurement, IT and Legal), and ensure compliance with relevant legislation including IR35, Right to Work requirements, Agency Workers Regulations and Contract Standing Orders.

The policy also seeks to promote transparency, accountability and value for money by ensuring that the use of agency workers and consultants is appropriate, time limited and monitored, while supporting managers to engage external expertise efficiently where operational needs require it.

Will this deliver any savings?

There are no direct savings identified with this apart from clear, and where possible, automated processes which should make the process more efficient for management and services.

What benefits or change will we see from this proposal?

See above response.

Which key groups of people or areas of the borough are involved?

This is an internal RBC process and procedure and will not have a direct effect on people or areas of the borough.

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

Group of people	Impacted?
Residents	No
Businesses	No
Visitors to Rushmoor	No
Voluntary or community groups	No
Council staff	Yes
Trade unions	No
Other public sector Organisations	No
Others	Please specify: Yes: Agency workers and consultants engaged by the Council

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

Please outline in brief:

Who will be impacted? For example, which services, teams, or buildings?

This impacts recruiting managers who are seeking assistance from an agency or consultancy. As a consequence of this the following services should receive clear information when an agency worker or consultant is appointed:

- Finance
- Procurement
- IT
- People Team
- Legal

How many staff members?

There is no direct impact to any staff member, just clear information from the recruiting manager at the point an agency or consultant is offered the engagement.

What will the impact be? (e.g., changes to structure, staffing levels, responsibilities, relocation, or new working methods)

The new process will enable increased compliance and responsibility when engaging agency workers and consultants.

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

There is no formal engagement with anyone. We have been working with relevant services noted above to ensure processes proposed meet their requirements.

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.		This policy sets out internal processes for managers when engaging agency workers or consultants and does not affect access to work, pay, terms or conditions based on age

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 does not change reasonable adjustments, access needs or support arrangements and applies equally to all individuals.

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 is procedural only and does not affect dignity at work, access to roles or treatment based on gender identity.

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.		There is no impact on employment terms or treatment related to marriage or civil partnership status.

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.		The policy does not alter maternity rights, leave arrangements or protections and has no disproportionate 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 applies consistently to all individuals and does not affect recruitment, treatment or access based on race or ethnicity.

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.		There is no impact on religious observance, belief, or non-belief as the policy only relates to internal approval and compliance processes.

Protected characteristic - Sex

(Under the Equality Act 2010 and following the 2025 Supreme Court ruling on 15 April 2025, 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 does not affect pay, terms, access to work or treatment based on sex.

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 does not affect access to work or treatment related to sexual orientation.

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 or No	Yes or No	Choose an item.	Yes or No	Neutral: No 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

CABINET

COUNCILLOR SOPHIE PORTER
HEALTHY COMMUNITIES & ACTIVE LIVES
PORTFOLIO HOLDER

03 MARCH 2026

KEY DECISION? YES

REPORT NO. REG2601

FARNBOROUGH LEISURE CENTRE – CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT AWARD**SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS:**

This report provides an update on the Farnborough Leisure Centre Project and seeks approval to enter into a Development Management Agreement for RIBA stage 5 (Construction and handover) onwards for the delivery of the new leisure centre.

A. It is **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet:

- 1) Notes the progress with the design of the leisure centre and changes made as a result of feedback during the leisure operator procurement process.
- 2) Notes the progress of the planning submission for the new Farnborough Leisure Centre.
- 3) Subject to planning permission being granted and review of the contractors proposals that authority be delegated to the Executive Director, in consultation with the Executive Head of Finance (S151 officer), the Interim Monitoring Officer and Corporate Manager Legal Services and Portfolio Holder for Healthy Communities & Active Lives, to enter in a Development Management Agreement with Alliance Leisure Services Ltd as set out in section 6.3 of this report, for the delivery of a new leisure centre and surface car park in Farnborough town centre.
- 4) Confirm that revenue capacity funding received from MHCLG continue to be utilised against revenue costs associated with the project.
- 5) Delegates authority to the Executive Head of Finance (S151 officer) to update the Capital Strategy and Treasury Management Strategy in line with the approval of capital budget and funding as above.
- 6) Authorises the use of the Council's powers to appropriate the Queensmead Car Park, Farnborough and the site of the previous Pinehurst Car Park, as set out in the plan at Appendix K Farnborough for planning purposes under section 122 of the Local Government Act 1972.

- 7) Authorises the use of Section 203 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 to remove any legal constraints to development and delegates authority to the Interim Monitoring Officer and Corporate Manager Legal Services and Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Executive Head of Property and Growth to agree any compensation payable to beneficiaries of rights under section 204 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 following due diligence of their claim.
- 8) Notes the decision of the Interim Corporate Manager Legal Services as to protective measures and authorises her, in consultation with the Executive Head of Finance (Section 151 Officer) to negotiate the terms of the protective measures to not exceed £100,000. Cabinet should note the £100,000 does not appear in projected costs below as the outcome of the negotiations is not yet known.

B. That the **COUNCIL BE RECOMMENDED** to delegate authority to the Executive Head of Finance (S151 officer) to put in place a Capital Budget up to £27.5m for the project to be funded by external funding (Levelling Up Programme), S106 funds and borrowing as set out in section 4.2 of this report.

1. BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY OF DECISIONS

- 1.1. In February 2025, Cabinet (REG2501) approved a revised approach for the delivery of a Leisure Centre in Farnborough town centre along with the procurement approach to appoint an operator to run the existing leisure facilities within the borough and the proposed new leisure centre.
- 1.2. The Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) gave full approval in April 2025 for the Council to deliver the revised scheme utilising the remaining £18.5m Levelling Up grant (now known as the Local Regeneration Fund). At that time the Cabinet noted that the scheme would also require some borrowing that would be funded by operator income payments.
- 1.3. The proposed facility includes two swimming pools (a 25m 6-lane main pool, 10m x 8m learner pool with moveable floor), 100+ station fitness suite including provision of specialist equipment for people who are less mobile or active, 2 x studios plus a dedicated spin studio, a café and active play for children. A new surface car park and play park will also be delivered as part of the scheme. Plans for the scheme are included in the RIBA 3 report attached at Exempt Appendix B.
- 1.4. The new Farnborough Leisure Centre replaces the previous facility demolished in 2022 and will play a significant role in reducing health inequalities - both physical and mental - and increasing levels of physical activity in the Borough. These are key priorities identified in the Council Delivery Plan 2026-27.

1.5. This report

- Provides the latest position with the design and development of the Leisure Centre and the work underway to reduce and mitigate risk.
- Sets out the forecast financial profile of the project, affordability and impact on the Council's medium term financial position.
- Requests delegated authority to enter in the necessary agreements to enable the construction of the Leisure Centre subject to the total contract cost being less than £25.3m inclusive of 5% contingency
- Requests budget for client-side costs of £2.2m as set out in Exempt Appendix C.
- Taking into consideration the current forecast budget, financial sensitivity modelling and outstanding provisional sums, recommends the Council delegate authority to the Executive Head of Finance (S151 officer) to put in place a total capital budget not exceeding £27.5m on completion of the contract. The final budget to be confirmed in the first budget monitoring period after contract commencement.

2. NEW LEISURE CENTRE DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

Background to the project for a new leisure centre in Farnborough

- 2.1. The initial business case and rationale for a new leisure centre for Farnborough was developed to support the Council's levelling up bid (now known as the Local Regeneration Fund) for a Leisure and Cultural Hub. In October 2023 (report REG2307) the Cabinet agreed to commence work on that project.
- 2.2. In February 2024 (report REG2402) it was agreed that the RIBA 3 designs (Pre-planning) should be shared with the public and at the same time Cabinet agreed that work be undertaken to provide cost certainty on the project. A market tested cost plan was commissioned to ensure the estimated project costs were clear before the decision to move to the next stage of delivery. That work, alongside work by the Councils cost consultant, confirmed that costs has increased significantly, and the Leisure and Cultural Hub project as designed would be completely unaffordable given the Councils financial position at the time.
- 2.3. The Council's project team then engaged with a team of specialist consultants, known as Delivery Associates, provided by Government as part of the levelling up delivery programme to look at how the project could be adjusted to achieve the most important outcomes for local people whilst being affordable for the Council.
- 2.4. In February 2025 (REG2501) the Cabinet considered the outcome of the work undertaken with the support of the Delivery Associates. The report proposed a revised project, which would deliver a Leisure Centre in Farnborough, within the time parameters of the Levelling Up Fund (now known as the Local Regeneration Fund) and would be affordable for the Council given the Council's wider funding pressures. The community need and rationale for a replacement leisure centre facility remained unchanged from the bid but the cultural elements of the scheme were removed and facilities mix scaled back to ensure affordability

but taking into account the key resident priorities of replacement swimming pools and fitness.

- 2.5. At the same time the location of the new facility was changed to the Queensmead car park site which has advantages of being closer to the town and public transport and provides future flexibility for the regeneration of the wider Civic Quarter. The wider Civic Quarter is now subject to a strategic review of the Civic Quarter Masterplan and the outcomes of this review will come forward later this year.
- 2.6. In Feb 2025 (REG2501) the Cabinet agreed work would continue on the revised scheme and planning be submitted on completion of RIBA stage 3 (detailed design). In July 2025 (REG2503) Cabinet approved the budget to take the project to the end of RIBA Stage 4 (technical design) which would enable a final estimated cost to be confirmed before the decision to move to the construction phase was agreed. That work is now complete and the design update set out in section 3 below. The planning application submitted in October is due to be considered in March.
- 2.7. Subject to planning permission being approved the final key decisions for the Council to make in order to progress to construction of the leisure centre relate to the financial viability and affordability of the project and the decision to enter into contract.
- 2.8. Affordability of the scheme and the delivery of future leisure services offered by the Council is intrinsically linked to the outcome of the leisure operator procurement and the Council's financial position. Now that the operator procurement has been concluded (Report OS2603) the full financial implications of the new Leisure Centre have been modelled and are set out in section 5 of this report and Exempt Appendix A.

3. DESIGN UPDATE

- 3.1. The detailed design phase (RIBA stage 3) was completed in October 2025, and the stage 3 report can be found at Exempt Appendix B to this report. The purpose of the Stage 3 Report is to provide a developed and tested design so that the project can be developed into the technical detail in RIBA stage 4 in readiness for the delivery stages.
- 3.2. Following completion of RIBA 3 and pre planning public consultation, the planning application for the scheme (25/00583/FULP) was submitted on the 27th October 2025. The consultation period ended on the 18th November 2025 and the application is due to be determined by Development Management Committee during March.
- 3.3. Throughout the process of procuring an operator for the new leisure centre, feedback has been requested from bidders on the proposed designs. As a result, a number of changes have been made, including a reduction in dry change provision to facilitate the addition of a 100sqm second studio / multiuse space on the first floor of the building.

- 3.4. As set out in the July cabinet report (REG2053), consultation was undertaken with the BMX and skate community to seek their views on the proposed skate park provision. As a result of this consultation, it became clear that the area available was not sufficient and would not be suitable for a replacement provision. A decision has therefore been made that the reprovision of the skatepark will be taken forward as part of the wider Civic Quarter development.
- 3.5. As a result of the above, a new children's play area, reflecting the aviation heritage of Farnborough, has now been incorporated into the scheme, funded by S106 contributions.
- 3.6. The July cabinet report indicated that following the preliminary market engagement sessions with operators, all operators indicated that they would welcome additional spaces over and above those that can be provided via a surface carpark.
- 3.7. A transport assessment, including a parking study was undertaken for the scheme which identifies the parking requirements generated from the scheme and takes into consideration the existing parking available within the town centre. This information together with the additional costs to provide a multi-storey car were considered and given the financial position of the Council the decision was made to proceed with a surface car park.

Site Surveys - issues arising and impact on budget

- 3.8. Following initial site investigations, concerns were flagged around potential issues with high groundwater and associated flood risk, indicating a potential increase to the building finished floor level height, requiring further site investigations.
- 3.9. Further site investigations were undertaken impacting the RIBA 3 programme by circa 7 weeks. Following further investigations, the building height was raised by 300mm to manage ground and surface water risks which impacted budget.
- 3.10. Due to initial ground investigations uncovering a small area of contamination within Queensmead car park, further ground investigations were carried out in January 2026 to determine the extent of the contamination. These investigations confirmed that the contamination was widespread throughout the car park. Although there were already provisional sums within the budget for contamination this was no longer sufficient and the sums have been adjusted accordingly and the revised figures set out in Exempt Appendix C - under contract sum analysis from Pellikaan.
- 3.11. There are certain items within the contract sum that will be undefined provisional sums. This is an allowance in a construction contract for work that cannot be fully determined until work starts on site, such as ground conditions. These items are derisked via site investigations and the information available is used to determine a realistic sum for the work as well as a wider project contingency to cover any unforeseen circumstances.

3.12. The following items are provisional sums within the contract:

- Site risks: Ground contamination incl. asbestos & obstructions
- Dewatering (removal of excess ground water from site)
- Civil works Play area
- External services and temporary services connections (water/gas etc)

3.13. It is worth noting that the risk for these items sits with the Council in regard to any claims for delays and associated costs by the contractor.

Current design status

3.14. RIBA stage 4 (technical design) and pricing is currently concluding with final contractor's proposals due mid-March 2026.

4. PROJECT COSTS AND FUNDING

Capital Costs

4.1. The project cost to deliver the new leisure centre, playground and surface car parking is £27.5m. As set out in 3.11 it should be noted that the contract costs include provisional sums as set out in section 3.12 above. A high-level breakdown is set out in the Table A below. The detail behind Table A is included in Exempt Appendix C which includes the client-side cost breakdown.

Table A:

Project Cost	£
Contract cost	25,256,457
Client side costs	1,479,991
S106 funded playground	200,000
Capitalised interest	555,960
Project Cost Total	27,492,408

4.2. The funding approach for the capital elements of the scheme utilises the remaining Levelling up grant (now known as the Local Regeneration Fund) of £18.5m with a funding extension to March 2028, £200,000 of S106 funding for the playground and borrowing of £8.8m as detailed in Table B below.

Table B:

Funding	£
Levelling Up Funding	18,500,000
S106	200,000
Borrowing	8,792,408
Project Funding Total	27,492,408

- 4.3. The additional borrowing has a revenue implication of interest costs and Minimum Reserve Provision (MRP) charges. The revenue implications of additional borrowing and other revenue costs of operating the site detailed below are intended to be funded from leisure centre operator income following the successful award of the operator contract as approved by Cabinet 10 February 2026. The financial modelling and implications are set out in section 5 below and in the Exempt Appendix A.

Revenue costs

- 4.4. In addition, to the borrowing costs above, there will be additional revenue implications for the Council. Whilst the operator will be providing the key leisure services for the Council/new unitary council there will be a number of ongoing revenue costs related to the operation of a new leisure centre, playground and car park. These are set out in Exempt Appendix A and include additional staffing resource to manage a larger leisure contract portfolio, ANPR running costs and playground maintenance costs.
- 4.5. Reduction in available car parking in a prime Farnborough town position is also anticipated to reduce current car parking income levels. The modelling provided in Exempt Appendix A builds in an assumption that car park income loss is 50% of current income at the Queensmead car park. Officers will work to mitigate this impact by redirecting users to alternative council owned sites, however loss of this income is an anticipated negative impact from the redevelopment of the site.

5. AFFORDABILITY AND MODELLING

- 5.1. The proposed scheme will require the Council to borrow £8.8m in addition to utilising the levelling up funding (now known as the Local Regeneration Fund). This has a direct impact on the council's revenue budget alongside the other revenue implications covered in the project costs section above.
- 5.2. A number of scenarios have been modelled to consider costs and income changes to the MTFS due to the proposed investment in the site and are provided in Exempt Appendix A as listed below:
- i) Main business case
 - ii) A loss of all car parking income
 - iii) A 1% increase in interest rate assumption
 - iv) A £0.5m increase in capital costs
 - v) A £1m increase in capital costs
 - vi) A 1% increase in discount rate
- 5.3 Other assumptions included in these investment business case calculations include;
- contingency levels
 - capitalisation of interest during the construction period
 - a 50 year building life assumption
 - a standard borrowing interest rate of 5.43%

5.4 Consideration of these scenarios help to show the impact of some of the potential financial impacts of project risks to the council.

6. DELIVERY

Development Partner

6.1. The delivery approach for the project was approved at Cabinet on the 11th February 2025 (REG2501). The approved approach is to deliver the project via the direct appointment of a Development Partner utilising the UK Leisure Framework, leading to the appointment of Alliance Leisure Services Ltd (ALS) for the provision of project management, design and professional services required for the completion of RIBA stages 2 & 3 and proceed with a direct appointment of the Principal Contractor as identified by ALS.

6.2. As set in report REG2501, the UK Leisure Framework is a single supplier framework. At that time Cabinet considered how best value is achieved for the Council via this route and this is summarised below:

- **Supply Chain Leverage:** The framework has a well-established and pre-procured supply chain developed over many years. With the potential of repeat business, as part of a larger potential pipeline, this keeps contractor costs most competitive, quality high and the ability to quickly overcome challenges. This leverage is powerful and helps the Council get the best results.
- **Gateway Process:** The pre-construction process is aligned with the RIBA stages. An End of Stage report, inclusive of a value for money assessment, is issued by Alliance for review by the Council and validated independently, prior to approval being given to move to the next stage.
- **Sub-contractors:** The sub-contractors available through the Framework consists of building contractors, architects, project managers and equipment providers with a proven track record in delivering high quality projects, on time and on budget in both the public and private leisure sectors.
- **Evaluation:** The Framework has an evaluation procedure for engaging with its architects, contractors, professional teams, and equipment supply chain ensuring that projects meet the standards required.
- **Design team:** The selection of the design team will be made by Alliance Leisure Services Ltd, thus enabling them to manage the delivery risk for the project and protecting the Council. This route provides the quickest method to progress pre-construction work for the project and shortens the programme providing some mitigation towards inflation risk.
- **Early contractor engagement** ensures 'buildability' from the outset and avoids unwanted surprises in later stages.
- **Single point of contact:** Alliance manage multiple appointments helping to relieve additional time and resource required by the Council.

- 6.3. What this means in practice is that the Council will enter into a Development Management Agreement with Alliance Leisure Services Limited for the project total, less client side costs. Alliance Leisure will enter into a Design & Build JCT contract with the build contractor, Pellikaan. Alliance will oversee the contractor on a day-to-day basis meeting regularly with the Council's client-side project team. Alliance are procuring a clerk of works whose role is to ensure the scheme is built in accordance with the plans and is compliant with legislation. The Council is employing a technical construction consultant who will work independently of Alliance. He will visit the site regularly to ensure the project is being delivered in accordance with the design specification and the relevant Health and safety regulations.
- 6.4. As part of the Council's due diligence on suppliers it has undertaken financial checks on both Alliance Leisure and Pellikaan, even though the construction risk is with Alliance. Both companies are considered low risk and stable. In addition, a review of previous statements of accounts has been undertaken and this confirms the stability of Pellikaan's financial position.

Rushmoor Project Arrangements

- 6.5. Project governance arrangements are in place to ensure project oversight by senior management and members, including fortnightly portfolio holder briefings. The Project governance diagram is set out at Exempt Appendix D.
- 6.6. The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) has acted as the project board to date and provide steer as required on project-related issues that may arise throughout the lifecycle of the project as well as review the progress of the project and receive regular updates on progress against programme, budget, and risk through consideration of project highlight reports. Oversight of the build project will be through the same arrangements with reporting to Members through the quarterly performance reports.

7. CONTRACT, RISKS AND MITIGATION

- 7.1. The Council will entering into a Development Management Agreement with Alliance leisure. The DMA forms the contractual arrangement by and between Alliance and the Council. Alliance then enters into a series of contracts with its suppliers comprising both the builder and professional consultants, for which Alliance will be paid a fee to manage them. Alliance will ensure that the builder engages with specialist sub-contractors. Thus there will no direct contractual relationship between the Council and Alliance's team of builders and professionals.
- 7.2. In order to mitigate the Council's risks, the builders, its sub-contractors and the professional consultants are required to enter into collateral warranties in favour of the Council. The Council is also requesting Alliance Leisure to retain professional indemnity insurance for 12 years from practical completion.

- 7.3. The contract being used by Alliance Leisure with Pellikaan is a JCT design and build contract (2016) with amendments. This has been reviewed by counsel who confirmed that the terms of the contract have been thoroughly drafted to protect the Council's position and that no significant risks for the Council were identified.
- 7.4. The Council is also choosing to include the costs of Latent defects insurance in the project costs. Latent defects are hidden problems which may only be discovered over time, such as structural or waterproofing envelope issues. They are not those defects obviously found upon normal inspection.
- 7.5. The final set of protections being put in place are set out in exempt appendix L.

8. PROGRAMME

- 8.1. A detailed current programme can be found at Appendix E and the build period is 18 months. The key milestones for the project are set out below:

Project Stage	Milestone
Planning Approval	March 2026
Completion of RIBA Stage 4 Design & Cost	March 2026
Award of construction contract	March 2026
Pre-commencement activity	April – June 2026
Contractor full Site Commencement	June 2026
Facility Open	Winter 2027

- 8.2. The Project Team will make operational day-to-day delivery decisions within the agreed delegations following Cabinet/Council decisions, in line with the Council's Scheme of Delegation as outlined in the Constitution and Council procedure rules, overseen by the Project Sponsor, currently the Executive Director.

9. Alternative Options

- 9.1. There is an option not to deliver a new facility and retain the existing Queensmead car park and find an alternative use for the other land for other purposes. This is not in line with Council priorities and would likely be unpopular with residents.
- 9.2. Not providing a new facility would have a significant impact on the leisure procurement and reduce the attractiveness of the current offer to the market.

Consultation

- 9.3. Between 30 June and 25 July 2025, the council undertook a programme of public consultation, comprising three in-person events. Approximately 350 residents attended the in-person sessions, with further feedback collected through the physical survey forms, and digital engagement channels.
- 9.4. A dedicated public consultation microsite was launched on 20 June 2025. The site hosted digital versions of the consultation boards and provided direct access to the online survey. The microsite will remain live throughout the development process to support ongoing engagement.
- 9.5. The consultation gave multiple opportunities for the community to review the draft proposals and share their views.
- 9.6. A broad range of stakeholder groups were engaged through stakeholder engagement meetings throughout the design process to ensure the proposals reflect the needs of users, operators and the wider community. Engagement focused on organisations and direct users, with feedback sought on accessibility, operational requirements and key community priorities. Feedback from these engagement meetings were used to inform the evolving design.
- 9.7. Stakeholders consulted included:
 - Local sports clubs and interest groups, including scuba training providers, artistic swimming groups, Rushmoor Royals Swimming Club, BMX and skateboarding representatives, and GKR Karate
 - Community and accessibility groups, including Henry Tyndale School and the Rushmoor Accessibility Action Group (RAAG)
 - National Governing Bodies (Sport England, Swim England, Badminton England, England Netball, England Basketball, England Volleyball)

A full summary of engagement activities and feedback is provided in the Statement of Community Involvement in Appendix F.

10. IMPLICATIONS

Risks

- 10.1. The Council will be accepting a number of risks in opting to proceed with delivery of this project. These include risks associated with the development and delivery of a capital project of this scale such as site ground conditions, contractor solvency, cost overruns, inflationary increases and associated stakeholder management.

- 10.2. In entering into the Development Management Agreement with Alliance the Council will be accepting a number of these risks. The live risk register is attached at Exempt Appendix G and sets out the current risk ownership. Prior to entering into contract this will be agreed and finalised with input from legal and used as a core project document.
- 10.3. The risk of the scheme to the Council's overall financial position is set out in section 5. While the Council has the residual £18.5m grant funding to employ against the scheme, if it is to proceed to construction, it will be accepting the financial risks associated with the funding approach including the additional borrowing required and the associated financial risks such as interest rate risk and other risks as identified, evaluated and scenario tested.
- 10.4. As part of our obligations for the Levelling up funding (now known as the Local Regeneration Fund) a risk register is maintained for the project with the top 10 risks reported to MHCLG as part of the monitoring return requirement. These reported risks are attached at Exempt Appendix H.

Legal Implications

- 10.5. As set out in section 7 and Appendix L of this report, the Council will enter into a Development Management Agreement with Alliance Leisure Services Limited and Alliance will enter into a Design & Build JCT contract with the build contractor.
- 10.6. The key legal risk relates to the issue of contractor failure in terms of delivery (in whole or in part) of the contract and the impact of that on the wider organisational finances. As set out in the recent budget report the MTFs shows a projected situation of not being able to set a legal budget in 2028-2029. There is therefore no capacity within the organisational finances to absorb the impact from contract failure.
- 10.7. The scheme of delegation delegates the decision as to the appropriate mitigation of that risk to the Corporate Manager Legal Services. Due to the commercial nature of the matters she has considered, and due to negotiations being ongoing, details are set out in Exempt Appendix L.
- 10.8. There are a number of legal constraints to the development of the leisure centre by way of third-party rights and covenants over the sites. Having received Report LEG2505 at its meeting on 14th October 2025, the Cabinet delegated how best to deal with these constraints to the Executive Director in consultation with the Interim Monitoring Officer and Corporate Manager Legal Services. They decided the best method was to carry out public consultation for the appropriation of the sites for planning purposes and use of section 203 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 to override third party rights.

- 10.9. No objections or comments have been received and the Officers recommend that Queensmead and Pinehurst Car Parks are appropriated to planning purposes, and section 203 of the HPA is used to override the third party rights necessary to carry build and operate the Leisure centre subject to the receipt of planning permission for the development.
- 10.10. Compensation may be payable if valid claims are received by owners of the third-party rights and further information concerning this is contained in the Exempt Appendix I.

Financial Implications

- 10.11. The project has previously had approvals to proceed to RIBA stage 4, funded fully by the Levelling Up Fund (now known as the Local Regeneration Fund).
- 10.12. The Council was awarded £20m of Levelling up Fund (now known as the Local Regeneration Fund) from government to deliver a leisure and cultural hub in Farnborough in 2023. £18.5m of this funding is to be utilised to deliver the Farnborough Leisure Centre. This funding had a requirement to be spent by 31 March 2025. However, the Council has achieved an extension to this deadline, and funding must be utilised by 31 March 2028.
- 10.13. The Council will be required to borrow an additional £8.8m to enable this project. In the past three Council approved budgets, the Council has been seeking to reduce the debt levels of the council to reduce the revenue implications down to a more sustainable level for the Council.
- 10.14. This project, however, does enable some positive cashflows to the council through the operator management fee. In the initial years following project completion whilst membership numbers are built up to maturity, revenue costs outweigh this income. As the leisure centre site reaches a position in years 4-onwards, the site will have a net positive revenue position to enable debt costs of the project to be covered, provide additional income to the council whilst providing a leisure asset to the public.
- 10.15. In the interim years whilst construction is taking place and initial 3 years following the site opening, the council will have revenue impacts that are not offset by a leisure operator management fee. Therefore, the Council will need to fund the net cost from reserves in the short to medium term. This does increase pressure on the MTFS. Forecasts for these costs have been included in the 2026/27 budget & MTFS subject to approval by Council on 26 February 2026.
- 10.16. The main business case shows the projected NPV of the project, which is positive for the council, therefore delivering value to the council as well as the community.

- 10.17. During the construction interest rate costs can be capitalised. This enables the council to mitigate the revenue impact of these costs to be covered through the life of the asset, funding them with the leisure operator management fee.
- 10.18. Whilst the modelling provided in Exempt Appendix A uses current PWLB rates and rate forecasts from the councils treasury consultants to assess financial feasibility. The Council may not borrow for the capital costs over the 50 year life of the asset due to anticipated changes with LGR. The unitary council that will be in place from April 2028 may not require borrowing to fund this cost, therefore it may tie the new council into a debt position it does not require. It is more likely short term borrowing will be utilised until the new unitary council is in place. Therefore, we have utilised the MTFS interest assumption of 4.5% for the capitalisation of interest during the construction phase.
- 10.19. The Council continues to have a financial deficit within its MTFS (medium-term financial strategy) period which requires resolution. Any decision to take on a project needs to be considered in the context of this deficit.
- 10.20. Ernst & Young LLP, the Council's Financial Statements Auditors, raised a growing concern on the matter as part of the 2025/26 audit findings report regarding the council's high level of short-term borrowing and budgeted shortfalls within the MTFS that do not currently have recurrent savings identified to bring into balance. Therefore, progression of this project to construction stages, and therefore committing the council to over £20m of capital expenditure requires confidence that it will achieve appropriate income to mitigate additional borrowing costs.
- 10.21. In addition, MHCLG will need confidence that the council is financially sound and the project will offer financial viability to ensure that the Council does not receive a Best Value Notice. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government will consider issuing a 'Best Value Notice' to secure compliance with the Best Value Duty, as required by the Local Government Act 1999. One of the key triggers for issue of a notice which could be relevant may be concerns over financial sustainability in a Councils MTFS or concerns regarding value for money regarding this project.

Resource Implications

- 10.22. An internal Project Team is in place comprising existing establishment roles within the Regeneration and Development Service to progress client-side responsibilities associated with the delivery of the scheme.
- 10.23. A Client side technical construction consultant is required for the duration of the project as set out in section 6.3 of this report and this has been included for within the client side project costs.

10.24. Once the new Farnborough Leisure Centre is open, an additional internal resource is anticipated to be required to manage the main phase of the new leisure operating contract. A full-time G4 position has been costed into the financial implications but would require a justification consideration closer to the completion of the project due to the anticipated changes in staffing of the Council in the months prior to LGR (Local Government Reorganisation) and implications in this period on other staff.

Equalities Impact Implications

10.25. The project addresses significant Health inequalities and seeks to improve access to leisure facilities in Farnborough. The design proposals have evolved significantly to better reflect local identity, improve accessibility, and provide flexible and inclusive spaces

10.26. An Equality Impact Assessment screening tool has been completed and can be found in Appendix J which details how the Design proposals will have a positive impact on a number of groups with protected characteristics, as well as disadvantaged groups.

11. CONCLUSIONS

11.1. The delivery of a new leisure centre for Farnborough is a significant priority for local people and the Council's Cabinet. Entering into the development agreement with Alliance for the construction phase is considered the most effective and least risk option for delivery with the protections in place as set out in the report.

11.2. The report seeks delegations to officers to enable contracts to be entered into once planning permission is granted and ensure delivery of a new facility within the Levelling Up funding (now known as the Local Regeneration Fund) timelines and to ensure a much need facility for local people.

LIST OF CONFIDENTIAL APPENDICES

Appendix A - Exempt Financial Modelling
Appendix B - Exempt RIBA Stage 3 Report & Design
Appendix C - Exempt Detailed Project Costs
Appendix D – Exempt Project Governance Diagram
Appendix E - Delivery Programme
Appendix F - Statement of Community Involvement
Appendix G - Exempt Risk Register
Appendix H - Exempt MHCLG Risk Register
Appendix I - Exempt S203 - Third Party Rights
Appendix J - Equalities Impact Assessment
Appendix K - S203 Appropriation Redline Plan.
Appendix L – Exempt Financial Protections

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Cabinet Report REG2501
Cabinet Report REG2503
Cabinet Report LEG2505
Cabinet Report OS2603

CONTACT DETAILS:**Report Authors**

Johanna Cohen – Development Manager

Johanna.Cohen@rushmoor.gov.uk

Rosie Plaistowe-Melham – Financial Services Manager & Deputy S151 Officer

rosie.plaistowe@rushmoor.gov.uk

Amanda Bancroft – Interim Monitoring Officer and CM Legal Services

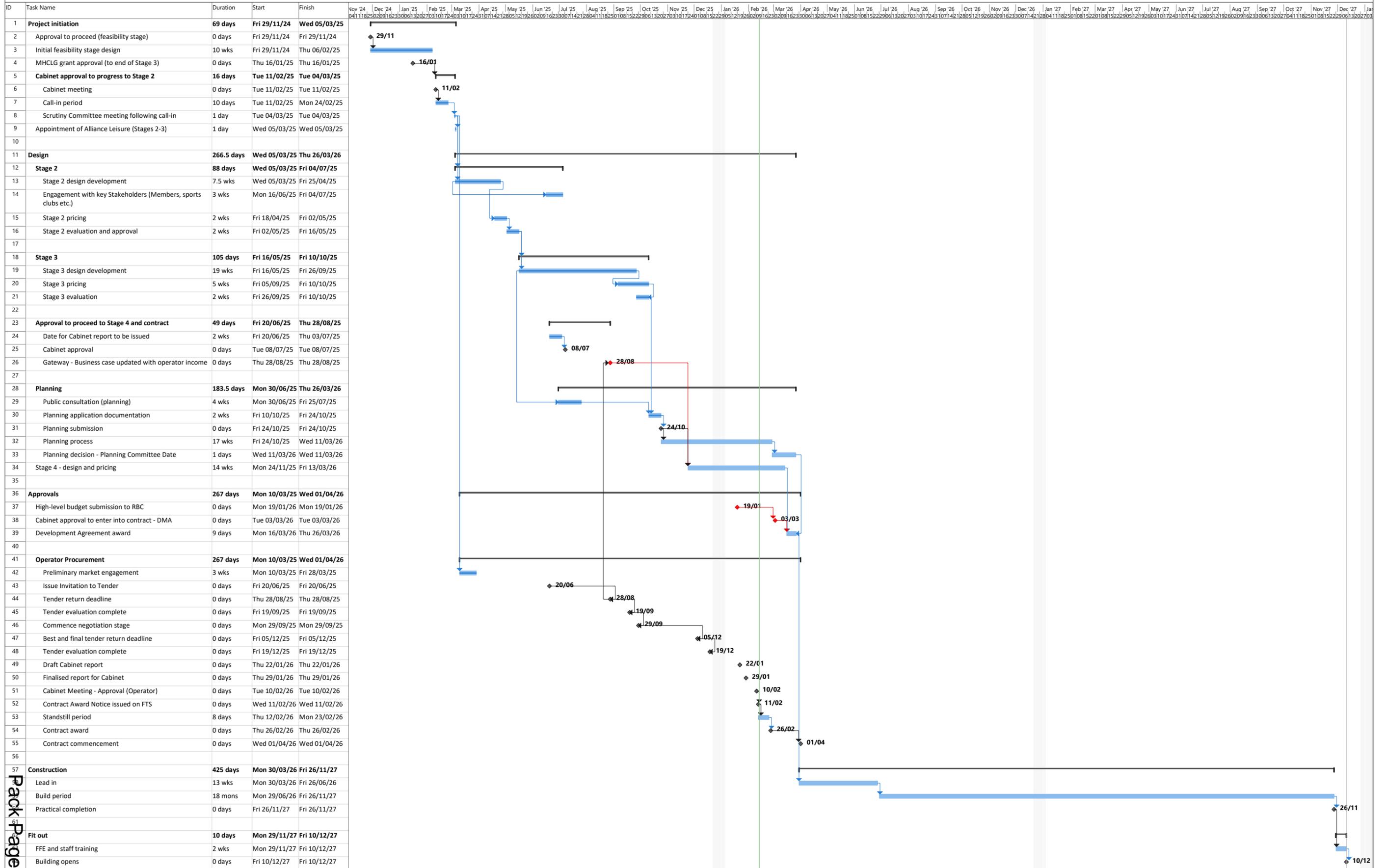
Amanda.bancroft@rushmoor.gov.uk

Executive Director

Karen Edwards, Executive Director

Karen.edwards@rushmoor.gov.uk

Farnborough Leisure Centre estimated delivery timescales
Rev S - Rev B



Pack Page 65

On behalf of
Rushmoor Borough Council

Date
October 2025

Project Number
T11641

FARNBOROUGH LEISURE CENTRE STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Project No. **T11641**
Issue No. **1**
Date **24/10/2025**

Made by **Emma Howie**
Checked by **Jenna Murray**
Approved by **David Williams**

Made By: Emma Howie

Checked/Approved By: Jenna Murray / David Williams

This report is produced by Ramboll at the request of the client for the purposes detailed herein. This report and accompanying documents are intended solely for the use and benefit of the client for this purpose only and may not be used by or disclosed to, in whole or in part, any other person without the express written consent of Ramboll. Ramboll neither owes nor accepts any duty to any third party and shall not be liable for any loss, damage or expense of whatsoever nature which is caused by their reliance on the information contained in this report.

Version Control Log

Revision	Date	Made by	Checked by	Approved by	Description
Final	24.10.25	EH	JM	DW	For submission

CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	3	
1.1	Overview of the scheme	3	
1.2	Purpose and format of Statement of Community Involvement ("SCI")	3	3
2	PLANNING POLICY	4	
2.1	National Policy	4	
2.2	Local Policy	4	
3	PRE-APPLICATION DISCUSSIONS	6	
3.1	Planning	6	
3.2	Highways	7	
3.3	Flooding	8	
4	PUBLIC CONSULTATION	10	
4.1	Introduction	10	
4.2	Consultation Undertaken for the Application	10	
4.3	Analysis of Public Consultation	17	
4.4	Key Themes considered by the design team	20	
5	STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT	23	
6	SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION	30	

TABLE OF TABLES

Table 4.1: Key information about in-person events	10
Table 4.2: Daily visitors in the first two weeks of the consultation period	11
Table 4.3: Summary of public comments and design team responses	20
Table 5.1: Stakeholder engagement summary table	24

TABLE OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Extract from RBC Town Centres and Regeneration page	11
Figure 2: Copy of the poster advertising public consultation	12
Figure 3: Leaflet distribution boundary	13
Figure 4: Leaflet distributed to properties in above boundary (Side A and B)	13
Figure 5: Example social media posts	14
Figure 6: Copies of public consultation boards	15
Figure 7: Photographs of in-person public consultation events	16
Figure 8: Quantitative response to question 1	18
Figure 9: Quantitative response to question 2	18
Figure 10: Quantitative response to question 3	20

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Copy of public consultation feedback form

1 INTRODUCTION

This Statement of Community Involvement is submitted on behalf of Rushmoor Borough Council ("RBC") ("the Applicant") in support of a full planning application in relation to the provision of a new Leisure Centre at Queensmead Car Park and Pinehurst Roundabout, Farnborough, GU14 7TE ("the Site").

The Application seeks permission for the following development ("the Proposed Development"):

"Erection of a new Leisure Centre incorporating landscaping, play area, public realm, car parking and associated works."

1.1 Overview of the scheme

The Proposed Development represents an opportunity to provide significant public benefits to the people of Farnborough and comprises the following principal elements:

- Construction of a new Leisure Centre building spread over two levels, including main pool and learner pool, gym, studios, changing facility and café.
- Creation of landscape and public realm surrounding the building, including new children's play area.
- Creation of surface level car park, accessible parking, cycle parking and service yard.

This statement should be read in conjunction with the other submission documents, in particular the Planning Statement and Design and Access Statement.

1.2 Purpose and format of Statement of Community Involvement ("SCI")

Effective and inclusive engagement is paramount to Rushmoor Borough Council, and the success of the Proposed Development. Engaging with the local community and key stakeholders has provided equal and welcomed opportunities to acknowledge and receive feedback.

The Proposed Development has been developed through informative and collaborative engagement methods. Pre-application discussions have taken place with those across the community with various stakeholder groups.

This Statement sets out the engagement methods used, analyses the feedback received and explains how the feedback has influenced the design development.

2 PLANNING POLICY

This section of the SCI provides an overview of relevant national and local planning policy.

2.1 National Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework ("NPPF") (2024) seeks to ensure that early engagement is undertaken, with an emphasis on the front-loading of applications with the local planning authority, local community, statutory and non-statutory consultees in order to resolve any issues at the pre-application stage, to help avoid any unnecessary costs and delays.

Paragraph 40 of the NPPF states:

"Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality preapplication discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community".

Paragraph 41 sets out the key role local planning authorities have in encouraging other parties to take maximum advantage of the pre-application stage:

"They cannot require that a developer engages with them before submitting a planning application, but they should encourage take-up of any pre-application services they offer. They should also, where they think this would be beneficial, encourage any applicants who are not already required to do so by law to engage with the local community and, where relevant, with statutory and non-statutory consultees, before submitting their applications."

Paragraph 42 recognises that the more issues that can be resolved at the pre-application stage, the greater the benefits. Statutory planning consultees should also take a pro-active approach and provide advice on any planning application proposals in a timely manner throughout the process.

In ensuring that the right information is submitted with an application in order to facilitate good decision taking, Paragraph 45 of the NPPF recommends that local planning authorities should only request supporting planning documentation that is necessary, relevant and material to the application being considered.

2.2 Local Policy

The RBC Statement of Community Involvement (2019) strongly encourages developers to carry out consultation with the local community prior to their application.

The RBC SCI states that community consultation by developers will be expected in relation to leisure schemes totalling over 2,000 sqm which is relevant to the planning application proposals.

The SCI outlines consultation methods that could be used, as provided below:

- Identifying and contacting all key stakeholders and members of the community directly or indirectly affected by the proposals.
- Using websites, social media and emails.
- Producing newsletters, leaflets and posters to keep people informed.
- Organising local exhibitions.
- Holding stakeholder workshops and focus groups.
- Informing consultees through local media and specific newsletters.
- Producing a public consultation statement.

Although there is no specific policy on engagement within the RBC Local Plan, the Supporting Text to Policy DE1 states that 'Applicants are encouraged to engage with the Council at an early stage in the application process in order to ensure a good design outcome is achieved'.

3 PRE-APPLICATION DISCUSSIONS

The following section provides details of the pre-application engagement that has taken place with the local planning authority and Hampshire County Council ("HCC") prior to the submission of this Application.

3.1 Planning

Two planning pre-application meetings were held with Rushmoor Borough Council.

The first pre-application meeting took place on 15th May 2025 when the scheme was in very early stages of design development. The pre-application proposals presented can be found within the Design and Access Statement submitted in support of this planning application. The meeting focused on the principle of development, initial design concepts, and an overview of highways and landscape considerations. The written response, received on 29th May 2025, confirmed strong support for the proposed use and recognised the scheme's potential to deliver high-quality community facilities within the town centre. The Council also provided a number of constructive comments relating to building design, landscaping, access, and amenity. These have since been carefully considered by the design team and were used to inform the subsequent design development.

The key points raised by officers as part of this initial pre-application meeting are set out below:

- There was no objection to the principle of the site being redeveloped for a Leisure Centre use.
- Scale and massing were considered to be acceptable.
- Concerns were raised about the contrast between the initial design concepts and the 'hangar' design. Officers acknowledged that cost is a major driver of the design however, they requested that the design development/rationale needs to be developed further in advance of the next pre-application meeting and for submission of the planning application.
- Concerns were also raised on the red cladding, limited quantum of glazing, potential views of roof-mounted plant and requirement for all sides of the building to be carefully considered due to the buildings 360 degree prominence.
- Officers confirmed that they do not require the proposals to be subject to a design review panel.
- Officers advised that there are good opportunities for landscaping and tree planting to assist with achieving Biodiversity net Gain ("BNG").
- Anti-social behaviour concerns were raised in respect of the potential relocation of the skate park to this site. It was acknowledged by officers that skate park provision in this location is likely to generate public discussion.
- In terms of highways, a Transport Assessment and engagement with HCC will be critical to success. Officers also stated that bus parking may be an issue and bus operators, and HCC should be consulted.
- It was discussed that there may be an opportunity for decked parking on the southern part of the site, with officers having no objection to this.

The second pre-application discussion was held on 5th August 2025. The discussion focused primarily on detailed design and landscape matters. The team presented the updated proposed scheme and highlighted how the design had evolved as a result of both the first pre-application discussions and recommendations, and public consultation and stakeholder engagement comments received to date. The design team also provided significant explanation of the analysis of context, character and heritage of the Site and wider surrounding area.

As part of the second pre-application meeting, the following design changes were presented:

- Addition of colour and vibrance to the design through adding brightly coloured accents to the façade materials and breaking up the massing through differing spacing in cladding panels.
- Significant aviation buildings and structures were studied including Q121 Wind tunnel, Farnborough Air Hanger and the Nulli Secundus. This led to the incorporation of aviation influences within the design such as large vertically proportioned openings and vertical rhythm/verticality, long span structure, shifting gradient from ground to sky and colours from planes and airshow posters.
- Due to site constraints and following feedback from both the skating and BMX communities, it was decided that a skatepark would not form part of the proposed development.
- A number of changes were also presented which responded to feedback received during the public consultation exercise. These are set out later on in this document.

Officers did not issue written feedback after this discussion. Instead, they provided confirmation that the applicant's notes accurately reflected the discussion. The main comments raised by officers are outlined below:

- The building is inevitably going to be large and relatively boxy due to the nature of use/function requirements however, the changes to the mass and form of the building have successfully softened and broken down the mass.
- Landscape discussions centred around tying the colour and type of planting to the building.
- Play space could reflect the aviation heritage of Farnborough and careful consideration is needed on the form of enclosure to ensure child safety.

The team continued to progress the massing and façade design as a result of both the second pre-application and public consultation comments however, no significant design changes were required.

The landscape scheme also evolved to incorporate the comments. Further aviation influences were incorporated throughout the play area and inclusion of aviation themed play equipment. The proposed enclosure to the play area continues to be of high quality to ensure both child safety and aesthetic appeal.

3.2 Highways

Extensive pre-application discussions have taken place with Hampshire County Council, the Local Highway Authority ("LHA"), in relation to the highways and transport implications of the Proposed Development. These discussions helped shape the Transport Assessment scope, access strategy, parking provision, and approach to sustainable travel.

A Transport Assessment Scoping Report, prepared by SK Transport and dated May 2025, was submitted to HCC for initial feedback. HCC's formal response, dated 25th June 2025, confirmed agreement with the overall approach to trip generation and distribution modelling and provided a number of specific recommendations, which have informed the development proposals.

Key points raised by HCC during the pre-application meeting and written response:

- The proposed access from Kingsmead was accepted in principle, subject to vehicle tracking to demonstrate that refuse and delivery vehicles can safely manoeuvre within the site.
- The proposed use of an existing bus stop for coach drop-off was also accepted, subject to appropriate amendments to Traffic Regulation Orders ("TROs") and the identification of suitable off-site layover provision.
- The proposed provision of 130 parking spaces should be assessed against RBC parking standards. HCC requested updated demand surveys, which have been completed and indicate lower occupancy levels than those recorded in the 2019 baseline study.

- Weekday trip generation rates have been agreed in principle. HCC requested that traffic impacts be assessed at a wider set of junctions, supported by new survey data, all of which has been completed.
- Pedestrian and cycle access routes should be reviewed against current guidance, including LTN 1/20, TG10, and Rushmoor's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). A Walking, Cycling and Horse-Riding Assessment and Review (WCHAR) was also requested.
- The site is considered to be well served by public transport. HCC requested clarification on the submitted isochrone maps and further detail on the quality and accessibility of pedestrian and cycle routes.
- A parking accumulation assessment should be carried out, including analysis of the potential for overspill parking. HCC noted that existing TROs in surrounding streets would likely limit the risk of on-street parking.

The below sets out the matters confirmed or progressed following the meeting:

- Updated parking surveys have been completed, including at Queensmead and The Meads, as requested. These indicate lower occupancy than the 2019 baseline.
- Weekday trip generation rates have been agreed through further discussion.
- Additional junction and car park surveys have been undertaken, as agreed with HCC.
- Design development has responded to known pedestrian and cycle access constraints (e.g. substandard underpasses), with further detail to be provided in the TA and Travel Plan.

Furthermore, it is anticipated that highway-related mitigation measures and any necessary financial contributions will be secured through a Section 106 agreement.

The submitted Transport Assessment includes further detail on the comments provided by Hampshire and the design team response.

3.3 Flooding

A pre-application meeting was held with the Local Lead Flood Authority ("LLFA"), Hampshire County Council, on 17 July 2025. The LLFA subsequently provided a written response setting out its requirements for any future planning application.

The key issue raised was in relation to surface water flooding with the LLFA noting that the site lies in an area identified as a 'flood risk and drainage priority area' in Rushmoor's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, meaning that development should seek to achieve a minimum 50% betterment on brownfield runoff rates. The response confirmed that proposals must comply with the drainage hierarchy and be supported by a drainage strategy and Flood Risk Assessment.

Key points raised included:

- Request for confirmation of the ownership of drainage assets and the need for permission from third parties where relevant.
- Requirement for groundwater risk management, including site investigation, groundwater monitoring, and buoyancy calculations for any below-ground storage.
- Requirement to demonstrate that post-development runoff rates and volumes will not exceed pre-development conditions.
- Provision of a topographic survey, overland flow routes, and hydraulic calculations requested.
- Inclusion of a robust maintenance schedule identifying responsibilities for all drainage features requested.
- Early consultation with the Environment Agency, water companies, and Network Rail needed if their assets would be affected.

The LLFA also drew attention to the publication of the new National Sustainable Drainage Systems Standards (June 2025), particularly standards 2 and 7, and advised that these will be a key consideration for the planning application.

The feedback led to a detailed review of the flooding and drainage design. A written response prepared by the design team was issued to the LLFA on 11th September 2025. This response set out the mitigation measures proposed to minimise the risk of surface water flooding. This includes: the Finished Floor Level ("FFL") of the Proposed Development being raised by 300mm; external levels being graded to direct surface water runoff away from the building; the new surface water drainage network will be designed to accommodate a 1 in 100 year storm event including an allowance of 25% for climate change; and the proposed surface water discharge rate will provide a 50% betterment over the existing situation.

The LLFA responded on the 10th October and confirmed that sufficient evidence has been provided to demonstrate that the areas of surface water flood risk do not represent a flow route at the site. As part of the proposals, the LLFA has requested that the area to the north-west of the site be retained for ponding and stated that it will need to be modelled as 100% impermeable.

4 PUBLIC CONSULTATION

4.1 Introduction

There has been a range of public engagement over four years which has informed the current application for a new Leisure Centre in Farnborough. The principle of a new Leisure Centre was established through the proposal for a new Leisure Centre as part of the wider Civic Quarter Masterplan. Given the extensive public engagement exercise which informed the masterplan, the applicant designed a more focused engagement strategy that focused on gathering the public’s thoughts on design and accessibility, and informing the public on the new site location. This was deemed appropriate to avoid/minimise consultation fatigue given that the principle of development had already been consulted on extensively and it was clear residents demanded that the Council ‘just get on’ with delivery of the facility.

The Council paid particular attention to engaging on elements of the Proposed Development where public influence was possible. For example, the facility mix was not consulted on as strict financial constraints meant that the facility mix was set during the initial stages of the project.

4.2 Consultation Undertaken for the Application

The consultation period ran from 30 June to 25 July 2025. RBC held three in-person consultation events to inform the local community about the draft proposals and provide an opportunity for residents to raise any comments. The events were attended by numerous members of the project team who were available to walk attendees through the draft proposals and answer any questions. The events were held at different times and locations, on both weekdays and weekends, allowing the local community to attend at a location and time best suited for them.

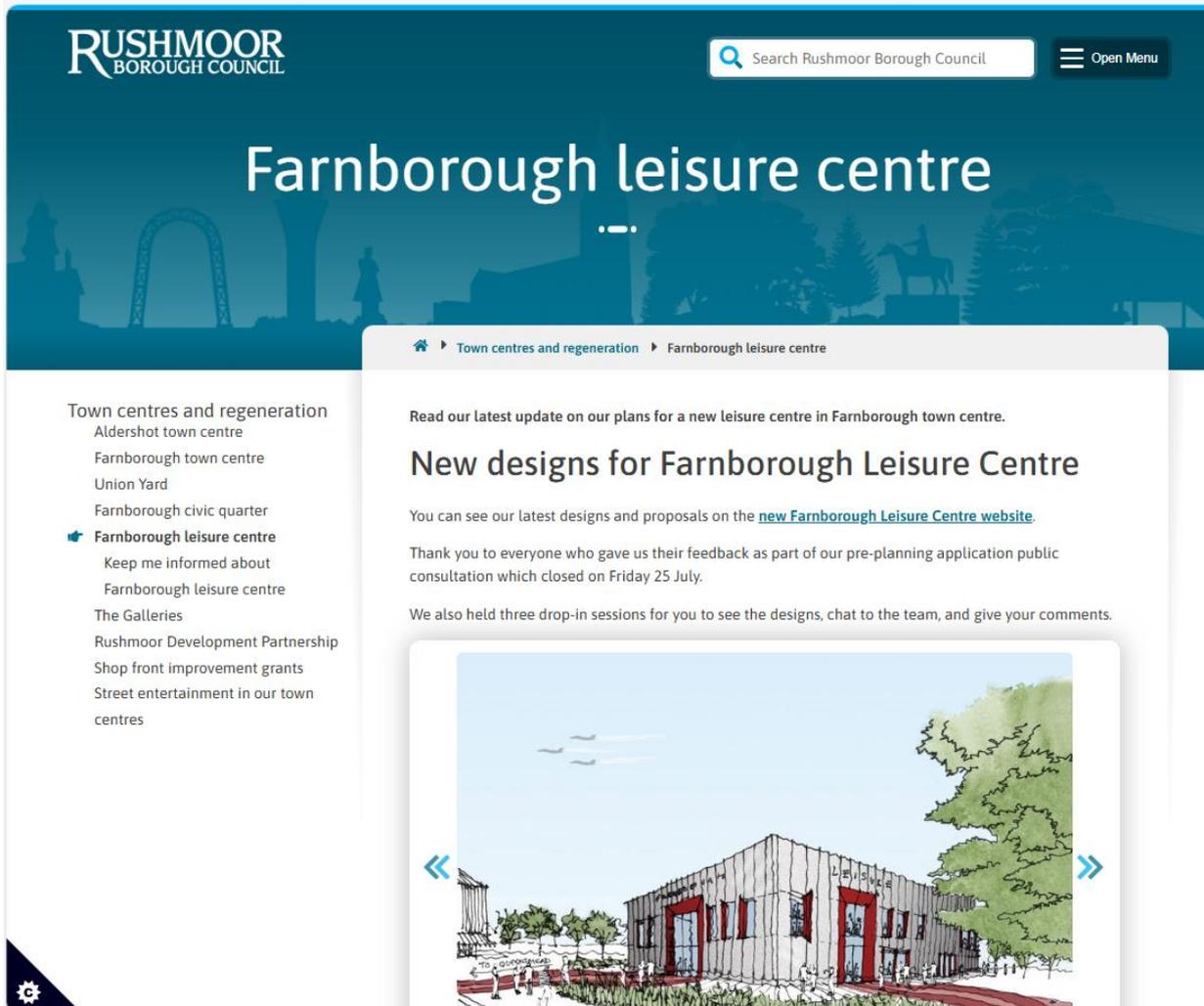
Table 4.1: Key information about in-person events

Date	Time	Location
Thursday 3 rd July 2025	2 – 7pm	Council offices
Monday 7 th July 2025	9am – 12:30pm	Council offices
Saturday 12 th July 2025	10am – 1pm	Princes Mead shopping centre

4.2.1 Website

Throughout the pre-application stage, Rushmoor Borough Council provided updates on the design development and public consultation events on the Town Centres and Regeneration section of the Rushmoor Borough Council website in addition to the dedicated Farnborough Leisure Centre website which provided more detailed information on the emerging design. Updates on the feedback received and how the design had evolved to reflect said feedback was also uploaded to the website.

Figure 1: Extract from RBC Town Centres and Regeneration page



A separate microsite was set up specifically for the public consultation period, it was live from 20th June. It contained digital versions of the public consultation boards and hosted the digital survey form. A copy of the consultation boards can be found below and details of the responses to the survey can be found at section 4.3. The microsite will remain live throughout the development.

There was a total of circa 2,500 visits to the microsite. The majority of people visited the site in the first two weeks of the consultation period, the daily numbers of which are shown in the table below.

Table 4.2: Daily visitors in the first two weeks of the consultation period

Date	Number of visitors
June 30	223
July 1	346
July 2	219
July 3	312
July 4	208
July 5	81

Date	Number of visitors
July 6	260
July 7	104
July 8	63
July 9	43
July 10	49
July 11	81
July 12	61
July 13	44
July 14	97

4.2.2 Promotional and Written Material

The applicant designed printed material as another method of communication to promote the public consultation events. The materials included leaflets, posters and flyers.

Circa 50 posters were printed and distributed in local centres and community notice boards across the town and wider area.

Figure 2: Copy of the poster advertising public consultation



Additionally, approximately 9,050 leaflets were distributed to properties within the yellow boundary on the map below, as agreed with planning officers via email dated 6th June 2025. The leaflet contained information on the location and time of the consultation events and a QR code to the micro-site and feedback form for those who weren't planning to attend in-person. A copy of the leaflet is also included below.

Figure 3: Leaflet distribution boundary



Figure 4: Leaflet distributed to properties in above boundary (Side A and B)



4.2.3 Social Media

RBC launched a series of social media posts across platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, X (formerly Twitter) and LinkedIn to increase engagement reach.

Rushmoor Borough Council's social media following, and engagement reach across platforms currently stands at:

- Instagram – 2.2k followers
- Facebook – 14k followers

- X (formerly 'Twitter') – 5.6k followers
- LinkedIn – over 3k followers

Figure 5: Example social media posts

Rushmoor Council @RushmoorCouncil X.com

We'll be in #Farnborough town centre on Sat 12 July for our final public drop-in session on our latest plans for Farnborough's new leisure centre. Find the team at Princes Mead shopping centre (on the Asda side) from 10am-1pm. We hope to see you there. [new-farnborough-leisure-centre.co.uk](https://www.new-farnborough-leisure-centre.co.uk)

We will be sharing the latest designs for Farnborough's new **leisure** centre as part of a pre-planning application public consultation which will be launching on Monday 30 June. To find out more, go to: [rushmoor.gov.uk/revisedplansfo...](https://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/revisedplansfo...)




14:03 · 10/07/2025 · 199 Views

Rushmoor Council @RushmoorCouncil X.com

Our first drop-in session on our plans for Farnborough's new leisure centre is now open at the council offices in Farnborough. Pop down to view the designs, chat to the team and give your feedback until 7pm (3 July). Find out more: [new-farnborough-leisure-centre.co.uk](https://www.new-farnborough-leisure-centre.co.uk)

The pre-planning application public consultation on our latest designs for **Farnborough leisure centre** closes on 25 July. Thank you to everyone who has already viewed the plans and given feedback. To see the designs go to: [new-farnborough-leisure-centre.co.uk](https://www.new-farnborough-leisure-centre.co.uk) and complete the short survey.




14:39 · 03/07/2025 · 475 Views

194

4.2.4 In-Person Events

Overall, the events were well attended, with an approximate total of 350 people attending across all three days. Approximately 50 people attended on each of the weekday events (3rd and 7th July) and approximately 250 people attended the weekend event (12th July).

Consultation boards were designed to promote key features of the proposals, including indicative elevational and landscape designs, and were displayed to be used as an aid for discussion at the events. Copies of the board can be found below.

Feedback forms were available for attendees to be completed on the day. All material available at the events was also available online for those unable to attend the events.

Figure 6: Copies of public consultation boards

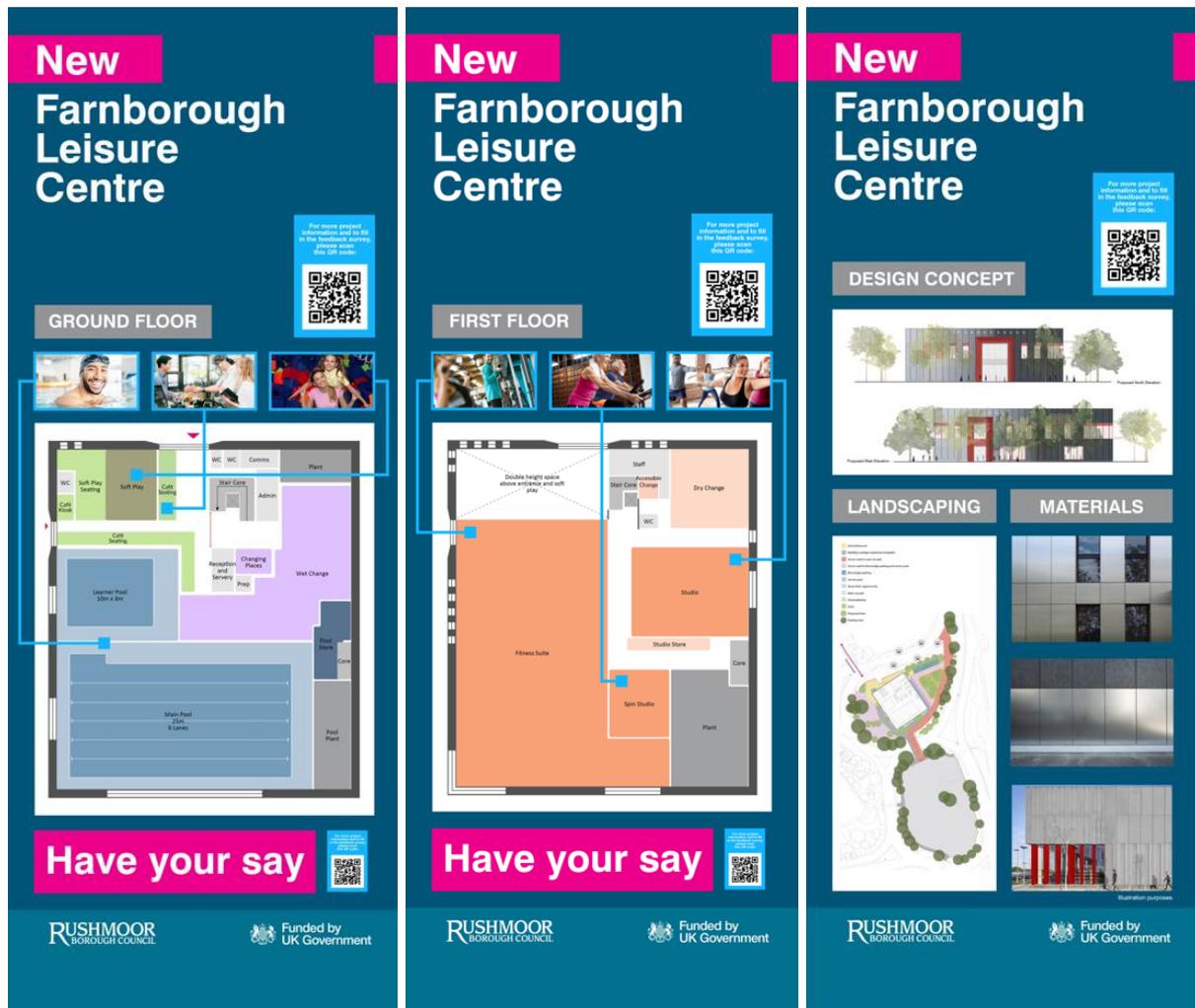


Figure 7: Photographs of in-person public consultation events



4.2.5 Survey

The consultation period ran from 30th June to 25th July 2025 and the online survey was open for the public to complete for the full period. It could be accessed via the Farnborough Leisure Centre website page, QR codes on posters and leaflets, and a link to the online survey was included on RBC social media posts. Physical survey forms were also available at each in-person consultation event.

The survey comprised a mix of multiple-choice and open-ended questions, the survey questions are set out below. It was used to focus the public's attention on specific aspects of the scheme including the external design, play area provision and access to the Leisure Centre. In total, 520 participants completed the digital survey and, the results of which are outlined in the following section.

The questions asked in the survey are set out below:

1. On a scale of 1-10, how much do you like the external building design as shown? (for example, appearance/materials)
2. Which of the proposed facilities are you looking forward to using the most? (select all that apply)
3. How are you most likely to get to the new centre? (select all that apply)

4. What would encourage you to walk, cycle or use public transport to go the centre? (select all that apply)
5. Will the new Leisure Centre encourage you and your family to use the following facilities more, less, or the same?
6. We want to make sure the Leisure Centre is easy to access and available for everyone to use. Are there any features you would like us to consider to make sure you can access and use the facility?
7. The outside of the Leisure Centre will include outdoor spaces for the public to enjoy. How important are the following to you?

4.3 Analysis of Public Consultation

The primary objective of the public consultation analysis was to ascertain the public's opinion towards the proposed designs and identify major themes within the comments that would influence the design development including architectural design, landscaping and public realm and other matters such as accessibility and sustainability.

Overall, 520 participants responded to the survey. The survey data was analysed to identify trends and key themes.

Quantitative responses from rating scales and multiple-choice questions were tallied to determine overall preferences. Qualitative data from open-ended comments were reviewed for recurring keywords, sentiments, and suggestions, which were then categorised into prominent themes. This approach ensures a comprehensive understanding of public opinion based directly on the collected data.

Overall, key themes were noted include:

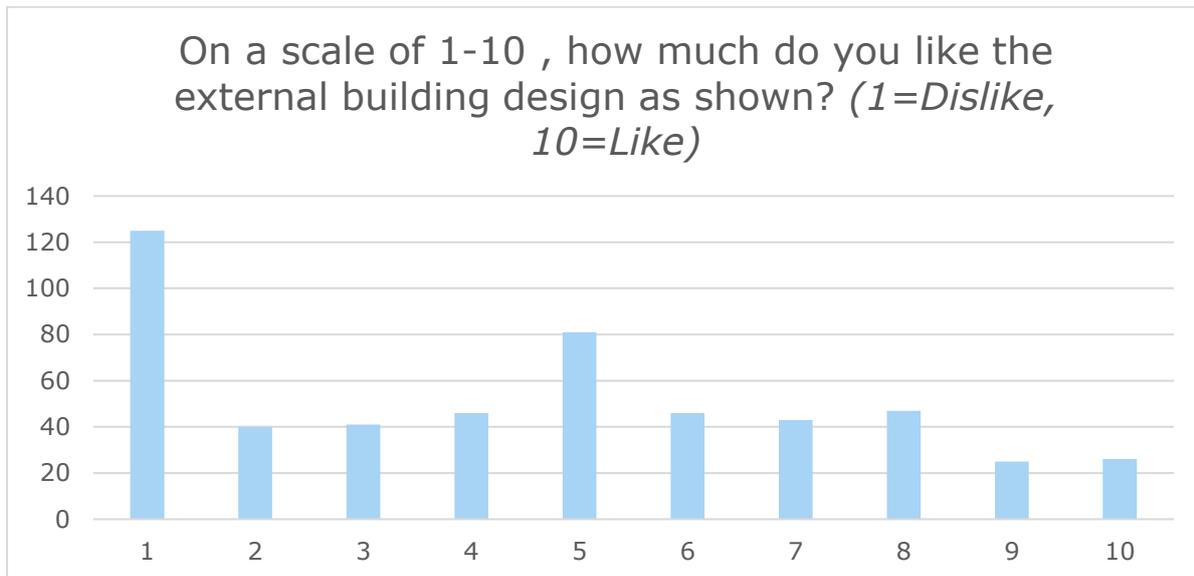
- The requirement for a new Leisure Centre was widely supported.
- Mixed to negative sentiment towards the external building design.
- The size and facility mix of the proposed centre was raised, particularly noting the lack of a sports hall, and reduced facilities compared with the previous Leisure Centre.

The following section outlines the analysis findings per theme:

1. Perception of External Building Design

The public's opinion on the external building design (as presented at the time of the events), as indicated by question one, is mixed.

Figure 8: Quantitative response to question 1



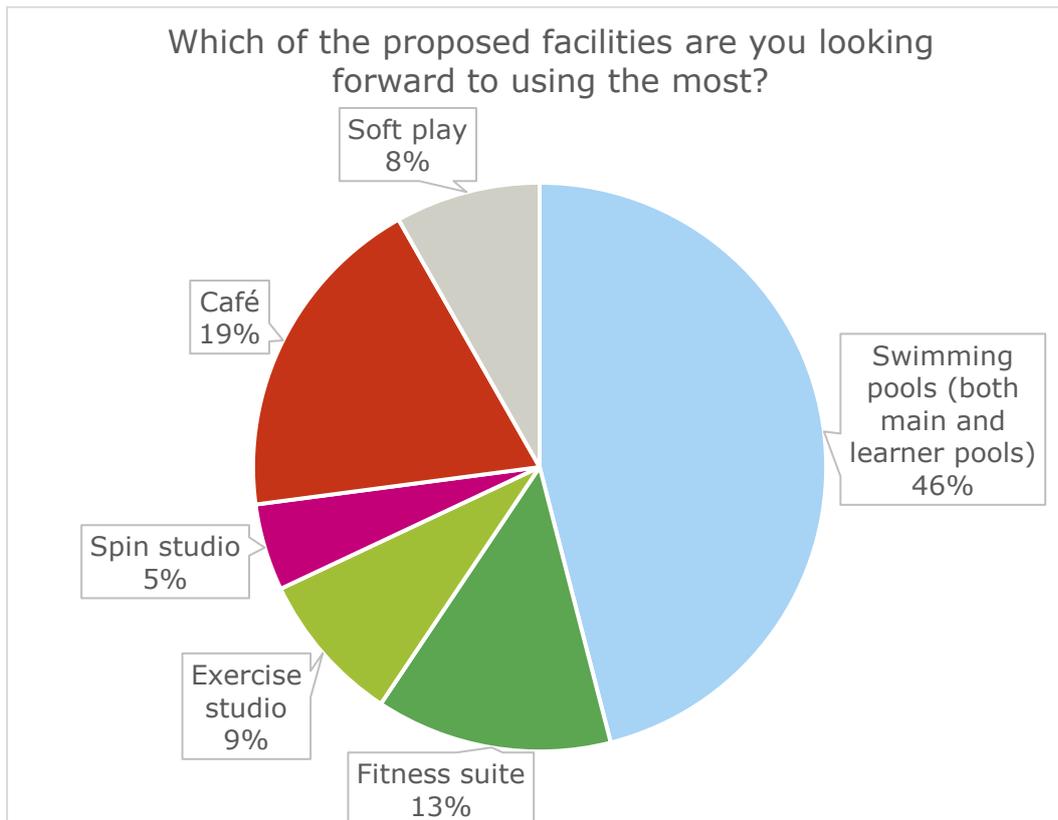
Key observations from open text answers related to the external design include:

- A significant number of comments described the design as "boring," "plain," "industrial," or a "square/grey/concrete box".
- Several respondents felt the design looked "outdated" or like a "1970's building".
- Feedback indicated a desire for more "character," "flair," "artistic embellishment," "modernity," or "innovation" in the design.
- Respondents made suggestions regarding the grey and red colour scheme, including a desire for "warmer colours," "brick," "wood cladding," or a more "natural looking" appearance. Comments about metal cladding not being environmentally friendly or prone to fading were also raised.
- Some commented that the design did not adequately reflect Farnborough's aviation history, missing an opportunity for a distinctive look.
- A few respondents stated that functionality was more important than the look, or that the design was "okay as long as easy to clean".

2. Facility Mix and Size Concerns

In terms of facility mix provision, respondents were most enthusiastic about the provision of the swimming pools. The second most popular facility to be provided was the café followed by the soft play provision. The full breakdown of facility mix preferences, as asked in response to question 2, is shown at the below.

Figure 9: Quantitative response to question 2



Facilities mix was also a dominant theme throughout the open text comments, common themes included comparisons with the proposed facilities against the former Leisure Centre and the perceived size of the new Leisure Centre, especially when compared to the previous one.

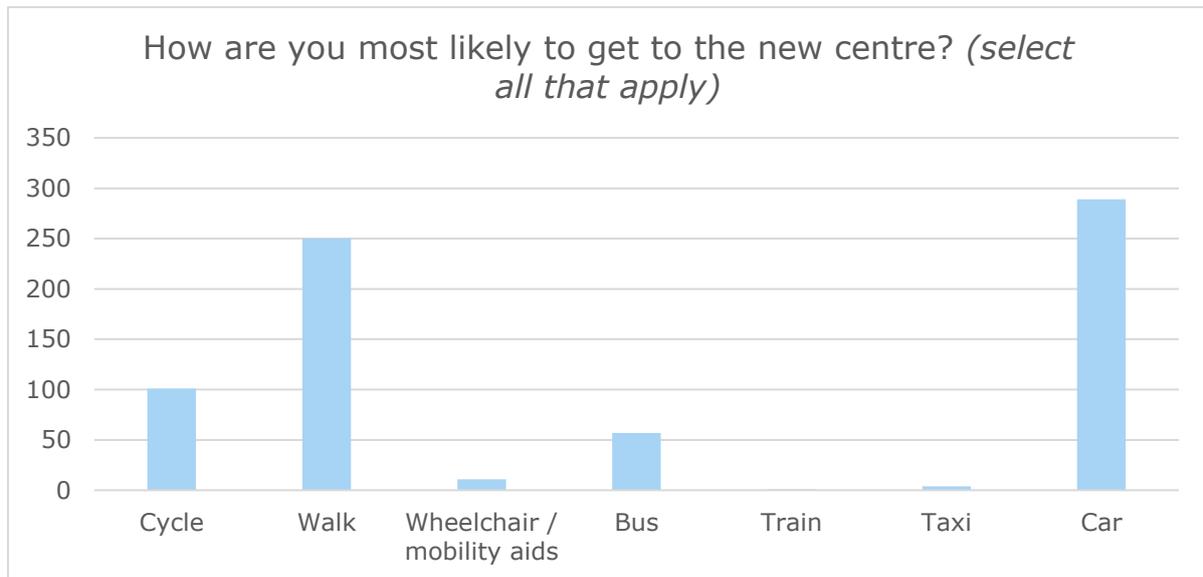
- Lack of Sports Hall/Courts: This was by far the most frequently raised comment. Many respondents commented that the new centre does not include a multi-use sports hall or courts for activities such as:
 - Badminton
 - Squash
 - Tennis
 - Netball
 - Basketball
 - 5-a-side football
 - Table tennis
 - Pickleball/Padel
 - Indoor bowls/carpet bowls
- Another common theme was that Farnborough already has numerous gyms and does not need another one.
- Multiple comments indicated that the swimming pool was too small, limiting usability and comparing unfavourably to other local centres like Camberley or Fleet. Some also requested a 50m pool or a play pool with slides.
- The overall feeling was that the new centre did not offer a like-for-like replacement of the previous Leisure Centre in terms of facility mix. Some respondents mentioned specific amenities from the old centre that are not included in the Proposed Development, including: Sauna/Steam room/Jacuzzi, Bowling alley / Ten-pin bowling, and Party hire/indoor children's party areas.

- Some questioned the need for the soft play area, noting that "360 Play" already exists and is underutilized, and that soft play noise might detract from the cafe environment.
- Given the smaller size, respondents worried about overcapacity, especially during peak hours, and the ability to accommodate local demand.

3. Accessibility and Practical Considerations

The majority of respondents envisaged accessing the new Leisure Centre by foot or by car, amounting to 75% of the total responses to question 3. The full breakdown of respondents answers to question 3 are shown at figure 10 below.

Figure 10: Quantitative response to question 3



Several comments touched upon accessibility and practical aspects:

- Comments were made about parking, including the loss of the previous car park, limited spaces, and a desire for free, ample, or secure parking. Some noted that other local centres offer free parking.
- Suggestions included better walking/cycling routes (safe, continuous, well-lit, clear signposts), more regular/cheaper bus services, and secure (covered, CCTV-monitored) cycle racks.
- Comments were made on internal accessibility, requests included lifts, ramps, step-free access, accessible showers with seats, hoists into the pool, appropriate changing facilities (including family, baby, and gender-separated options), and lower sinks/toilets for children.

4.4 Key Themes considered by the design team

Based on the public feedback, the following major themes were put forward to the design team and used to inform the evolution of the design:

Table 4.3: Summary of public comments and design team responses

You said	We did
Disappointment regarding the lack of a sports hall.	The facility mix was fixed during the inception stage of the project. Strict financial constraints dictated the proposed facility mix

You said	We did
	<p>and the project is predominantly government funded. This funding means that all the activities previously provided within the leisure centre cannot be included. However, there are multiple sports halls available for community use within the borough with sufficient capacity, including 31 badminton courts available for public use.</p>
<p>External design is "ugly," "boring," "industrial," or a "box." There is a strong desire for a more inviting, modern, and aesthetically pleasing building, possibly incorporating warmer materials, more glass, and a clearer link to local identity.</p>	<p>The external design was changed considerably as a result of the public's comments on design;</p> <p>The roofline at the north-western and south-eastern corners has been raised to break away from the monotonous, box-like form of the previous design, introducing a more dynamic profile and creating a stronger presence on the site.</p> <p>The extent of glazing has been significantly increased in key areas to help break down the building's mass and reveal more of the activities taking place within the building. These carefully placed openings and areas of glass not only enhance the facade's sense of animation but also promote a greater sense of transparency.</p> <p>Further colour was added to the façade (this was in addition to the red accents added in response to the first pre-application comments). A colour palette was created from Farnborough Airshow posters, modern buildings around Farnborough, the diverse Nepalese community and the Farnborough brand colours. These were incorporated through fins over the window openings and in internal spaces within the building.</p>
<p>Call for inclusive changing facilities (gender-separated and family options), clear timetables for different user groups (e.g., lane swimming, SEN sessions), and family-friendly amenities.</p>	<p>The design presented at public consultation was in relatively earlier stages and therefore specific information on internal accessibility measures were not available. However, accessibility was a key design consideration throughout the development, particularly for internal layout, wayfinding, and landscape design.</p> <p>The following details have been included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The building includes a lift providing access to all floors. • Inclusive changing facilities are incorporated in the design, with combined accessible WC and shower rooms and a dedicated Changing Places facility. • Circulation routes are generous, clear, and unobstructed to support ease of movement for all users. • Family-friendly amenities and facilities are considered through flexible changing spaces and accessible design elements.
<p>While driving remains a primary mode of transport, improving safe and clear walking, cycling routes, and bus</p>	<p>The Site is highly accessible by public transport with a bus stop located immediately to the north of the Site and the train station within a 10 minute walk of the site.</p>

You said	We did
<p>services, along with secure cycle storage, is important to encourage active travel. Adequate and convenient car parking is also a significant concern.</p>	<p>The landscape is zoned to segregate pedestrians and cyclists from vehicular movement. the vehicular access route and service yard are located to the east of the Site whereas the active travel routes are kept to the west.</p> <p>Active travel routes are designed to be safe, legible and accessible and seamlessly connected to existing routes to promote on-wards active travel.</p> <p>Sufficient and secure cycle storage is located within the Arrival Space, the northern most section of the Site.</p> <p>Seating is provided along the pedestrian routes on Site, especially around the building entrance.</p>

5 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

A wide range of stakeholder groups were consulted throughout the design process to ensure that the proposals meet the needs of local user groups, service operators, and the wider community. The engagement strategy focused on individuals and organisations with a direct interest in using or supporting the delivery of the new Leisure Centre, with input sought on matters such as accessibility, operational needs, and key community concerns.

Stakeholder groups engaged included:

- **Political representatives**, including Rushmoor Borough Council Members.
- **Local authorities**, including Rushmoor Borough Council planning officers and Hampshire County Council highways officers.
- **National Governing Bodies (“NGBs”)**, including Sport England, Swim England, Badminton England, England Netball, England Basketball, and England Volleyball.
- **Local sports clubs and interest groups**, including scuba training providers, artistic swimming, Rushmoor Royals Swimming Club, BMX and skateboarding community representatives, and GKR Karate.
- **Local community and accessibility groups**, including Henry Tyndale School and the Rushmoor Accessibility Action Group (“RAAG”).

Feedback from these stakeholders was reviewed and analysed to inform the evolving design. While some requests, such as the provision of a full-size sports hall or a judo-compliant studio ceiling height, could not be accommodated due to budgetary and structural constraints, the design team has worked to optimise the layout and ensure that spaces are as flexible, inclusive, and functional as possible for a wide range of users.

The table below summarises the stakeholder engagement meetings held during the design process, including dates, locations, and key issues raised. Only stakeholders who responded to engagement invitations are listed.

Table 5.1: Stakeholder engagement summary table			
Stakeholder group/s	Meeting date	Meeting location	Key points raised
GKR Karate	1 st July 2025	Virtual meeting	<p>The team presented the Proposed Development, focusing on the emerging site layout, access to the studio to be used by the club, proposed storage space, changing room layout and views from the studio.</p> <p>Points raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous Leisure Centre studio layout unsuitable for karate. back-to-back classes create potential bottlenecks at entry/exit and corridor. Consideration of a one-way system suggested. • Mirrors along northern wall preferred. • Exit door on northern wall requested. • Sprung floors preferred. jigsaw mats unsuitable. • Proposed 10.6m × 13.8m area sufficient for 15–20 students. larger groups not feasible. • Floor-to-ceiling height (3.5m) adequate for karate, Aikido, Taekwondo. insufficient for judo/Kendo. Meets around 5 of 8 Sport England’s martial arts requirements. <p>Project team/design response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Studio footprint constrained by column structure cannot be enlarged without impacting other spaces. • Unable to accommodate the two entry/exit points to create a one way flow due to fire design constraints <p>The internal design specifics are no set yet, the design will look to incorporate mirrors and sprung floors</p>
Rushmoor Accessibility Action Group	2 nd July 2025	Rushmoor Borough Council offices	<p>The team presented the Proposed Development, focusing on the access through the Site and within the building including the change facility, pool access and lifts.</p> <p>Points raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location of new leisure centre welcomed for improved bus access. • Request for review of barrier/gate sizes for larger wheelchairs. • Clear operator guidance needed for poolside wheelchair spaces. consider a multi-use space to support accessibility (e.g. assistance dogs, wheelchairs). • Four pool chairs required, to be compatible with Changing Places and accessible change facilities.

Table 5.1: Stakeholder engagement summary table			
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Query on whether pool pods can be used with walking frames. • Query on Changing Places management measure to ensure hoist access, controlled door system, and proper supervision. • Hoist required in both accessible changing room (with toilet) and Changing Places facility. • Accessible lockers required. • Assess support for users re-entering pool pods requested. <p>Project team/design response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility and inclusivity have been key principles of the design since the early stages, in line with the Equality Act and Approved Document M. • All internal facilities (first aid, baby change, kitchen, changing areas) are designed as accessible. • All circulation routes are generous, unobstructed and clearly defined, allowing full wheelchair access across the building. • The Changing Places facility is equipped with hoists and a changing bed, positioned for minimal diversion from pool or general centre access. • Pool access includes walk-in steps and a docking station for a moveable lifting platform (pool pod). • The learner pool includes a moving floor, enabling multiple wheelchair users to enter the pool simultaneously before lowering. • A lowered reception counter is incorporated for wheelchair users. • Appropriate visual contrast and manifestations to assist visually impaired users will be implemented across the building.
Henry Tyndale School	30 th June 2025	Virtual meeting	<p>The team presented the Proposed Development, focusing on the emerging landscape design, school party access around the building, changing room design and accessibility measures such as pool access.</p> <p>Points raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fully support the need for a new swimming pool in Farnborough. • Explanation of current struggle to find suitable/available school swimming facilities locally. • Concerns about Changing Village cubicles in regards to size, space for assistants for children with additional needs. • Suggestion that family cubicles are clustered together to improve accessibility and supervision.

Table 5.1: Stakeholder engagement summary table			
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider provision of a swim wheelchair outside the Changing Places and accessible change, in line with RAAG feedback. <p>Project team/design response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All internal facilities are designed to be accessible, including changing areas. The design of the changing areas maximises flexibility for all users. Circulation routes throughout the building are generous, clear, and unobstructed to support access for all users. Combined accessible WC and shower rooms are provided in line with Sport England guidance. A 'Changing Places' room is located within the wet change area and includes a bed and hoists. The Changing Places facility is positioned to be easily accessible from both the pool and wider centre with minimal diversion. The learner pool includes a moving floor, which allows multiple wheelchair users to enter before it is lowered, supporting group use.
Community representative from the BMX community and Skate community	7 th July 2025	Virtual meeting	<p>The team presented the Proposed Development, focusing on the initial proposal for skate park layout.</p> <p>Points raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong view that existing facilities should not be lost unless replaced with equal or greater space. Current ramps are heavily used by the BMX community and are seen as a rare facility in the region. Concerns that the proposed new area is smaller, with constraints (trees, walking/cycling routes) limiting scope for large ramps. Different needs identified: BMX riders require large ramps/frames, while the skate community favours smaller concrete elements. Suggested moving existing BMX ramp frames to a new site to reduce costs. Potential collaboration between Maverick (skate-focused) and a BMX-specialist supplier discussed. Concern that a small beginner-focused facility would not serve the current community and would not act as a replacement space. Requested memorial benches and tree be incorporated into any new scheme, and whether a new park could be named after a rider.

Table 5.1: Stakeholder engagement summary table			
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall concern that the currently proposed location/area is not suitable. <p>Project team/design response:</p> <p>Proposed Skate Park was removed from the Proposed Development. Reprovision of the skatepark on the Civic Quarter site will be taken forward as part of the wider redevelopment in due course. In the meantime, the current facility will remain in place.</p>
Swim Clubs – Scuba Training, Artistic Swimming, Rushmoor Royals, Swim England, Swim England Facilities Team	3 rd July 2025	Rushmoor Borough Council offices	<p>The team presented the Proposed Development, focusing on the facility mix and proposed changing village, pool access, pool depth and pool use.</p> <p>Points raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clubs requested dedicated training spaces, including classroom/AV facilities for scuba and music plug points for artistic swimming. Scuba club requires 3x4 m poolside storage for heavy equipment whereas artistic swimming and Rushmoor Royals have minimal storage requirements. Clubs willing to partner in funding, design advice, and fundraising activities. Operational requirements were outlined by each group: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rushmoor Royals: 3–5 evening sessions weekly, 3–6 lanes, potential to reduce travel to other pools. Scuba club: dedicated deep-water pool time, willing to pay storage fees. Artistic swimming: deep-water requirement in main pool, space for approx. 20 people. <p>Project team/design response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was not possible to accommodate the comments around the size of the learning pool due to budgetry and site constraints. Dedicated AV facilities for scuba could not be included in the facility mix due to space being at a premium given the site and cost constraints.
Sport England	21 st May 2025	Virtual meeting	<p>The team presented the Proposed Development including landscape design and internal layout. They explained why the facility mix was set and how the design had evolved to result in the scheme presented.</p> <p>Points raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The lack of replacement sports hall is likely to be the primary issue

Table 5.1: Stakeholder engagement summary table			
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The absence of an indoor sports facilities strategy or assessment weakens the council's position. Request that more sports NGB's be consulted. <p>Project team/design response:</p> <p>The team provided details of the available sports halls in Farnborough and nearby elsewhere in the borough which are currently meeting the demands of residents, and that all uses located in the previous Leisure Centre (which was last open five years ago) have been relocated.</p> <p>The team also consulted with the following NGBs (in addition to Badminton England who had already been consulted): England Netball, England Basketball and England Volleyball. Each were contacted a number of times but no response has been received at the time.</p>
	30th June 2025	Virtual meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request was made for more detail on engagement with NGBs <p>Team response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional information was provided to Sport England via email on 20.10.25. This included information gathered from England Netball on netball provision in the Borough. The other NGBs were chased for a response however, no response has been received.
RBC Members Briefing	9 th June 2025		<p>The team presented the Proposed Development including explanation of how the design responds to site constraints/opportunities and the facilities required in addition to presenting the emerging concept design, internal layout and elevation design.</p> <p>Points raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issues were raised in regard to the general design, specifically boxy nature of the building Request for the design to reflect Farnborough's aviation heritage, especially within the play area <p>Project team/design response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further aviation elements added into landscape Addition of colour within façade, increased openings and glazing and change to roofline

Table 5.1: Stakeholder engagement summary table			
	1 st September 2025		<p>The team updated members on the design development since the first Members Briefing. The presentation focused on public consultation feedback and how the design had responded and updated members on design development including altered roofline, addition of colour, glazing and vertical openings. Attention was drawn to how the colour palette was chosen and how the incorporated colour responses to the uses within the building. It also highlighted how aviation elements had been incorporated in the proposed landscape scheme.</p> <p>Points raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments from members were supportive of the updated design • Discussions centred around non-planning matters, predominantly around programme, budget and project risks.

6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The public consultation and stakeholder engagement undertaken as part of the development of the new Farnborough Leisure Centre have been critical in shaping a proposal that responds to both the aspirations and practical needs of the community. Through a focused engagement strategy, the Council and design team gathered valuable insights that influenced the design's development.

Pre-application discussions

Pre-application engagement with Rushmoor Borough Council and Hampshire County Council were key in shaping the proposal. Two meetings with Rushmoor Borough Council planning officers established support for the principle and scale of the development, while raising important design, landscaping, highways, and anti-social behaviour suggestions. The design team responded by incorporating measures such as aviation-inspired features, refining massing and adding colour to the façade treatment.

Highways discussions with Hampshire County Council helped develop the access strategy and parking provision, informed by detailed surveys and Transport Assessment Scoping Report. Engagement with the Local Lead Flood Authority highlighted flood risk and drainage requirements, leading to a 300mm raise in the Finished Floor Levels.

Public Consultation

The public consultation received a strong response, with over 500 survey completions and over 2,500 visits to the online consultation microsite. In-person events were well attended, and promotional efforts across digital, print, and social media ensured wide community awareness. Feedback showed clear and recurring themes. These views helped shape a series of design updates, notably revisions to the external appearance including a more dynamic roofline, greater use of glazing, and a more locally inspired colour palette. However, some concerns, particularly around the facility mix, could not be fully resolved due to budget constraints and were fixed at earlier stages of the project. The events provided an opportunity for points such as this to be explained to attendees and allowed for other concerns or comments to be discussed.

Stakeholder Engagement

Parallel to public consultation, detailed stakeholder engagement was carried out with user groups, National Governing Bodies, schools, accessibility groups and local politicians. Some requests, such as larger studios, sports hall provision, or taller internal spaces, could not be fully met due to structural and funding limitations. Nevertheless, where possible, design refinements were made to maximise flexibility, support specialist needs, and improve the user experience.

In conclusion, this report demonstrates that meaningful consultation and engagement, including early pre-application discussions, public consultation, and ongoing stakeholder engagement, have played a central role in shaping the proposed Farnborough Leisure Centre. Feedback from the pre-application stage helped identify key design issues, such as dissatisfaction with the external appearance and facility mix, which informed subsequent design revisions. While some requests, particularly for a full sports hall or larger studio spaces, could not be fully accommodated due to budgetary and structural constraints, the proposals have evolved significantly to better reflect local identity, improve accessibility, and provide flexible and inclusive spaces. This iterative process has resulted in a scheme that balances community aspirations with practical delivery realities, laying a strong foundation for a modern, welcoming Leisure Centre that serves Farnborough's diverse population.

APPENDIX 1
COPY OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION FEEDBACK FORM

Farnborough Leisure Centre

Feedback Form

Farnborough Leisure Centre Feedback Form

We would like your views on our latest designs for Farnborough's new leisure centre. Please complete our survey to give us your feedback or come to one of our drop-in sessions.

Our closing date is Friday 25 July.

The new leisure centre is set to include a 25-metre swimming pool and learner pool, along with a gym offering more than 100 fitness stations including specialist power-assisted equipment for people who are less mobile or active, studio space, a spin studio, soft play and a café.

Your feedback will feed into the designs for the new Leisure centre and the planning application.

Please submit this survey in the ballot box provided.

Alternatively, you can view all the plans and fill in the feedback survey on our project website by scanning this QR code or visit www.new-farnborough-leisure-centre.co.uk



1. On a scale of 1-10, how much do you like the external building design as shown? (for example, appearance/materials).

dislike like

←-----→

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

If you dislike it, please add any suggestions/comments here:

2. Which of the proposed facilities are you looking forward to using the most? (tick all that apply)

- Swimming pool (both main and learner pools)
 Fitness suite
 Exercise studio
 Spin studio
 Café
 Soft play

3. How are you most likely to get to the new centre? (tick all that apply)

- Cycle Train
 Walk Taxi
 Wheelchair / Mobility Aid Car
 Bus Other (please specify)
- _____

4. What would encourage you to walk, cycle or use public transport to go the centre? (tick all that apply)

- Better walking/cycling routes
 More regular bus services
 Secure cycle racks/cycle hubs
 Other (please specify): _____

Farnborough Leisure Centre

Feedback Form

5. Will the new leisure centre encourage you and your family to use the following facilities more, less, or the same as now? (please tick one answer per option)

	More	Less	Same	Don't Know
Princes Mead Shopping Centre				
The Meads Shopping Centre				
Farnborough library				
Local shops				
Local cafés and restaurants				
Cinema				
Other:				

If you answered 'other', please provide further detail

6. We want to make sure the leisure centre is easy to access and available for everyone to use. Are there any features you would like us to consider to make sure you can access and use the facility?

7. The outside of the leisure centre will include outdoor spaces for the public to enjoy. How important are the following to you? (please tick one answer per option)

	Important	Not Important	Neutral
Outdoor café space			
Space to sit/benches			
Skatepark			
Planting / trees / biodiversity			

To help us understand feedback from different perspectives, please tell us:

8. What is your age group?

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Under 16 | <input type="checkbox"/> 45-54 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 16-24 | <input type="checkbox"/> 55-64 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 25-34 | <input type="checkbox"/> 65-74 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 35-44 | <input type="checkbox"/> 75+ |

9. What is your gender?

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Male | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-binary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Female | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transgender | |

10. What is your ethnicity?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I'd prefer not to say | <input type="checkbox"/> Black or British Black – Caribbean |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White-British | <input type="checkbox"/> Black or British Black – African |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White-Other | <input type="checkbox"/> Black – Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White – Irish | <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed – White and Asian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White – Gypsy/Traveller | <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed – White and Black Caribbean |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or British Asian – Nepali | <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed – White and Black African |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or British Asian – Chinese | <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed – Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or British Asian – Indian | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian – Other | _____ |

11. Would you say you live...

- In Farnborough
- In Aldershot
- Outside the borough of Rushmoor
- Other (please specify) _____

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	The New Farnborough Leisure Centre Design Proposals
Reference number (if applicable)	
Service Area	Regeneration
Date screening completed	11/12/2025
Screening author name	Kate Hilliard
Policy Team sign off	
Authorising Director/Head of Service name	Karen Edwards

1. Please provide a summary of the proposal

Please outline:

What are the aims / objectives of this proposal?

The former Farnborough Leisure Centre closed in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. A Cabinet decision was made in 2021 that due to the position with the leisure market at the time, increased operational costs and other risks associated with the ongoing operation of the facility, it would remain closed. The leisure centre was subsequently demolished in 2022 and the site cleared ready for a new facility.

In January 2023, the Council was awarded £20m of Levelling Up Funding to support the delivery of a Leisure and Cultural Hub in Farnborough on the plot of the previously demolished leisure centre, forming part of the wider Civic Quarter masterplan. Design work was undertaken during 2023 and proposals shared with the public in early 2024.



A market tested cost plan was commissioned to ensure the estimated project costs were clear before the decision to move to the next stage of delivery. That work, alongside work by the Council's cost consultant, confirmed that costs had increased significantly, and the Leisure and Cultural Hub Project as designed would be completely unaffordable.

The Council's project team engaged with a team of specialist consultants, known as Delivery Associates, provided by Government to look at how the project could be adjusted to achieve the most important outcomes for local people whilst being affordable for the Council. A revised project proposal was shared with the Levelling-Up Unit at MHCLG in late 2024 with full approval to proceed, utilising the remaining £18.5m funding, given by Government in April 2025, together with confirmation that the levelling up funding would be extended until March 2028.

The revised scheme will require an element of Council borrowing that will be offset by Operator income.

The revised scheme includes the provision of a new Leisure Centre in Farnborough comprising:

- Main pool - 25m 6-lane
- Learner Pool with moveable floor- 10m x 8m
- 100+ station Fitness Suite - (*including specialist equipment which provides a low impact, full-body workout circuit for the older population and people with long-term health conditions who cannot use standard gym equipment*)
- 2 x Studios
- Spin studio
- Café
- Soft Play area
- Wet and dry change facilities

The revised scope also incorporates a play park (£106 funded) and the provision of a 130 space surface car park.

The new Leisure centre will be delivered to the immediate south of the existing town centre high street on Queensmead car park, directly adjacent to existing public transport nodes which will help to improve access for the local community.

The delivery of a new leisure centre for Farnborough is a significant priority for local people and the Council's Cabinet.

The focus is to proceed at pace to ensure that the new centre can be delivered within the Levelling Up funding timelines and to ensure a much need facility for local people.

Will this deliver any savings?

No, The project currently is anticipated to be funded by external funding of £18.5m of Levelling Up Fund Grant, supplemented by financial borrowing.

What benefits or change will we see from this proposal?

As set out in the original Levelling up bid, a new leisure facility will help towards addressing health inequalities within the borough.

The provision of a new leisure centre in Farnborough is a key priority for the council and aims to increase participation in physical activity across all age groups and improve health and happiness of

local communities through a high-quality, inclusive, and community-focused facility that promotes health, wellbeing, and social connection for the residents of Farnborough and the wider Rushmoor Borough. The core objectives of the new facility are:

- Provision of leisure facilities designed to encourage increased community participation, social cohesion, and active lifestyles.
- Delivery of significant health, wellbeing and social benefits for Farnborough and the wider Borough through improved leisure provision.
- Creation of quality public realm which seeks to enhance connections between the site and wider town centre enhancing community wellbeing.
- Creation of local jobs, both temporary as part of the construction process and permanent following the opening of the leisure centre – including six annual work placements, 12 locally prioritised jobs per year, 291 training weeks, 20 qualifications, and 300 hours of green skills training.
- Encouragement of increased footfall and linked trips to the town centre.
- Encouraging sustainable travel through the provision of convenient and safe cycle storage and accessible and integrated active travel routes through the Site.

Which key groups of people or areas of the borough are involved?

Stakeholder groups engaged included:

- Political representatives, including Rushmoor Borough Council Members.
- Local authorities, including Rushmoor Borough Council planning officers and Hampshire County Council highways officers.
- National Governing Bodies (“NGBs”), including Sport England, Swim England, Badminton England, England Netball, England Basketball, and England Volleyball.
- Local sports clubs and interest groups, including scuba training providers, artistic swimming, Rushmoor Royals Swimming Club, BMX and skateboarding community representatives, and GKR Karate.
- Local community and accessibility groups, including Henry Tyndale School and the Rushmoor Accessibility Action Group (“RAAG”)

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	No
Other public sector Organisations	
Others	Please specify:

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

No impact in relation to the design but will be addressed in the Operator Equality Impact Assessment

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

Please see attached (Appendix A) The Statement of Community Involvement report detailing all public consultation and stakeholder and user group engagement as part of the scheme.

Engagement workshops with accessibility groups and representatives will be continued into the technical design stage to ensure that the necessary details are included and allowed for.

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.	Yes or No	<p>The design proposals have evolved significantly to better reflect local identity, improve accessibility, and provide flexible and inclusive spaces.</p> <p>The design supports users across all age groups, from children to older adults. The design supports used across all age groups ensuring that access and movement through the building are straightforward and comfortable for younger and older users.</p>

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>
				<p>Features such as clear sightlines from the café to the learner pool and visual connections to external play area enhance safety and comfort for families.</p> <p>The layout enables operators to deliver a wide range of age-specific classes and programmes, ensuring the centre remains welcoming and accessible for people of all ages.</p> <p>See Section 5.5 and 6.2 of attached RIBA 3 Report (Appendix 1)</p>

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	Yes or No	Choose an item.	Yes or No	<p>The design proposals have evolved significantly to better reflect local identity, improve accessibility, and provide flexible and inclusive spaces.</p> <p>The whole centre will be accessible for wheelchair users, with level thresholds and no intermediate steps along access routes. All circulation routes are designed to be clear, generous and unobstructed and will provide full access to all the functions within the building.</p> <p>Lifts will be sized to accommodate wheelchairs and pushchairs. The scheme includes 1no. lift, which IS suitable to take wheelchair users. This is sized to accommodate a wheelchair user and a standing companion.</p> <p>All turnstiles / security gates will include wider gates, to accommodate users such as those in wheelchairs and with assistance dogs.</p> <p>See 6.2 of RIBA 3 Report (Appendix 1)</p>

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	Yes or No	Choose an item.	Yes or No	<p>The proposals have evolved significantly to better reflect local identity, improve accessibility, and provide flexible and inclusive spaces.</p> <p>The design ensures privacy and safe movement around the centre (doors not opening across main access routes, vision panels only where appropriate) particularly in areas such as WCs and changing rooms, which is important for trans and gender diverse users. This iterative design process will continue to be addressed with the appointment of the operator.</p>

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>
N/A	Yes	Choose an item.	N/A	No direct or indirect impact.

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.	N/A	Plans include examples of a Family WC provision (larger room with, WC and space for baby changing and nursing). The Café will provide a supportive, welcome space for people who are pregnant or new parents, offering space to rest, feed and socialise. Contributing to positive inclusion and comfort.

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.	N/A	The facilities are designed to be accessible and usable by people from all ethnic backgrounds.

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>
				<p>The design aims to reflect and celebrate the diversity across the local community (aviation + community concept).</p> <p>The centre is intended to be a civic hub that fosters connection across communities (bringing people together, supporting wellbeing, connection, community cohesion).</p>

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.	N/A	<p>The Proposals design development features colour ways of community and reflects those colours in the design. Farnborough’s rich blend of cultures offers a unique opportunity to use colour thoughtfully, reflecting the community’s diversity and creating a welcoming, inclusive atmosphere.</p> <p>The design approach acknowledges that users, including those from faith backgrounds value privacy and modesty. This has informed the general layout or changing and circulation spaces.</p>

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.	N/A	<p>Accordingly, the proposal has been designed to reflect the guidelines of the inclusive design principles embodied in the Equality Act assuring that the access and use of the facilities consider and provide for different user groups. The layout of changing, showering and circulation areas has been developed to ensure all users can access facilities with dignity, supporting appropriate separation of spaces and a welcoming environment for all genders.</p>

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.	N/A	Nothing in the physical design creates barriers for people based on sexual orientation"

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.	N/A	The design allows users to choose between sitting in open, expansive areas or more sheltered, intimate corners. This flexibility is especially important for individuals with neurodivergent needs, who may feel more comfortable in smaller, less exposed spaces. The result is a café environment that is welcoming, adaptable, and supportive of the diverse needs of the community.

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.

Equalities Impact Assessment: Full Assessment

Before completing this form, you should have filled out an Equality Screening Tool and obtained approval from your Head of Service and the Policy Team. This Equality Impact Assessment should be completed if the Screening Tool identifies a potentially negative impact on one or more specific groups or there is a large-scale proposal or impact. It can also be used to highlight positive impacts.

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.

If unsure, contact the Policy Team.

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.

Name of Project	
Reference number (if applicable)	
Service Area	
Date assessment completed	

Before completing the EIA, please read the guidance and FAQs. For further help and advice please contact Policy@rushmoor.gov.uk

1. Please provide a summary of the proposal

Please provide:

- How the service works now (if relevant) and what changes are being suggested.
- Who will benefit from the proposal and what the results will be.
- Any savings the proposal might bring.

2. What impact will this change have on different groups of people?

This section of the assessment examines the broad impacts of the proposed changes on different groups, such as service users, local communities, and businesses.

2A. Who will your proposal impact?

Please consider:

- Will the impact mostly affect people outside the council, inside, or both?
- Who will be affected – residents, service users, local communities, businesses, visitors, or others? The effect on staff will be looked at separately.
- What will the impact be – for example, less access to services or travel disruptions?

2B. What impact will this change have on staff?

Please consider:

- Who will be impacted? For example, which services, teams or buildings? How many staff?
- What will the impact be? For example, changes to structure, reporting lines, staff levels, responsibilities, location, access to services, new working methods, or development opportunities.

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

This section of the assessment looks in detail at the likely impacts of the proposed changes on different sections of our diverse community.

3A. What data have you used to assess impacts?

Please provide:

- Details of the evidence used to check the impact on people with protected characteristics and disadvantaged groups (see guidance for help).
- A breakdown of service user details, if possible.
- A short summary of what the findings mean.

3B: Assessing the Impacts on People with Protected Characteristics and Disadvantaged Groups in the table below.

Direct and indirect impacts

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

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/ Neutral/ Negative	What are the positive and/or negative impacts?	How will potential benefits be enhanced or negative impacts be eliminated or reduced? <i>Consider both direct and indirect impacts when completing this table</i>
Choose an item.		

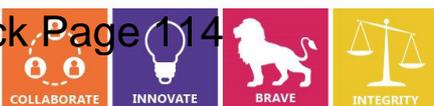
Protected characteristic – Disability

(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/ Neutral/ Negative	What are the positive and/or negative impacts?	How will potential benefits be enhanced or negative impacts be eliminated or reduced? <i>Consider both direct and indirect impacts when completing this table</i>
Choose an item.		

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/ Neutral/ Negative	What are the positive and/or negative impacts?	How will potential benefits be enhanced or negative impacts be eliminated or reduced? <i>Consider both direct and indirect impacts when completing this table</i>
Choose an item.		

Protected characteristic - Marriage and Civil Partnership

Positive/ Neutral/ Negative	What are the positive and/or negative impacts?	How will potential benefits be enhanced or negative impacts be eliminated or reduced? <i>Consider both direct and indirect impacts when completing this table</i>
Choose an item.		

Protected characteristic – Pregnancy and Maternity

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

Positive/ Neutral/ Negative	What are the positive and/or negative impacts?	How will potential benefits be enhanced or negative impacts be eliminated or reduced? <i>Consider both direct and indirect impacts when completing this table</i>
Choose an item.		

Protected characteristic – Race or ethnicity

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

Positive/ Neutral/ Negative	What are the positive and/or negative impacts?	How will potential benefits be enhanced or negative impacts be eliminated or reduced? <i>Consider both direct and indirect impacts when completing this table</i>
Choose an item.		

Protected characteristic – Religion or belief

(include no faith)

Positive/ Neutral/ Negative	What are the positive and/or negative impacts?	How will potential benefits be enhanced or negative impacts be eliminated or reduced? <i>Consider both direct and indirect impacts when completing this table</i>
Choose an item.		

Protected characteristic - Sex

(Under the Equality Act 2010 and following the 2025 Supreme Court ruling on 15 April 2025, 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/ Neutral/ Negative	What are the positive and/or negative impacts?	How will potential benefits be enhanced or negative impacts be eliminated or reduced? <i>Consider both direct and indirect impacts when completing this table</i>
Choose an item.		

Protected characteristic - Sexual Orientation

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

Positive/ Neutral/ Negative	What are the positive and/or negative impacts?	How will potential benefits be enhanced or negative impacts be eliminated or reduced? <i>Consider both direct and indirect impacts when completing this table</i>
Choose an item.		

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/ Neutral/ Negative	What are the positive and/or negative impacts?	How will potential benefits be enhanced or negative impacts be eliminated or reduced? <i>Consider both direct and indirect impacts when completing this table</i>
Choose an item.		

4. How do you plan to mitigate negative impacts?

Please provide:

- An outline of actions and the expected outcomes
- Any governance and funding which will support these actions if relevant

5. Please provide details of your consultation and/or engagement plans.

Please provide:

- Details of what steps you have taken or plan to take to consult or engage the whole community or specific groups affected by the proposal.
- Who has been or will be consulted or engaged with?
- Methods used or that will be used to engage or consult.
- Key findings or feedback (if completed)

If you are planning or completing key strategic participation and engagement work or if you need guidance and support, please get in touch with the communications team

communications@rushmoor.gov.uk

If you have **not** completed any engagement activity and do not plan to, you should outline why this decision has been made.

6. Once the proposal has been implemented, how will impacts be monitored and reviewed?

Please provide details in the table below.

Action	Responsible team or officer	Deadline

Please send the completed EIA to Policy@rushmoor.gov.uk for quality checking by the policy team. All Equality Impact Assessments must be attached with any report to a decision-making board and should be made publicly available on request.

This Equality Impact Assessment has been completed in accordance with the guidance and using appropriate evidence.

Member	Name	Signed	Date
Staff member completing this form			
Policy Team			
Director or Head of Service			

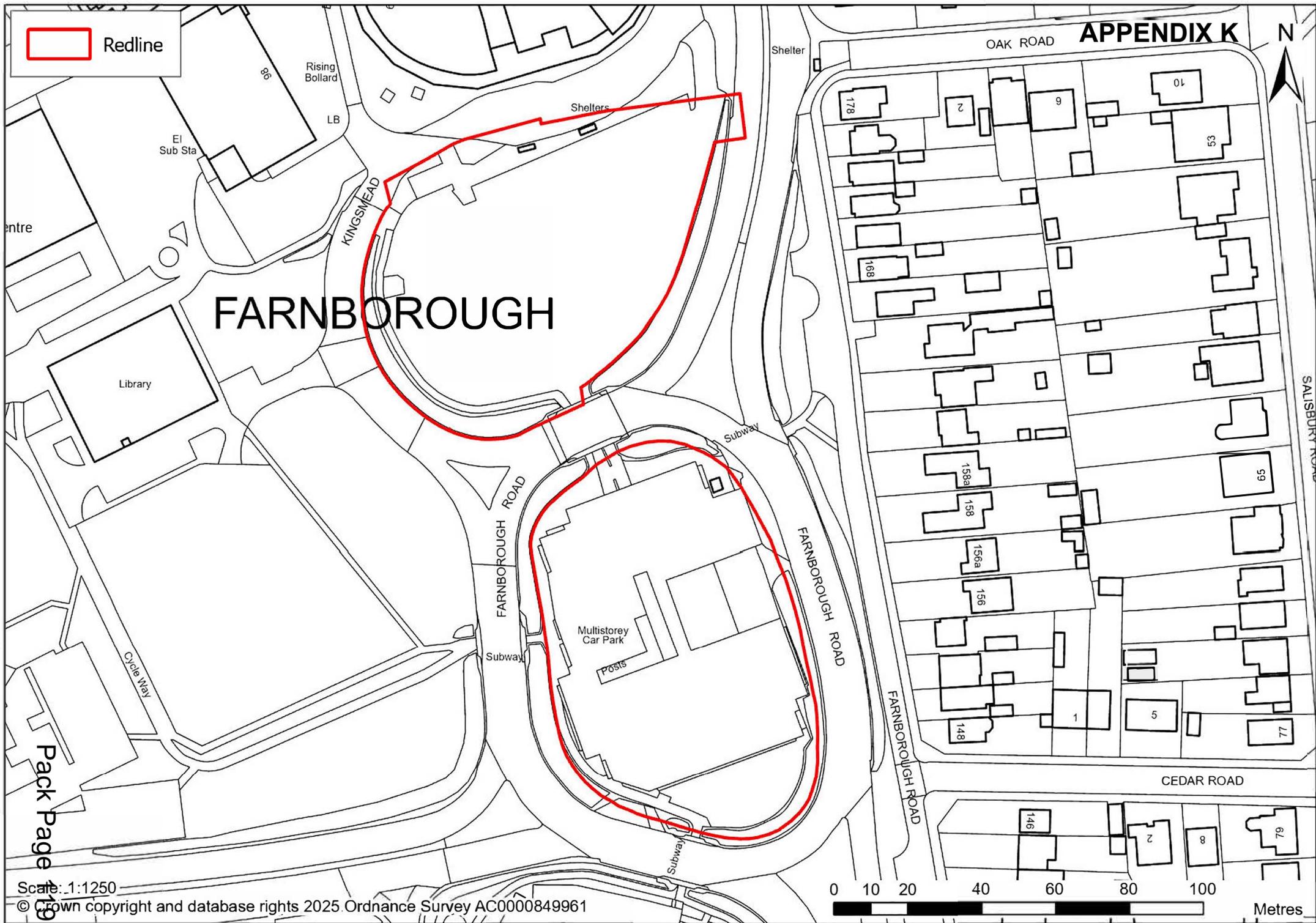


Redline

APPENDIX K

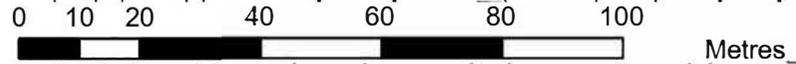


FARNBOROUGH



Scale: 1:1250

© Crown copyright and database rights 2025 Ordnance Survey AC0000849961



This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank