

Public Document Pack



RUSHMOOR BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

*to be held remotely on
Tuesday, 19th January, 2021 at 7.00 pm*

To:

Cllr D.E. Clifford, Leader of the Council
Cllr K.H. Muschamp, Deputy Leader and Customer Experience and Improvement
Portfolio Holder

Cllr Marina Munro, Planning and Economy Portfolio Holder
Cllr A.R. Newell, Democracy, Strategy and Partnerships Portfolio Holder
Cllr M.L. Sheehan, Operational Services Portfolio Holder
Cllr P.G. Taylor, Corporate Services Portfolio Holder
Cllr M.J. Tennant, Major Projects and Property Portfolio Holder

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

A G E N D A

1. **MINUTES** – (Pages 1 - 6)

To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 8th December, 2021 (copy attached).

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM BUDGET STRATEGY WORKING GROUP** – (Pages
7 - 12)

(Cllr Paul Taylor, Chairman of the Budget Strategy Working Group)

To consider Report No. FIN2101 (copy attached), which sets out recommendations
from the Budget Strategy Working Group, resulting from its work over the past year.

3. **SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN 2021/23** – (Pages 13 - 34)
(Cllr Adrian Newell, Democracy, Strategy and Partnerships Portfolio Holder)

To consider Report No. DCS2101 (copy attached), which sets out the Council's proposed Supporting Communities Strategy and Action Plan 2021/23.

4. **PEOPLE STRATEGY 2020-23** – (Pages 35 - 54)
(Cllr Paul Taylor, Corporate Services Portfolio Holder)

To consider Report No. HROD2101 (copy attached), which sets out the Council's proposed People Strategy 2020-23.

5. **REVIEW OF CHARGING FOR PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE** – (Pages 55 - 64)
(Cllr Marina Munro, Planning and Economy Portfolio Holder)

To consider Report No. EPSH2101 (copy attached), which sets out proposed changes to the level of charges for pre-application planning advice.

6. **ALDERSHOT REGENERATION UPDATE - UNION STREET, ALDERSHOT** –
(Pages 65 - 70)
(Cllr Martin Tennant, Major Projects and Property Portfolio Holder)

To consider Report No. RP2101 (copy attached), which sets out a progress update in relation to the redevelopment of Union Street, Aldershot and seeks approval to establish a Cabinet Working Group to support the completion of the due diligence processes in relation to the scheme.

CABINET

Meeting held remotely on Tuesday, 8th December, 2020 at 7.00 pm.

Voting Members

Cllr D.E. Clifford, Leader of the Council
Cllr K.H. Muschamp, Deputy Leader and Customer Experience and Improvement
Portfolio Holder

Cllr A.R. Newell, Democracy, Strategy and Partnerships Portfolio Holder
Cllr M.L. Sheehan, Operational Services Portfolio Holder
Cllr P.G. Taylor, Corporate Services Portfolio Holder
Cllr M.J. Tennant, Major Projects and Property Portfolio Holder

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor Marina Munro.

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 **21st December, 2020**.

36. MINUTES –

The Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 10th November, 2020 were confirmed by the Chairman.

37. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING AND FORECASTING 2020/21 - QUARTER 2 – (Cllr Paul Taylor, Corporate Services Portfolio Holder)

The Cabinet considered Report No. FIN2031, which set out the anticipated financial position for 2020/21, based on the monitoring exercise carried out during October and November, 2020. Members were informed that the Covid-19 pandemic had continued to have a widespread impact on local authority budgets, particularly in relation to a significant loss of income from services. In Rushmoor, the greatest impacts had been seen in relation to car parking income, planning fees and income from events and performances at the Princes Hall, Aldershot. It was reported that the Council had agreed to defer interest payments on loans to provide cashflow support to Farnborough International Limited, following the cancellation of the 2020 Airshow. Since this time, Barclays, as primary creditor, had proposed to capitalise interest in line with the Intercreditor Agreement. This would mean that, unless a compromise could be agreed with Barclays, the Council would not receive the deferred interest until 2026 at the earliest. Included in the other information contained in the Report were the risks and uncertainties faced by the Council at this time.

The Cabinet **RESOLVED** that

- (i) the latest revenue forecasts and financial impact from Covid-19, as set out in Report No. FIN2031, be noted; and
- (ii) the establishment of a Local Elections reserve, noting the reserve movement proposed to support the General Fund in 2020/21, be approved.

38. CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING AND FORECASTING 2020/21 - QUARTER 2 –

(Cllr Paul Taylor, Corporate Services Portfolio Holder)

The Cabinet received Report No. FIN2029, which provided the latest forecast regarding the Council's Capital Programme for 2020/21, based on the monitoring exercise carried out during September, 2020. The Report advised that the Capital Programme for 2020/21, allowing for slippages from the previous financial year and additional approvals, totalled £56,299,000. It was noted that projects of major financial significance to the Council in the Capital Programme included the Aldershot Town Centre Integration and Union Street developments, the Farnborough Civic Quarter development, the replacement of cremators at the Rushmoor Crematorium, the conversion of Voyager House, the establishment of a housing company and the further acquisition of investment properties. It was explained that, of the approved capital budget of £56.3 million, only £33.3 million was forecast to be spent by the end of 2020/21. It was reported that the variance and increase in approved budget since its approval at the Council meeting on 20th February, 2020 were due to delays in capital projects being completed in the 2019/20 financial year.

The Cabinet RESOLVED that

- (i) the latest Capital Programme monitoring position, as set out in Tables 1 and 2 of Report No. FIN2029, be noted;
- (ii) the virement of £15,000 budget from Telephony Call Centre Upgrade to Ice Programme – Modernising Corporate and Service Systems be approved;
- (iii) the virement of £40,000 budget from App development of Love Rushmoor to Ice Programme – Modernising Corporate and Service Systems be approved; and
- (iv) the additional capital funding requests, as set out in paragraph 3.9 of the Report, be approved.

39. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2021/22 TO 2024/25 - UPDATE –

(Cllr Paul Taylor, Corporate Services Portfolio Holder)

The Cabinet received Report No. FIN2032, which set out an outdate on the key factors influencing the preparation of the Council's 2021/22 budget. The Report also provided an update on the financial position of the Council and set out how Members would be kept informed of changes in the forecast over the medium term for financial planning purposes.

Members were informed that the Council, along with many other local authorities, continued to face significant financial challenges over the medium term. Risks and uncertainties, particularly around Brexit, Covid-19 and the global economy made it difficult for the Council to accurately predict its medium term financial position. The Report set out details of the 2021/22 Spending Review by the Government and the prospects for local government funding in 2021/22. The Cabinet was informed that all of the factors listed in the Report would make the budget setting process difficult

this year but Members were assured that, despite these pressures, it would be possible to set a balanced budget. The Cabinet expressed gratitude to Council officers that had contributed to the Council continuing to provide its core services in unprecedented circumstances.

The Cabinet NOTED the impact from Covid-19 on the financial planning process and associated risks and uncertainties, as set out in Section 7 of Report No. FIN2032.

40. **COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME 2021/22 –**
(Cllr Diane Bedford, Chairman of the Council Tax Support Task and Finish Group)

The Cabinet considered Report No. FIN2030, which set out the work carried out by the Council's Council Tax Support Task and Finish Group in respect of potential changes to the Council Tax Support Scheme. The Chairman welcomed Cllr Mrs. D.B. Bedford, Chairman of the Council Tax Support Task and Finish Group, who was attending to report on the Group's recommendations.

The Council Tax Support Task and Finish Group had met on 2nd March, 2020 and 6th October, 2020 to consider its recommendations to the Cabinet. The Group had considered the on-going impact of Covid-19 and had paid specific attention to a number of matters during its deliberations and these were set out in paragraph 2 of the Report. Having considered all relevant factors, the Group recommended that no changes should be made to the Council Tax Support Scheme for 2021/22. This would mean that the minimum contribution would remain at 12%. Additionally, it was recommended that the fundamental review of the Scheme, that had been previously agreed to commence in 2020, should be deferred until 2021/22.

The Cabinet expressed gratitude to the Council Tax Support Task and Finish Group for its work in producing these recommendations.

The Cabinet

- (i) **RECOMMENDED TO THE COUNCIL** that the current Council Tax Support Scheme for working age customers be retained for 2021/22, with the usual alignment to Housing Benefit Rates; and
- (ii) **RESOLVED** that:
 - (a) in light of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, the deferral until 2021/22 of the fundamental review of the Council Tax Support Scheme be approved;
 - (b) the use of any remaining funds from the Covid-19 Council Tax Hardship Fund to continue to support recipients of Council Tax Support, alongside the Council's own Exceptional Hardship Fund, be approved;

- (c) the deliberations and considerations of the Council Tax Support Task and Finish Group in arriving at its recommendations, as set out in Report No. FIN2030, be noted; and
- (d) the Council Tax Support Task and Finish Group's views on Hardship Funds and Government funding in 2021/22, as set out in paragraphs 1.12 and 1.13 of the Report, be noted.

41. **RENEWAL OF BUILDING CONTROL PARTNERSHIP –**
(Cllr Marina Munro, Planning and Economy Portfolio Holder)

The Cabinet considered Report No. EPSH2036, which set out a proposal to renew the Hart and Rushmoor Building Control Partnership as a shared service between the two authorities to discharge the statutory building control functions for both areas until 31st March, 2025.

Members were reminded that Hart District Council and Rushmoor Borough Council had formed the Partnership in July, 2015. Since this time, the Partnership had performed well and now held an estimated 70% of local building control work. The Report set out how fees and costs had been split previously. It was proposed that, in future, the split would be proportionate to the amount of work carried out for each authority. The Report made reference to renewing the Partnership until 31st March 2026 but it was explained that Hart District Council had only received agreement for the period to 31st March, 2025. For this reason, agreement was now being sought for the same period. The Cabinet expressed strong support for the continuation of the Partnership and acknowledged the high quality of work carried out by the Partnership since its formation.

The Cabinet RESOLVED that the renewal of the Hart and Rushmoor Building Control Partnership, to provide a shared building control service until 31st March, 2025, unless terminated earlier in accordance with the provisions of the agreed deed, be approved.

42. **APPLICATION FOR RENT RELIEF BY ALDERSHOT TOWN FOOTBALL CLUB –**
(Cllr Martin Tennant, Major Projects and Property Portfolio Holder)

The Cabinet considered Report No. RP2017, which set out details of an application by Aldershot Town Football Club Limited for relief from rental payments due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and the Club's inability to raise income.

Members were informed that the Club had been prohibited from playing games in front of crowds from March, 2020 until the end of the second national lockdown on 2nd December, 2020. It was reported that the Club was now allowed a prescribed number of spectators at home games, subject to strict Covid-secure requirements. Further discussions were taking place in respect of what this meant for the Club's ability to pay rent. In expressing support for the approval of the application for rent relief, Members made reference to the considerable amount of work that the Club and the Chairman, in particular, did in the local community. This was considered to be a reasonable step to help to support the Club at this difficult time.

The Cabinet RESOLVED that the granting of rent relief to Aldershot Town Football Club Limited, for the financial year 2020/21 or until such time as the Club would be able to operate and raise income through gate receipts, be approved.

The Meeting closed at 8.01 pm.

CLLR D.E. CLIFFORD, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

This page is intentionally left blank

CABINET
19 JANUARY 2021

BUDGET STRATEGY WORKING GROUP
COUNCILLOR PAUL TAYLOR (CHAIRMAN)
REPORT NO. FIN2101

KEY DECISION: YES/NO

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM BUDGET STRATEGY WORKING GROUP

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

SUMMARY:

This report sets out the strategic financial issues considered by the Budget Strategy Working Group and recommends a number of actions to Cabinet.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Cabinet is requested to note the recommendations from the Group:

- i) Development of a new robust, balanced and proportionate savings and income programme for 2022/23 and the medium-term strategy period. Budget Strategy Working Group to act as consultee on the development of the programme in line with the Terms of Reference set out in Appendix A.
- ii) The Group were keen to see an emphasis on the Council acting more commercially and increasing the level of net income from services.
- iii) The Group were supportive of spreading any Collection Fund deficit over a 3-year period, as set out by Government in revised regulations.
- iv) The Group, whilst mindful of the impact on Rushmoor residents, were supportive of increasing Council Tax by the maximum permissible level (£5) given the financial pressures facing the Council.

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 As part of the annual budget setting process, the Council must review its expenditure and income plans to take into account priorities, the expected level of resources available, and the wider strategic financial landscape. The Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), published in February 2020, provided members with an estimate of income and expenditure over a 4-year period. This indicated that the Council would face significant financial pressures in 2021/22 and over the medium term.
- 1.2 The budget setting process updates the MTFS and considers the budget for the forthcoming financial year. It is worth noting that the Council is legally required to set a balanced budget for the forthcoming financial year.
- 1.2 Covid-19 is having a widespread impact on local authority budgets nationally and has been particularly significant for district and borough councils with a significant loss of income from services being a particular pressure

- 1.3 In common with many local authorities, Rushmoor Borough Council continues to face significant financial challenges over the medium term. The Council will need to continue to take difficult decisions around resource allocation

2 WORK OF THE BUDGET STRATEGY WORKING GROUP

- 2.1 The Budget Strategy Working Group was established to give support to the Cabinet on the process for setting priorities and preparing the budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).
- 2.2 The group's Terms of Reference were updated in July 2020 and are included in Appendix 1 for information.
- 2.3 The Group has met throughout the year (July, September, November and January) to consider the strategic options around the Council's revenue and capital budget setting for the forthcoming financial year.
- 2.4 The Group have considered the on-going impact on the Council's financial position from Covid-19 and have received briefings from officers on a number of specific matters:
- Updates on developments in Local Government Finance
 - Updates on the impact from Covid-19 on the Council's financial position and consideration of recovery and strategic direction
 - Introduction to the Council's Service Manager – Commercial Services
 - Fees and charges – a strategic view from the BSWG

3 BUDGET STRATEGY – LGFS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET

- 3.1 The Government announced the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement (LGFS) on 17 December 2020 which sets out the level of Government funding and support the Council will receive in 2021/22.
- 3.2 The Group were provided with an overview of the settlement and the impact this has on the 2021/22 budget which is shown below for context and reference.
- Council Tax limit: £2% or £5 (whichever is the greater)
 - New Homes Bonus: Year 11 amount of £313k
 - Lower Tier Grant: £101k
 - RBC share of Covid-19 £1.55bn is £489k
 - Local Council Tax Support Funding to meet the additional costs associated with increases in local council tax support caseloads in 2021/22. The funding is unringfenced and can be used to provide other support to vulnerable households, including through local welfare schemes. RBC allocation is £93k.
 - Ability to spread Collection Fund deficit over 3 years was confirmed

- Tax Income Guarantee Scheme – funding available to support Councils with irrecoverable losses in council tax and business rates
 - Sales, Fees & Charges (SFC) Compensation scheme – extended into Q1 2021/22
 - PWLB Lending Terms – significant change and impact (announced in the Spending Review on 25 November 2020)
- 3.3 The Government published new lending terms at the end of November 2020 and are designed to prevent local authorities from using PWLB loans to buy commercial assets primarily for yield. The Government's intention for PWLB loans is that they should be used to pursue service delivery, housing, and regeneration activities.
- 3.4 The main changes to the ending terms require local authorities, through their Section 151 Officers, to submit a high-level description of their capital spending and financing plans for the following three years, including their expected use of the PWLB.
- 3.5 The new lending terms took effect for all PWLB loans from 26 November 2020. The lending terms are more restrictive and will require the Council to review its capital expenditure and financing plans. However, the Government will, as a result of the reforms, lower the interest rate of PWLB lending by 100bps (1.00%) for all new loans arranged from 26 November 2020.
- 3.6 At their meetings in November 2020 and January 2021 the group considered the recommendations they would make to Cabinet. A number of themes emerged from the discussions and these are set out below and form the recommendations to Cabinet.
- Development of a new robust, balanced and proportionate savings and income programme for 2022/23 and the medium-term strategy period. This is in response to changes in the PWLB Lending Terms that prevent all Councils from acquiring further commercial property. The Council's Savings Plan (as approved within the February 2020 MTFS) included significant additional rental income expectations from commercial property acquisitions. Budget Strategy Working Group to act as consultee on the development of the programme in line with the Terms of Reference set out in Appendix A.
 - The Group were keen to see an emphasis on the Council acting more commercially and increasing the level of net income from services. This would take the form of both cost reduction and reviewing fees and charges in-line with the existing methodology. The Group were supportive of the Council's Service Manager (Commercial Services) in ensuring key income generating assets improve their financial performance over the medium-term. It is acknowledged that there will be constraints on the Council's commercial services given the impact from Covid-19 and the wider economic landscape.
 - The Group were supportive of spreading any Collection Fund deficit over a 3-year period, as set out by Government in revised regulations.
 - The Group, whilst mindful of the impact on Rushmoor residents, were

supportive of increasing Council Tax by the maximum permissible level (£5) given the financial pressures facing the Council, as set out in the Council Tax Referendum Limits guidance. It is worth noting that the increased income from the maximum Council Tax rise is not sufficient to cover the financial pressures across the Council's services, so it is essential to follow this course.

- Consideration of financial support as a result of Covid-19. More specific support to the community in light of the continued impact of Covid-19 on vulnerable individuals and families and the local economy.

3.7 The group acknowledged the financial uncertainty facing Rushmoor Borough Council, its residents and businesses due to the differential impact of Covid-19 and the discussion on the budget and recommendations to Cabinet reflects this view.

4 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no specific legal implications resulting from this report.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. The budget reports to Cabinet and Council in February 2021 will set out the finance and resource implications from the proposed revenue and capital budgets for 2021/22.

6 CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Cabinet are asked to consider the issues and recommendations raised in this report and to take into account the Group's recommendations.

Councillor Paul Taylor
Chairman of Budget Strategy Working Group

CONTACT DETAILS: **Report Author and Head of Service**

David Stanley david.stanley@rushmoor.gov.uk
01252 398440

BUDGET STRATEGY WORKING GROUP

TERMS OF REFERENCE (updated July 2020)

A. FUNCTIONS

- To review the process for setting priorities and preparing the budget, including Member engagement in the process
- To monitor the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and progress towards achieving financial sustainability
- To monitor the delivery against the Savings Plan and consider strategic options for Cabinet to review
- To examine and provide input into the Council's response to any proposed changes to Government funding of Local Government (e.g., New Homes Bonus, Fair Funding Review, Business Rates Retention)

B. REPORTING

The Group will report and make recommendations to the Cabinet on the outcomes of its work.

C. MEMBERSHIP

A cross-party group of councillors appointed by the Cabinet, including:

- Corporate Services Portfolio Holder (Chairman)
- Chairman of Licensing, Audit and General Purposes Committee
- Chairman or Vice-Chairman of Policy and Project Advisory Board
- Two Conservative Group Members
- Two Labour Group Members
- One Liberal Democrat Group Member

Other Members may be invited to join meetings for discussion on issues relating to specific projects.

This page is intentionally left blank

CABINET

CLLR ADRIAN NEWELL
DEMOCRACY, STRATEGY AND PARTNERSHIPS
PORTFOLIO HOLDER
REPORT NO. DCS2101

19th January 2021

KEY DECISION - YES

SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN 2021/23**SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Rushmoor is generally a prosperous, safe and well-connected place and the Council's ambitions to regenerate and develop the Borough over the next few years will further enhance its attractiveness as a place to live, work and visit. Nevertheless, Rushmoor has pockets of deprivation which the Council is seeking to address. Whilst a range of positive improvements have been made, some of the pockets still exist and the underlying issues in these areas have been further highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Over the past year, the Council has been working with partner organisations to develop a new collaborative approach to addressing the challenges facing local communities. This Strategy and Action Plan has been developed to build stronger and resilient communities over the next three years by maximising opportunities and reducing inequalities faced by residents in the Borough, and especially in the most deprived areas.

The Cabinet is recommended to approve:

- (1) The Supporting Communities Strategy and Action Plan for 2021/23; and
- (2) The proposed expenditure set out in paragraph 4 for utilising the earmarked reserve fund and the process for the allocation of the funding

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This Report outlines the Council's proposals for the Supporting Communities Strategy and Action plan – a strategy for tackling inequality and deprivation in the Borough.
- 1.2. The Strategy reflects a new collaborative approach to addressing the long-term challenges and is supported by a flexible three-year action plan.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. Reducing deprivation has been a long-standing objective for the Council. Whilst improvements have been made as a result of work delivered, the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) still identify that Rushmoor has three small areas of deprivation in the 20% most deprived wards in England.
- 2.2. The Covid pandemic has highlighted the inequality that exists and has exacerbated the challenges faced by many residents in the Borough. It also presents an opportunity to review and adapt the approach to how the Council works with partners to address needs and support local communities.
- 2.3. The Strategy has been developed with a range of partners and has taken account of:
 - Data, evidence and local insight and intelligence from partner organisations
 - The Council Plan priorities and the longer- term delivery of 'Your Future, Your Place' – a Vision for Aldershot and Farnborough 2030
 - The views of Members (including the Policy and Project Advisory Board), Council Service Managers and community groups

3. DETAILS OF THE PROPOSAL

General

- 3.1. The Strategy has been prepared to identify and agree priorities and develop an action plan in order to meet longer term objective:

To tackle the effects of poverty and deprivation, and to have a positive impact on people's daily lives.
- 3.2. It outlines what the Council wants to achieve, and how it will achieve this through partnership working and developing targeted projects in specific locations.
- 3.3. The Strategy has four priority themes.
 - Economic Hardship
 - Young People
 - Physical and Mental Health
 - Connecting Communities (loneliness and digital enablement)
- 3.4. Projects will initially be targeted in Aldershot Park and Wellington Wards. In addition to these areas, there remains a significant amount of work being

delivered through Borough wide programmes and, as part of the annual refresh, the needs and issues within other wards will be considered for future initiatives.

Action Plan

- 3.5. The Action Plan has been developed in partnership over a period of ten months. It includes a range of projects many of which are led by partner organisations and some that have secured external funding. Partner involvement has been a crucial part of the planning work.
- 3.6. The Action Plan identifies the projects prioritised for year one. This includes: focused work in Wellington and Aldershot Park wards for income and health respectively, job clubs, kickstart, keep well and a stay connected digital project, repair café and men's shed.
- 3.7. The Action Plan is a 'living' document which will be monitored and reviewed by the partner working group as we continually measure our performance. It will be updated as new opportunities and challenges emerge to ensure that the priorities reflect need and the approach we are taking is effective.
- 3.8. To drive performance and measure success, a raft of measures will be developed in collaboration with relevant partners. These will be included within the Council's quarterly reporting process.

Consultation

- 3.9. Partners including Hampshire County Council, Department for Work and Pensions, Clinical Commissioning Group, Rushmoor Voluntary Services, Citizens Advice, Vivid, Rushmoor Healthy Living, Community Safety and The Vine have been involved in developing the Strategy and Action Plan.
- 3.10. Members of the Policy and Project Advisory Board have been consulted at various stages and have participated in a workshop. Their views and suggestions have been considered in the preparation of the final draft document.
- 3.11. Service Managers have also been consulted through a briefing session. A number of Rushmoor's services have been represented at the tackling deprivation working group and have had an input into the projects set out in the Action Plan.
- 3.12. The Leader of the Council has been consulted and has led a discussion on the Action Plan at the Strength In Unity – multi-faith meeting. Some participants from the meeting are involved in the projects.
- 3.13. An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out on for the Strategy and Action Plan.

4. DELIVERING AND RESOURCING THE PROJECTS

- 4.1 The proposed Action Plan will be co-ordinated by the Community and Partnerships Team who will deliver some projects directly but will work with other services and organisations to deliver most of them. Many projects underpin other initiatives and services within the Council and will sit alongside, for example, the Climate Change Action Plan and the Council's equalities work. Essential to the effective delivery of the Action Plan will be the involvement of partners and mobilising support from within local communities.
- 4.2 Some success has already been achieved in obtaining external funding, including the grants for addressing digital exclusion (with the CCG) and to establish a repair café, specifically focussed on support from local veterans. A number of other funding streams have also been identified for other projects and this has shown the value of the partnership approach because, for many of them, only certain organisations can bid for resources, so it is important that a range of organisations are involved to lead bids where necessary. The Council will be supporting them.
- 4.3 The Cabinet will be aware that a one off "earmarked reserve" fund of £100,000 has been established to assist the delivery of the work. £5,000 was allocated earlier in the year to assist the Vine with MySpace for 2020/21. Proposals have been developed to spend the allocation over the next couple years on projects relating to:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposals to tackle unemployment/skills development, with emphasis on young people to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A Virtual Job Club ○ MySpace (The Vine) ○ The Kickstart scheme ○ Young persons' skills hub 	£40,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing health inequalities with particular focus on action plan priorities, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mental and physical health programmes ○ Promoting positive health as part of other local projects (e.g. Men's Shed and the Food Hub) ○ Measures to deliver health promotion activities ○ Projects to address loneliness and exclusion (particularly digital) 	-£45,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pump priming projects within the community (e.g. Community Gardens) 	-£10,000

- 4.4 These projects are being developed with partners (particularly the CCG, Hampshire County Council and the DWP) and with the resources being allocated by these organisations the value of the fund is likely to be doubled. In terms of the process for agreeing the precise allocations it is proposed:

- The Cabinet agrees the principle of the allocations
- Detailed expenditure proposals prepared by the Head of Democracy and Community/Portfolio Holders, in consultation with the Executive Head of Finance
- Consultation with Members of the Council
- Decision made by the Portfolio Holder for Democracy, Strategy and Partnership, in consultation with the Executive Director and Head of Democracy and Community

4.5 Whilst the earmarked reserve will have a significant impact on delivery of the Action Plan in the early stages, consideration will need to be given to resourcing projects over the longer term. The Community and Partnerships Team will be working directly with partners on this and will also be examining models which can provide sustainable resources over time.

4.6 It is also proposed to develop a system for regular monitoring and evaluation of the Action Plan so that delivery and outcomes can be assessed. This will be discussed with the Assistant Chief Executive as part of the Council's wider performance monitoring process.

5. CONCLUSIONS

5.1. The Supporting Communities Strategy and Action Plan sits within the Council Business Plan and policy framework. The Covid-19 pandemic has shown that the Borough has active and resilient communities and the Action Plan seeks to harness the assets provided by communities and partners to complement the Council's community leadership role. The approach taken in the response to, and recovery from, the pandemic is to provide help where needed but also to encourage and support residents to help themselves, wherever possible. This also applies to much of the work incorporated in the Strategy and Action Plan.

5.2. The Cabinet and Council have made clear their intention to tackle deprivation and inequalities in the Borough and the Strategy and Action Plan is a step forward on this journey. The keys to success will be around collaboration, trust, ownership and engagement, and if the Council can engender these, communities will be able to thrive and take pride in Rushmoor. The Action Plan will evolve over time especially as partnerships develop but the framework has now been established.

Cllr Adrian Newell
Portfolio Holder for Democracy, Strategy and Partnerships

CONTACT DETAILS:

Report Authors –

Andrew Colver, Head of Democracy and Community,
Email: andrew.colver@rushmoor.gov.uk Tel: 01252 398820

Emma Lamb, Community and Partnerships Manager,
Email: emma.lamb@rushmoor.gov.uk Tel: 01252 398456

Supporting Communities – A strategy to tackle deprivation and inequalities across Rushmoor

Executive Summary

Rushmoor is a generally affluent area and for most people it is a happy, healthy and safe place to live. However, despite its overall affluence, there are pockets of deprivation and some residents who do not have the same opportunities, hope or aspirations that others may have.

The unprecedented socio-economic crisis created by Covid-19, together with the global calls for justice, articulated by the Black Lives Matter anti-racism movement, have highlighted the extent to which inequality and discrimination persist within our communities. With its diverse population, Rushmoor recognises the need to build on our success and continue to support and integrate our diverse communities.

The Covid-19 pandemic has caused great disruption to people's lives and livelihoods. The health and economic impacts have fallen hard and often hardest on people who already face disadvantage. But, while the virus has presented major challenges, change and disruption, it has also given some new perspectives on what the future could look like, highlighted the strength of volunteers and local communities and reinforced the importance of working together.

The Council recognises that there are factors that affect deprivation and poverty that we cannot directly control but we know that strong, resilient communities can help to reduce inequalities, increase social connections and improve the well-being of our communities.

Supporting stronger communities is about collaborating with partners to tackle the inequalities and focus our collective efforts on the most deprived families and communities in the borough.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report sets out the approach to Rushmoor's ongoing commitment to tackle inequality and deprivation. It provides an overview of the priorities and proposed action seeking to address local challenges in order to build stronger, resilient communities.
- 1.2 Strong communities are those where people have pride in where they live, where they are confident, resilient and able to respond positively to the challenges that they face. There is a need to strengthen communities in order to improve health and wellbeing and address the disadvantage that impacts on the long-term life chances for residents in our deprived communities.
- 1.3 Whilst no single action or even a series of actions will eradicate deprivation and poverty, the Council recognises it's role, to work with others, towards tackling the issues and addressing peoples' needs where we can.
- 1.4 The Strategy focuses on the improvements the Council and our Partners are prioritising in the next three years. It supports the Council Plan and the longer-term delivery of 'Your Future, Your Place' – a Vision for Aldershot and Farnborough 2030 which puts strong communities at its core with a strong emphasis on people and place.

- 1.5 Overall Objective:

To work with partners, to tackle the effects of poverty and deprivation, and to have a positive impact on people's daily lives.

- 1.6 Priority Themes

The priority themes have been informed by partner organisations, data sources, and the aspirations and ambitions of our communities:

Economic Hardship

To support people back into employment, raising skills and confidence.

Young People

To raise aspirations - increase access to businesses and role models

To improve the participation of young people in education and employment through training

Physical and Mental Health

To support physical and mental health and wellbeing provision

To support the objective of Public Health England to increase life expectancy at birth by 2 years and reduce the gap in healthy life expectancy between the least and most deprived communities by 3 years

Connecting Communities

To increase levels of community engagement and specifically engage Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities

To reduce social isolation and loneliness

To support digital enablement

2. Background

2.1 The Council has worked with partners, over many years, to address the issue of deprivation in the Borough: The focus of the work has included:

- Neighbourhood Renewal Plans
- Rushmoor Strategic Partnership – priority to tackle deprivation in Mayfield, North Town and Heron Wood wards
- My North Town – to assist North Town regeneration
- Prospect Estate Big Local (PEBL) – targeted to Cherrywood ward
- Skills and Employment programme, Skilled up, Rushmoor Employment & Skills Zone (RESZ)
- Mental health support in schools
- Physical activity in schools to tackle obesity
- Cohesion strategy and action plan
- Local coordination of national Troubled Families programme

2.2 Historically, the Council has delivered some successful initiatives to tackle the pockets of entrenched deprivation and this has primarily focused on Cherrywood. Despite this good work, it is acknowledged that it has not significantly altered deprivation levels in terms of the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) data and we must recognise that, due to how the IMD is measured, it is unlikely to do so in the near future.

2.3 Addressing significant deprivation is difficult and long term. For many communities that have experienced deprivation for some time, the causes are complex and multi-faceted and making real progress remains extremely difficult.

2.4 Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) Data

The Indices of Multiple Deprivation identifies that Rushmoor has three small areas of deprivation, in the 20% most deprived wards in England for multiple deprivation. They are:

Part of Cherrywood ward

Part of Aldershot Park ward

Part of Wellington ward

2.5 In addition to these locations, the data highlights key 'functional areas' where relatively speaking, Rushmoor does not generally perform well. This is also supported by other data from sources including Frimley ICS Shared Care Records, Public Health England, Acorn – Well-being Segmentation, Hampshire County Council's Rushmoor Covid-19 District Report and Active Lives Survey May 2018/19.

2.6 Functional areas

There are significant deprivation levels across the Borough for: Income, Health inequalities - especially mental health, self-harm, obesity and for Education, skills and training.

- **Income:** In Rushmoor, 11.2% of children live in low-income families. Wellington & Aldershot Park have high rates of income deprivation affecting older people.
- **Health** - Poor health in general compared to many other boroughs in Hampshire, with particular high levels of mental health issues and depression, falls in older people and injuries resulting from self-harm.

Rushmoor has one of the highest levels of adult inactivity in Hampshire across its population (Active Lives Survey May 2018/19) and this is worsening.

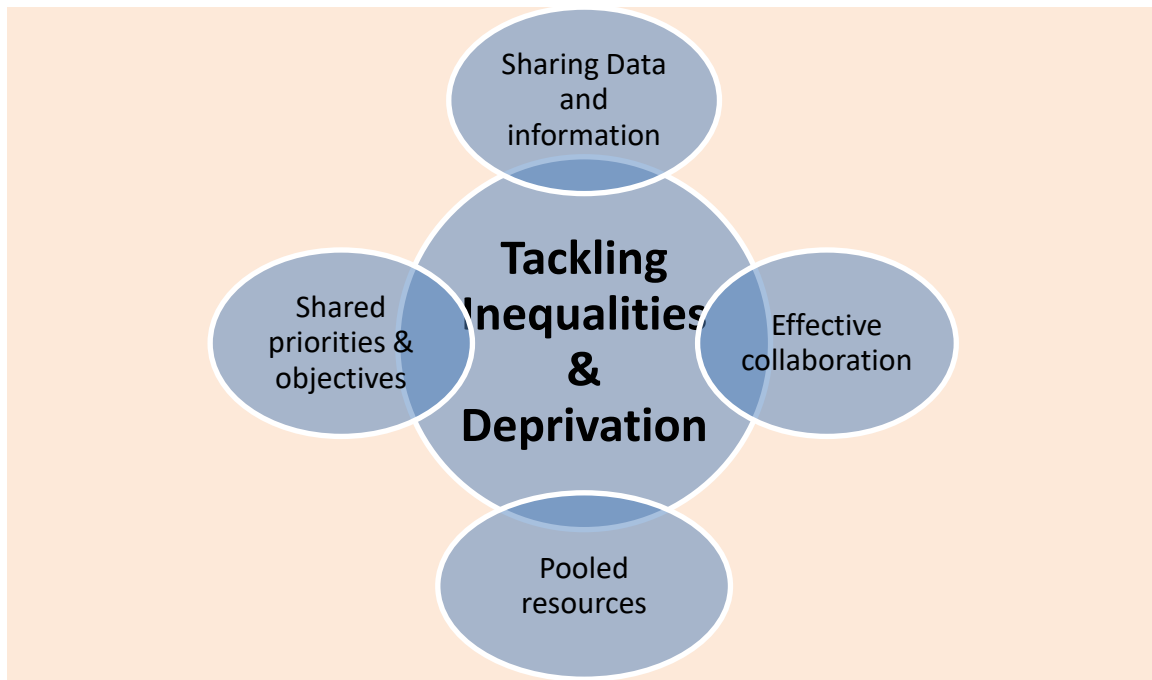
71% of adults are categorised as overweight and we have above average levels of obesity in young people in Years R and 6.

- **Education, Unemployment & Skills** – Rushmoor has high levels of unemployment – particularly for those between 18-24 years of age. These levels have been further damaged by Covid-19. Compared to Hampshire and the South East, Rushmoor has a higher percentage of residents with no qualifications.
- Many of Rushmoor's primary schools are well below average for reading and writing levels and from our secondary schools three out of the four are below the Hampshire average.

3. Context

- 3.1 Partnership, collaboration and co-operation are the essential building blocks for tackling the inequalities and deprivation we know exist in the Borough. The commitment to tackling inequalities and deprivation and supporting stronger communities, is shared by partners and reflected in some of our mutual priorities and objectives.
- 3.2 We recognise that by having more honest conversations, understanding one another's priorities better and sharing data and resources, where possible, we can achieve more. (Fig One)
- 3.3 The approach taken in preparing the strategy and action plan has taken account of:
- Indices of Multiple Deprivation - the official measure of relative deprivation in local communities across England
 - Data, evidence and local insight and intelligence from partner organisations
 - Partner workshops to identify joint priorities and future joint working
 - The priorities in the Council Business Plan and specifically Strong communities – proud of our area
 - The views of Members, local organisations and some community leaders, who have suggested a range of possible initiatives and opportunities.
 - The views of RBC Service Managers
 - Impacts of Covid-19 and the results from the Council's Covid-19 Survey of residents
 - Healthier Communities Partnership Committee
 - The uncertainty regarding re-opening of Council-funded leisure centres
- 3.4 The document reflects the strong view of partners that local targeted action is the best approach to making a difference to people. It is supported by an action plan which details where effort will be focussed in the next two/three years ahead.

Fig One:



4. Covid-19 Impact

- 4.1 Covid-19 has highlighted, and in many cases exacerbated, existing inequalities across the Borough. Whilst much of the early commentary gave the impression that Covid-19 had no boundaries and was indiscriminate in who it affected, it has become increasingly clear that the impacts of the disease fall disproportionately on our most deprived communities and put a spotlight on the long-standing, entrenched health inequalities in the borough.
- 4.2 Throughout the coronavirus pandemic the Council, alongside many partners, has worked hard to ensure that those most impacted by the crisis are able to access the support that they need, whether that be emergency food or medicine supplies, accommodation for rough sleepers, or digital support to enable people to stay connected.
- 4.3 A Community and Recovery Plan has addressed the immediate and urgent welfare response to supporting communities in the short term. This includes a particular focus on food and emergency provisions, but also engaging and understanding the impact on local communities better.
- 4.4 The plan includes an objective to facilitate the physical, mental and financial recovery of communities via the provision of appropriate, sustainable and community-based food initiatives. This includes developing longer term community led food provision such as community larders.

4.5 Some of the projects identified in this plan will complement the Community and Recovery Plan or, in some cases, continue the work that has been developed in response to Covid-19 to support stronger communities.

5. The Action Plan

5.1 The Action Plan has been developed with partners over the last nine months. It is a “live” document to acknowledge the rapidly changing situation and to ensure it is adaptable to changing needs.

5.2 It is based on the following:

- Place based – developing projects for specific locations based on need.
- Function based – for example mental health or aspiration projects developed across the borough
- Empowering communities and enabling community led initiatives
- Working together to achieve more with our available resources

5.3 The plan will be updated annually in the same way that the Council Business Plan is refreshed so that priorities are reflective of local issues and partner priorities.

5.4 The partner working group will monitor and evaluate the delivery of the action plan.

6. Targeted approach

6.1 It is crucial that we target our approach to the areas of greatest need, where we can engage the local community and make the biggest difference to residents with our limited resources.

6.2 Based on data, existing partnerships and priorities the action plan will initially focus on the following areas:

- Cherrywood ward – via PEBL-related projects expanding into other areas of the ward
- Aldershot Park ward – focus on health projects
- Wellington ward/Aldershot Town Centre – focus on income and debt, recognising the importance of supporting communities in the wider regeneration context
- Tower Hill – focus on health and disability related projects
- Borough wide – Income, employment, education and skills projects

- 6.3 Whilst there will be a particular emphasis on targeted projects in these areas it is not at the exclusion of others. There remains a significant amount of work being delivered through Borough wide programmes and as part of the annual refresh the needs and issues within other wards will be considered for future initiatives.

7. The Role of the Council

- 7.1 Deprived communities experience poorer mental health, higher rates of smoking and greater levels of obesity than the more affluent. They spend more years in ill health and have lower life expectancy. Reducing health inequalities is an economic and social challenge as well as a moral one.
- 7.2 The Council recognises it has a moral and legal duty to challenge barriers and promote equality of opportunity for all our residents and that is why it has developed a renewed approach to supporting stronger communities in conjunction with our partners.
- 7.3 In recognition of the intrinsic link between health and deprivation the Council is in the process of developing a joint post with the CCG to oversee the delivery of the physical and health priorities and reduce health inequalities.
- 7.4 The Council recognises that it needs to remove barriers to opportunity and close existing equality gaps. To support this, the Council will commit to review its existing Equality Plan by focusing on the following proposals.

As one of the borough's major employers: The Council should lead by example and is committed to cultivating a workplace where diverse backgrounds and perspectives are valued. The Council's People's Strategy will promote engagement in order to encourage a wider diversity in its employment profile.

As a Community Leader: The Council will challenge inequalities in every community. Council Ward Members actively lead the work in their wards, engaging with local communities and groups to identify opportunities.

Increased community engagement: Rushmoor is a diverse borough; a home to many different communities, interests and perspectives. An equal Borough must ensure that all voices are heard and represented, by taking active steps to engage, listen and learn, especially from those who have traditionally struggled to be heard.

- 7.5 The Council will explore different models for engaging with communities and learn from the success the Council had when engaging on the response to Covid 19 and issues around tackling climate change.

Draft

Supporting Communities – A plan to tackle deprivation and inequalities across Rushmoor

The plan identifies new activities developed and led by organisations in the Supporting Communities Partners Group. These are activities agreed to be needed by the group, additional to all the excellent work acknowledged as being carried out by authorities, organisations and community groups across the borough. Behind all the activities are separate plans with outcomes and success measures. Priority activities for each theme are highlighted in green.

Project	Activity	Location	Funding	Timescales	Lead Organisation / Partners
Young People - Resilience and Aspiration					
North Hampshire Youth Hub	Working with and providing for young people to improve their employability skills	Borough wide	Majority of funding from DWP £10K sought from Deprivation fund for IT and website	Feb 2021	Partnership between Rushmoor BC (RBC), Basingstoke & Deane DC and Hart DC
Kickstart Scheme	Fixed-term job placements for 16-24 year olds, offered by Rushmoor Borough Council, Citizens Advice, and other employers in the Borough	Borough wide	Government funded	Nov 2020	RBC / Citizens Advice and other local businesses
Kickstart Employability Courses	Training Providers: Community First (19-24) and Brockenhurst (16-24)	Borough wide	Funded	Late Jan - early Feb 2021	RBC
Open Doors Scheme	Virtual aspirational project showcasing careers and	Borough wide	TBC	March 2021	RBC / Rushmoor schools, Business, EM3

Project	Activity	Location	Funding	Timescales	Lead Organisation / Partners
	opportunities at RBC to school pupils				
(Rushmoor & Hart) Supporting Families Programme	Coordination of joined-up support by children and family professionals for newly identified vulnerable families	Borough wide with prominence in more deprived areas	Government funded	Nov 2020	Hampshire County Council (HCC) Family Support Service / RBC
Youth Council	Setting up a Rushmoor Youth Council to engage young people with local issues and decisions, including the development of a virtual platform for wider consultation	Borough wide	n/a	Feb 2021	RBC / Youth Forum
Aspirations workshop for 11-14 year olds	Workshops exploring ideas and encouraging confidence to fully engage within school by focusing on the young person's future plans –	Borough wide	Funded	Currently on hold due to Covid-19	HCC Children's Services (Rushmoor & Hart Family Support Service)
Targeted projects for young people	Free courses for Cooking with Confidence, Learn My Way, Numeracy & Literacy and Anger Management - all accessible to over 16 year olds	Borough wide	Funded	2021	Vine Centre
Mental and Physical Health					
Walking groups	Local walking group for residents to increase physical activity and social interaction	Aldershot Park	TBC	Jan 2021	Community Leaders supported by RBC / RVS

Project	Activity	Location	Funding	Timescales	Lead Organisation / Partners
Gardening club	Local gardening club	Aldershot Park	Ward member grant	Jan 2021	Aldershot FC Veterans
CCG Innovation Funding – Developing projects for Jan 2021	Small, innovative projects within local communities that could have a big impact on local health and well-being, capturing community energy and enthusiasm for real health benefits	Aldershot Park, Tower Hill, Cherrywood, Wellington	Funding to be applied for once projects identified	April-May 2021	Wider Supporting Communities group
Repair Café – Veterans Focus	Local repair café in Aldershot run by volunteers and veterans	Aldershot town centre	£15k funding from Covenant Trust	Feb 2021	RBC / Aldershot FC, Mike Jackson House
RVS Green Social Prescribing	Community gardening for people with mental health issues and from BAME communities, supported by Health and Wellbeing Support Workers	Borough wide	£9K funding secured from Energise Me	2021	Rushmoor Voluntary Services (RVS) with support from RBC / Primary Care Network (PCN) Social Prescribers
BAME Leadership Programme	Supporting BAME community groups in developing leadership skills and capacity	Borough wide	£28K fund secured through HIWCF		RVS as part of county-wide CVS led project
ORCA Befriending Support	Telephone befriending service to support isolated and lonely individuals across the borough	Borough wide	Funded	Nov 2020	RVS / Local volunteers
Mental Health Support	Supporting Rushmoor's case for a Mental Health Support	Borough wide	Funding to be acquired	March 2022	HCC Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service

Project	Activity	Location	Funding	Timescales	Lead Organisation / Partners
	Teams (MHST) in Schools project based in the borough				(CAMHS) / RBC, Rushmoor schools
Hampshire Youth Access	Counselling, advice and support for children and young people across Hampshire	Borough-wide	Funded		HCC
Mental Health Support	Specialist Mental Health workers supporting clients not currently engaged with Community Mental Health Recovery Services (CMHRS). Art Therapy is offered weekly	Borough wide with focus on targeted wards	Funded		The Vine Centre
Couch to 2k	Couch to 2k projects with primary schools' children to reduce obesity levels and encourage physical activity	Tower Hill	TBC	2021/2	RBC / Rushmoor schools
Parkrun and Junior parkrun	Continue to provide access to and promote local weekly parkruns and increase and broaden participation	Borough wide	N/A	As required	RBC
Economic Hardship					
Emergency Food / Free School Meals Provision	Emergency food provision, information and access to benefits support for families eligible for free school meals, alongside established Foodbank operators	Borough wide	£10K funded through Government grants and HCC	Nov/Dec 2020	RVS / RBC, HCC
Rushmoor Food Partnership	Community Store with food and essential items, plus	Aldershot initially, then	HCC food grant and	Jan 2021	RBC / RVS, Aldershot Town FC, Karuna Coffee, Park

Project	Activity	Location	Funding	Timescales	Lead Organisation / Partners
	access to support services as requested by clients and build resilience	Cherrywood once the Store has been established.	DEFRA funding to RBC		Church and other local support groups
Nepali Community Champions	Recruit, train and support Nepali Community Champions to identify those experiencing hardship, enable brief, appropriate interventions, and refer for full advice or other help where need is identified	Focus on Wellington	£20K for a 6-month project, adaptable depending on funding available	TBC	Citizens Advice (CA) /
Debt advice & support	Targeted promotion of community debt advice and support to encourage calls and referrals. Proactively supporting individuals with benefits, debt, housing and other economic hardship arising from Covid-19	Wellington Cherrywood Aldershot Park	Funded		CA
My Space	Providing face to face and telephone support to our most challenging unemployed residents, including benefits and 121 budgeting support	Borough wide	£12K from Supporting Communities pot for an additional year	March 2022	The Vine
PEBL Skills Café	Providing employment and budgeting supporting to residents	Cherrywood	Funded	On going	PEBL

Project	Activity	Location	Funding	Timescales	Lead Organisation / Partners
RBC Virtual Job Club	Delivering a virtual job club providing Rushmoor residents with an online education and support programme designed to help them find employment and training opportunities	Borough wide	£15K from deprivation pot - TBC	December 2021	RBC
General Employability Courses (19+)	Delivering short industry focused training linking job seekers directly with employers	Borough wide			The Vine / Hampshire, Community First and Brockenhurst College, community organisations and businesses
Connected communities					
Keep Well and Stay Connected	Reducing social isolation through increased digital opportunities	Aldershot Park	£40K Awaiting CCG funding decision	Feb 2021 if funded	RVS / RBC
CVS Digital Enablement	Supporting community groups to develop digital strategy and skills	Borough wide	£64K fund secured for CVS Network through HIWCF		RVS
Engagement with BAME communities and young people	Work with partner organisations, including faith groups targeting support work for BAME communities	Borough wide with Wellington focus	Community Cohesion		Youth Forum / Strength In Unity group
	Networking event with BAME groupings to ascertain	Borough wide	N/A	March 2021	RBC supported by the Cohesion forum

Project	Activity	Location	Funding	Timescales	Lead Organisation / Partners
	information about needs, capacity and barriers				
Reaching Out	Ensuring those most isolated or home-bound (particularly through age) are supported in their own homes.	Borough wide	Funded	Ongoing	Vine Centre / HCC Adult Services
Non-Themed / General work					
Engagement	Effective engagement with BAME and young people	Borough wide		2021	RBC via the Youth Forum, cohesion forum and Strength In Unity group
Men's Shed	Sites for pursuing practical interests to develop connections, showcase skills and encourage pride	Aldershot town centre, Aldershot Park	Pump priming funds		RBC / HCC
Funding	Identifying future funding streams to support deprivation work	Borough wide			RBC Community & Partnerships Team
Delivery	Identifying future delivery models to support deprivation work	Borough wide			RBC / RVS

CABINET
19 JANUARY 2021

COUNCILLOR PAUL TAYLOR
CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO HOLDER

Key Decision: No

REPORT NO. HROD2101

PEOPLE STRATEGY 2020-23

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

The challenges facing local authorities are considerable, from the impact of reducing resources, to the local and national impacts of both the pandemic and Brexit, and the changing customer expectations of public services. The authorities best able to address these demands will be those with the agility to adapt rapidly to change and this requires motivated and engaged individuals and teams throughout the organisation, who can execute the business plan.

The 2019 Peer Challenge Report recognised the importance of the workforce to the delivery of the business plan, highlighted the need to develop a People Strategy so that *'the Council's staff have the capabilities and skills to continue to embrace new ways of working. Sustaining cultural change will be important.'*

Great people management practices link to great business outcomes and a people-centric culture that prioritises people development and a positive employee experience is at the core.

During the last year, work has been undertaken to develop the People Strategy and Year 1 action plan and this is attached to this report. In developing the strategy, the Council has an opportunity to have a strategic approach to organisation and people development, to ensure it can continue to be agile, ambitious and able to deliver the services the community needs.

The Cabinet is recommended to approve the People Strategy.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The Council has developed a long-term vision for Aldershot and Farnborough up to 2030, and a three year Council Business Plan 2020-23 that shows how the Council will work to deliver this long-term vision.
- 1.2. The Council Business Plan provides the basis for prioritisation of resources, service planning and performance management and the most recent refreshed was approved in July 2020
- 1.3. The People Strategy sits underneath the Council Business Plan, setting out the people standards to which the Council aspires. The workforce is key to the delivery of the business plans and it is generally recognised the more traditional management methodologies will no longer work for modern businesses. To operate with agility and to be able respond and adapt to

change, organisations need talented people at every level, who can make good decisions that are right for the business To attract and retain talented people, organisations need to provide a working environment that is good for people, and develop committed, capable and collaborative colleagues who understand why and how their contribution matters.

- 1.4. This approach has been reflected in the People Strategy, under four key themes:
 - A positive culture enabling high performance
 - People are developed to realise their potential
 - The Council is an employer of choice
 - Engaged People who feel valued and supported

2. BACKGROUND AND CONSULTATION

- 2.1. In setting out the people standards to which the Council aspires, the People Strategy provides a roadmap for leaders, establishing the expectations for people management practices. It also communicates to the workforce the importance of positive people management practices, the contribution and expectations of individuals and teams and the support that will be available to help both individuals and teams realise potential.
- 2.2. As part of developing this strategy, an evidence base was built from a range of sources, to better understand the organisation and to anticipate the organisational development challenges that lie ahead. The inputs included:
 - Listening to staff and leaders through focus groups and surveys
 - Feedback from the LGA Peer Challenge Team
 - Understanding what customers want, using output from Customer Workshops
 - Understanding current organisational demographics
 - Understanding the impact of the pandemic on staff and on ways of working
- 2.3. Throughout the stages of development, views of Members were also sought via the Transformation Task and Finish Group and the Portfolio Member for Corporate Services and comment on draft documents was provided by CMT, Unions and staff.
- 2.4. The data and information from all these sources has been assimilated into the four key themes, each with a set of outcomes and Year 1 priorities, to be refreshed each year.

3. DETAILS AND IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1. The People Strategy has been prepared and this is attached for consideration by the Cabinet. The document sets out a vision and overall goals, expressed as key themes, and identifies the priority areas of action.

- 3.2. In terms of financial implications, the Council allocates an annual budget of £26,000 to corporate learning and development activities and consideration is already underway on how to use the 2021/22 allocation to contribute to delivery of the objectives contained in the strategy. At this stage it is not anticipated the strategy will require additional financial resource but were this to be the case, this would be subject to the usual approval processes.
- 3.3. There are no legal implications and an Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken.

4. COVID 19

- 4.1 The People Strategy sets out the priorities and actions for people development, taking the impact to date of the pandemic into account. In particular, the strategy reflects a need to prioritise the wellbeing of staff, as well as a drive to build on new ways of working.
- 4.2 Throughout the pandemic, the Council has prioritised the health, safety and wellbeing of staff and will continue to do so. It is clear COVID 19 will continue to impact the workforce over the year ahead and this may mean re-focusing the priorities within the action plan, with resources adjusted to best meet these needs.

5. CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The Council has a strong track record in developing its people, recognising that the way in which people are managed and motivated, and the availability of skills and expertise, is key to enabling the Council to deliver its Corporate Business Plan priorities..
- 6.2 The People Strategy builds on this foundation, and builds on the strengths of the current organisation, setting out the key principles that will shape the organisation's culture and ensure it has the right people with the right skills, attitudes and behaviours to deliver its priorities, achieve the ambitions for the community and secure its future as a great place to work.

CONTACT DETAILS:

Report Author – Alison McBride, Corporate Manager - People
alison.mcbride@rushmoor.gov.uk

Rushmoor Borough Council
People Strategy

Welcome to the council's People Strategy



The council faces more concurrent challenges than ever experienced before. The political, economic, financial and social challenge and change is significant, from the impact of reducing

resources, to the local and national impacts of COVID-19 and Brexit, the changing customer expectations of public services and the opportunities digital offers to transform service design and delivery, and open up new ways of working. The challenges are many and varied, but the political leadership of the council has the drive and determination to support officers to face these challenges head on.

The Council Business Plan articulates these goals, setting out what the council are committed to do over the next three years and part of that is making sure that the vision for the Borough – Your Future, Your Place – becomes a reality.

Councillor David Clifford
Leader of the Council

Central to the delivery of the council's priorities are our people – those the council employs to deliver its services. This strategy aims to ensure that the council has the right people with the right skills, attitude and behaviours going forward both in the short, medium and longer term to deliver its priorities and turn ambition into reality.

I want to ensure that the council values, supports and invests in its people, that it encourages diversity of thought and approach and welcomes open and honest communication. I along with the management team are committed to growing our reputation so that the best people want to work with us and to stay working with us.

We know that organisations where people feel supported and trusted are high-performing. They are places where people feel able to give their best, will challenge and improve how things are done and can continually learn and develop. They are organisations better able to respond to setbacks, better able to find new ways to solve new problems, better able to work with others - both inside the organisation and beyond – and better able to deliver for customers. It is these qualities that will equip us to navigate the road ahead.

The way we choose to lead will shape our culture, so we need leaders who make the right choices, who understand the vision for the future and recognise their role in translating the vision into reality. This People Strategy is their roadmap, setting out the standards we expect for our people management practices, so we will work with leaders right across the organisation to help them ensure the decisions they make, the behaviour they demonstrate and the integrity with which they act make certain the words in this strategy translate to everyday lived experiences.

We also know that delivering this future will mean change for everyone, and with change come opportunities and threats. We need to support people to manage and adapt, and to develop the skills and knowledge they need to deliver organisational priorities but we also need people to feel they work for an organisation that genuinely cares, that strives to put their wellbeing at the heart and helps them to be themselves at work. To do these, we will prioritise listening, we will help people feel they can speak up and we will encourage and act on feedback.

The council is very proud of its people, and values the commitment and contribution shown every day to making Rushmoor a better place. We have many strengths and qualities and we passionately believe that if we build on these, together we will achieve our ambitions for our community and secure our future as a great place to work.

Paul Shackley
Chief Executive



This strategy has been developed with evidence from a range of sources, to better understand the organisation now and to anticipate the organisational development challenges that are ahead.

The inputs included:

- listening to staff and leaders - through focus groups and surveys
- feedback from the LGA Peer Challenge Team
- understanding what customers want, using output from Customer Workshops
- understanding the current organisational demographics (see Appendix 1)
- understanding the impact of the pandemic on staff and on ways of working

The information has been assimilated into four key themes, each with a set of outcomes and Year 1 priorities, to be refreshed each year. In developing this People Strategy, the council has an opportunity to have a strategic approach to organisation and people development, and ensure it can continue to be agile, ambitious and able to deliver the services the community needs.

Staff Feedback – what do people feel is important?

Leadership – visible leaders who role-model the behaviours, adapt their style to the person, trust and empower their teams, provide supportive feedback and encourage decision-making and problem solving at the lowest possible level.

Flexible working – having a say in when and where work is done, the technology to support and enable this and options for flexible working as the ‘norm’.

Change – to be part of an organisation that engages people in change from the ‘ground-up’ and supports people through the change process.

Communication – open communication that cascades up and down the organisation, through multiple channels that offer choice and accessibility, with clear, frequent and timely messaging on the key issues.

Development – to continue to invest in people with further opportunities for growth and career development that everyone can access. A ‘learning organisation’ that encourages curiosity and testing assumptions, where there is time to reflect and learn.

Performance and process – outcomes to be more important than process, with policies that encourage flexibility and agility. A business-like approach to performance, recognition for good performance and honest feedback and action where there is under-performance.

Ideas and Innovation – to try new things and to learn by making a few mistakes, to put new ideas forward and to connect with others through projects, joint-working and networks.

Engagement – a say in the decisions that affect work, and input into determining the values. To work collaboratively as part of a community who believe in the value of the work, is focused on customers and residents and can celebrate what is achieved.

Health and Wellbeing –to continue to develop the strong focus on wellbeing and support everyone to thrive at work.

To achieve excellence and for people to do their best work for customers the council needs:

- people who understand and believe in the direction the organisation is going
- people who understand how their role and their team affects and contributes to the organisation's purpose and objectives
- agile and clear systems and structures that encourage everyone to take responsibility for their individual and team contribution, and for making change happen
- working practices that encourage collaboration, trust and openness
- honest communication, where people listen without judgement and are open to new thinking
- a high-trust culture where people and teams have clear accountability and authority to act



A positive culture enabling high performance

OUTCOME 1	Year 1 Actions
<p>Develop a strong set of shared core values that inspire a common purpose and flow through every aspect of working at Rushmoor – so that 'how we do things around here' is at the heart of what is done and how it is done.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Co-create a set of clear core values with stakeholders that align to organisational priorities and give clear direction and purpose ▶ Review the Behaviours Framework to align to the core values ▶ Help people get behind these values and behaviours by embedding them into everyday activity, through recruitment, induction, development, performance management, rewards and internal communication processes ▶ Identify and understand actual practices in the organisation and act on the information to develop a positive climate

OUTCOME 2	Year 1 Actions
<p>Develop an internal communication culture that encourages openness and trust and leads to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • high performance • improved wellbeing • an accelerated pace of change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Review the people performance management/ development review framework to ensure it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is clear and straightforward • aligns with the council's new Performance Management Framework • aligns with the values and behaviours framework • enables people to understand their contribution to the achievement of organisational objectives, through frequent and regular 2-way performance conversations ▶ Develop everyone's skills in seeking, giving and receiving honest and timely feedback, that is received positively, encourages people to express their views and encourages challenge as a healthy means of exploring different perspectives ▶ Use psychometric tools to help people understand their style, strengths and value to the team, and understand how to adapt their own communication style to get the best out of themselves and others ▶ Encourage leaders to openly talk about/share their experiences, in particular where they have challenged themselves to do things differently, encouraged decision-making at the lowest possible level or learnt from mistakes

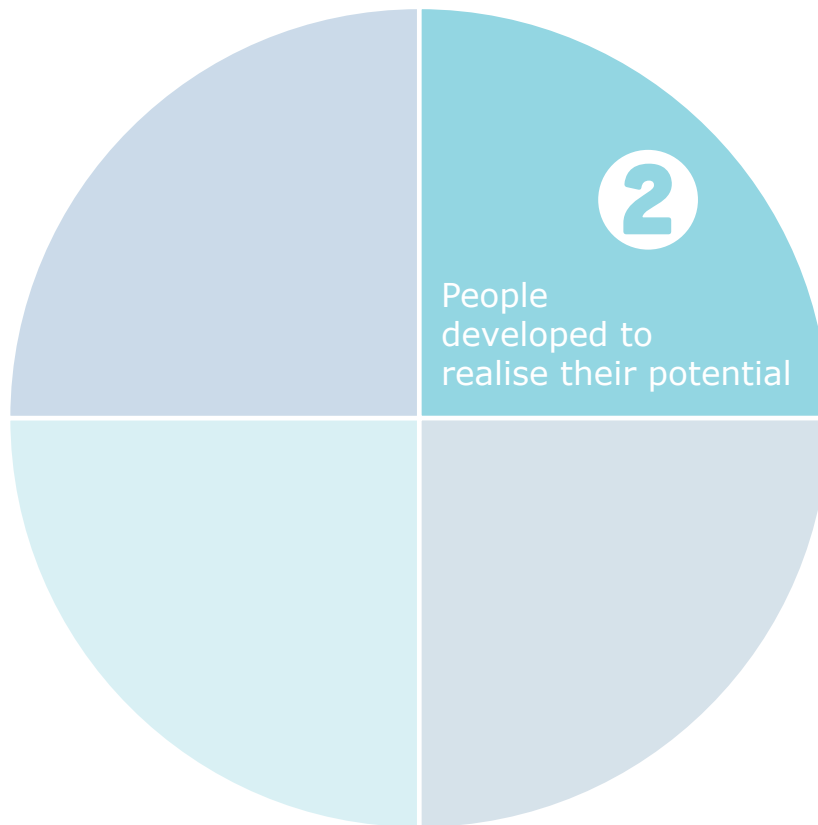
A positive culture enabling high performance

OUTCOME 3	Year 1 Actions
<p>Develop an agile organisation where 'boxes, lines and hierarchy' are less important and teams are built around end-to-end accountability for service delivery.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Use the work of the ICE programme to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • encourage leaders/managers to develop well-designed jobs that help people have the right level of autonomy to get work done, and feel a sense of personal achievement • identify what gets in the way of people working across teams and encourage working across boundaries • share lived experiences of change with the wider organisation through open internal communication practices that tell colleagues what and how change is happening, and how it is benefiting customers and driving efficiencies

OUTCOME 4	Year 1 Actions
<p>Encourage work to be 'something I do' rather than 'somewhere I go'.</p> <p>Create physical and virtual environments where people can do their jobs in the environment that is conducive to them and can collaborate across and outside the organisation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Through the Community Hub partnership working, understand what people want from the work environment and develop physical and virtual work-spaces that reflect the organisation's values and ambitions, including for a carbon-neutral environment ▶ Continue to develop and roll-out the technology that enables mobile, agile and flexible working. Train and engage staff to maximise its capabilities ▶ Develop equitable mobile/flexible working principles and ensure line managers are equipped to manage remote teams in a fair and inclusive way

A positive culture enabling high performance

The council recognises the impact learning opportunities have on the organisation and its people and performance. It is proud of its investment in learning and development and will continue to develop a culture of continuous learning through:



- developing leaders at every level, who lead with impact and purpose and model the values and behaviours framework
- developing diverse, inclusive and accessible L&D opportunities that offer value for money, deliver outcomes and offer everyone the opportunity to be their best at every stage of their career
- encouraging people to shake off mistakes and setbacks and view them as opportunities to learn and improve

People are developed to realise their potential

OUTCOME 1	Year 1 Actions
<p>Develop purposeful and self-aware leaders, able to align decisions and actions to the organisation's values and behaviours.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Develop what it means to be a leader at Rushmoor and the traits for success ▶ Use this framework to develop tools that will help managers become effective leaders, including a Leadership Development Programme for Senior Managers ▶ Build on the use of psychometric tools to help managers understand themselves and their style, and introduce 360 feedback ▶ Develop opportunities for aspiring leaders to continue to extend their learning and experiences

OUTCOME 2	Year 1 Actions
<p>Develop a L&D offering that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reflects a flexible/remote workforce and delivers accessible learning • delivers 'just-in-time' content that equips everyone with the skills and mindsets to underpin the organisational strategy • encourages on-going learning, where people build on and share knowledge and capabilities to develop in their roles and look for new ways of working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Develop and communicate a L&D plan that supports people to deliver organisational priorities ▶ Expand and promote informal learning opportunities - eg: 'lunch and learns', Learning at Work Week, Staff Showcase/Show and Tell, Action Learning sets, networks, shadowing ▶ Encourage 'bite-size' learning - podcasts, videos, links to external content, infographics – and the sharing of ideas, learning and stories through internal social media networks - eg: Yammer, blogs, webinars ▶ Continue to develop the capacity of My Learning as the organisation's e-learning and digital learning platform ▶ Establish a Learning and Development Network to champion organisation-wide engagement in L&D and encourage personal responsibility for development

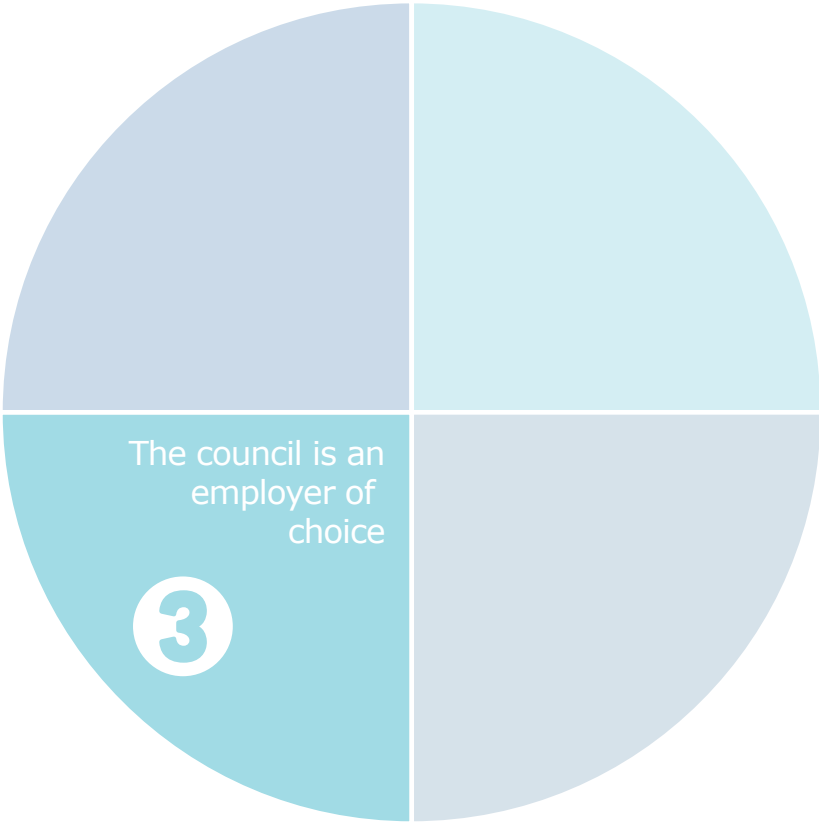
People are developed to realise their potential

OUTCOME 3	Year 1 Actions
<p>Develop managers who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • can translate the council's strategy and objectives into customer-centric action and results • are financially, politically, commercially and environmentally astute, as well as digitally proficient • can support and encourage change through skilled communication and empathy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Re-assess the competencies required to be an effective manager at Rushmoor, assess the current gaps and re-focus the Management Development programme to deliver against this updated framework ▶ Develop formal and informal approaches to management development, delivered/accessed through a variety of channels ▶ Seek creative ways to maximise use of funding through the Apprenticeship Levy to support management development activity

People are developed to realise their potential

To attract and retain people who bring diversity of perspective, make a difference to performance and deliver its core purpose - and continual evolution – the council will:

- understand what people value from work, and what matters most to them, and develop an employee offering that fulfils these expectations
- develop innovative and flexible approaches to recruitment processes and systems, to attract a diverse applicant base



Pack Page 47

The council is an employer of choice

OUTCOME 1	Year 1 Actions
<p>Encourage wider diversity in the council's employment profile, to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reflect the local community demographic • place the council as an 'employer of choice' for all 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Develop a creative brief that showcases to prospective employees what the council stands for and what it can offer, and embed into social media communications and recruitment campaigns ▶ Partner with community links to gain insight into what different segments of the community want from work, and promote Local Government as a career of choice ▶ Encourage young talent through continued investment in Apprenticeships, T Levels and Work Experience ▶ Develop recruitment analytics that audit the candidate journey, use the data to identify aspects of the processes that need attention and implement strategies to improve these areas ▶ Automate all areas of the recruitment process, where technology provides the best solution ▶ Introduce employee self-reporting for protected characteristics, to deliver an accurate workforce profile

The council is an employer of choice

OUTCOME 2	Year 1 Actions
<p>Develop talent pipelines to deliver the skills and attitudes that are needed to deliver innovative services of the future.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Use service-specific workforce plans to assess future need and use this analysis to develop targeted recruitment strategies ▶ Test and develop the concept of 'recruiting for attitude', based on the values and behaviours framework and, where appropriate the leadership framework ▶ Continue to build an employee-centred induction/welcome process, using digital tools where appropriate, that starts from the job offer, and ensures new people: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand how the organisation works and its values/beliefs • meet new colleagues and Snr Managers, and have opportunity for a 'welcome buddy' • have practical information on the working environment and understand their legal obligations/management obligations • can quickly become effective in their roles • can provide feedback on the process and highlight areas for improvement ▶ Refresh the current approach to pay and grading, to further streamline processes and work towards developing a process that reflects the values and ambitions of the organisation and offers greater flexibility, whilst maintaining equity and transparency

The council is facing a demanding and challenging environment, made even more complex as a consequence of the pandemic. The scale and pace of change will be unlike anything seen before.

It is increasingly important for people to feel they work for an organisation that genuinely cares, recognises contribution and welcomes input. The council will do this through:



- encouraging and supporting people to achieve good mental and physical health and to feel they can be themselves at work
- recognising the positive impact that comes from involving people in the decisions that affect them
- celebrating success, however large or small, and finding ways to say thank you

Engaged people who feel valued and supported

OUTCOME 1	Year 1 Actions
<p>Continue to develop the strong focus on wellbeing, encourage wellbeing as an integral part of routine conversations and support everyone to thrive at work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Continue to build resilience through investment in well-being initiatives – eg: Wellbeing Day/Week, support for national campaigns – and consider widening the range of support available - eg, through the introduction of Mental Health First Aiders ▶ Continue to build on health and wellbeing in the L&D offerings and increase managerial capability to support people through change ▶ Regularly publicise the Employee Assistance Programme and review its effectiveness ▶ Incorporate Health and Wellbeing into induction activities ▶ CMT to champion employee health and well-being through active support of initiatives and through including wellbeing as a routine part of check-in conversations

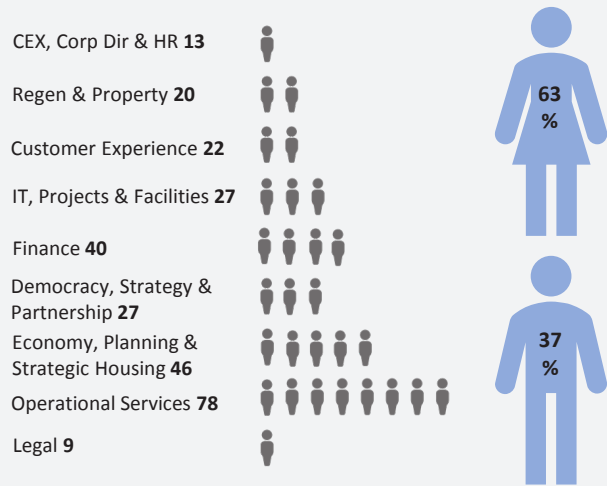
OUTCOME 2	Year 1 Actions
<p>Develop a culture of open and honest 2-way communication, that encourages listening as well as speaking, makes room for disagreement and diversity of opinion, and recognises where things are done well.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Using the work of the ICE programme, develop 'principles for change' that include engaging employees in the design and implementation of service improvements and digital solutions ▶ Develop opportunities for regular and timely feedback from staff, through, for example, focus groups and pulse surveys and use feedback to further develop processes and practices ▶ Continue to build on opportunities to openly celebrate successes and achievements, and recognise when people demonstrate the values

Pack Page 51

Engaged people who feel valued and supported

What does the organisation look like now?

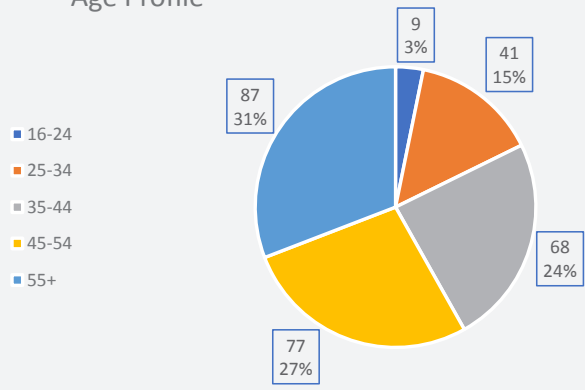
Workforce report 2019/20



32 Leavers

24 Starters

Age Profile



14 Members of staff undertaking an apprenticeship

4 Apprentice Positions 10 upskilling professional qualifications



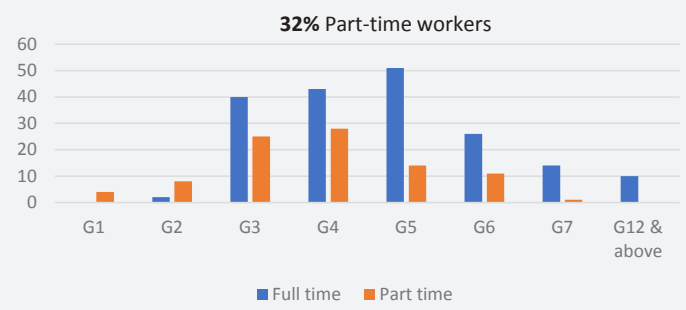
Corporate L&D initiatives



Learning at Work Week	Staff Showcase	Leadership Development Programme cohorts 1&2
Mental Health Awareness	Office 365 and Yammer	Management Development
Introduction to Agile	Working in a Political Environment	Leading Remote Teams



Gender Pay Gap 12%



Ethnicity	Council workforce	Rushmoor population (2011 Census)
White	75.2 %	85.9%
Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME)	2.2%	14.1%
Not stated	22.6%	

This page is intentionally left blank

CABINET
19th JANUARY 2021

COUNCILLOR MARINA MUNRO
PLANNING AND ECONOMY
PORTFOLIO HOLDER

KEY DECISION? NO

REPORT NO. EPSH2101

REVIEW OF CHARGING FOR PRE-APPLICATION PLANNING ADVICE

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

To review the charges for pre-application planning advice and to consider amendments to the scheme.

Recommendations:

- (a) Continue the practice of charging for pre-application discussions.
- (b) With effect from 1st April 2021, set charges at £70 for small householder developments, domestic outbuildings and advertisements; £120 for two storey/complex and large householder extensions; £240 for changes of use; £405 for single house schemes and simple minor developments; £860 for small major schemes and medium sized housing developments; and £1340 plus £195 per additional meeting for major developments.
- (c) Confirm that pre-application charges will not be required in respect of:
 - Wellesley/Grainger PLC schemes in relation to the Aldershot Urban Extension
 - The Council's own developments, and those of Hampshire County Council where they relate to the provision of public services in the Borough.
- (d) Confirm that the minimum householder/minor development charge of £70 will continue to apply to requests for pre-application advice, irrespective of the proposal type, made by community/charity groups which demonstrate that they meet all the following criteria:
 - A registered charity.
 - With headquarters in Rushmoor Borough
 - Involved in activity which serves the people of Rushmoor
 - Not part of a national charity with multiple UK or international offices

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Charges to potential planning applicants and developers for discussion and advice before the submission of planning applications were introduced in Rushmoor with effect from 1st February 2017. After one year the practice was reviewed and charges amended to include an approximate increase of 20%, reflecting the parallel government decision to increase planning fees by the same percentage.
- 1.2 The charges were introduced in pursuance of the corporate objective to establish a sound financial position, make sustainable budgetary savings, investigate new sources of income and implement channel shift, whilst

maintaining a high level of service.

- 1.3 Pre-application charging cannot be used to make a profit. In appropriate circumstances, authorities are permitted to charge as a means of meeting, and effectively regulating demand for pre-application advice. The key role of Local Planning Authorities in encouraging other parties to take maximum advantage of the pre-application stage is cited in the National Planning Policy Framework and forms an essential part of our planning process at Rushmoor.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Cabinet decision to increase the charges (6th March 2018) resulted in the following being introduced:
- 2.2 Householder and other small-scale enquiries - £40
Small to medium sized developments - (1-10 dwellings or up to 1000sqm commercial floorspace) - £270
Major Developments (in excess of 10 dwellings or residential sites of 0.5ha and above, or 1000sqm commercial floorspace, or other sites of 1ha or more) - £720
- 2.3 These receipts are subject to VAT at 20% meaning the actual receipt from a householder charge of £40.00 is £33.00, a minor development charge of £270.00 is £225.00 and a Major development charge of £720.00 is £600.00.
- 2.4 It was estimated at the time of the initial introduction that pre-application charges could generate up to £30,000 - £40,000 gross per annum, assuming that the demand for discussions ahead of applications being submitted did not fall as a result of charging. The introduction of the charges on 1st February 2017 fell part-way through the final quarter of the financial year. The original budget estimate for receipts from pre-application planning charges for the financial year 2017-18 was set at £30,000. In the event, pre-application discussions with developers initially declined, resulting in a revised estimate of £25,000 for that and future years. However, income picked up later in the year and the outturn for 2017-18 was £31,136. The annual performance reports to the Development Management Committee show the outturn figures for 2018-19 were £32,363 against a budget estimate of £36,000 and for 2019-20, when the estimate was again revised to reflect the period of political and economic uncertainty, £23,584 against a budget estimate of £29,000.
- 2.5 For the current 2020-2021 financial year, exceptional circumstances are again expected to be a significant factor. The initial pre-application budget estimate was £36,000 (£18,000 for the first six months) actual receipts for March to September are £14,907.
- 2.6 It remains the case that, particularly with reference to householder and minor development enquiries, the introduction of charging was not accompanied by a moratorium on providing informal advice to telephone callers. Fees are only charged in respect of written advice provided in response to submitted draft proposals. It is therefore commonplace for initial contact to be in the form of a telephone call, and for the resulting discussion to lead to a decision by the potential

applicant as to whether to make a pre-application submission requiring payment of a fee. Since charges were introduced however, discussions by telephone which do not result in a chargeable submission are no longer registered on the Uniform system as pre-application enquiries.

2.7 The size of the fees should be considered in relation to the costs of the works to which they relate. Even small householder extensions are likely to have construction costs of several thousand pounds. The payment of what are relatively small fees (even if the proposed increases are agreed) which to ensure that projects are likely to receive planning permission, is a very minor cost.

3. A Review of the Basis and Calculation of Appropriate Charging

3.1 Having established and observed over the three and a half year period since the introduction of charging, that it is effective in adding value and efficiency to the planning process, and benefits both applicants and the authority without discouraging engagement, it is appropriate to review the basis and level of charges currently in operation. Initial benchmarking of our current charging regime against available information on other Hampshire authorities using adjustments to provide a 'closest fit' comparison gives rise to the following table 1*

Table 1. Comparison with other Hampshire authorities.

Authority	Householder/Listed Building/Advertisement	Single Dwelling/Change of Use	Other Minor Developments	2-9 Dwelling s	Major Development
Rushmoor	£40	£240	£240	£720	£720
Winchester	£123.60	£277.20	£572	£954	25% of Planning fee
Basingstoke	25% of planning fee + VAT				
East Hants	£49	£133	£250	£561	£1036 – 10% of planning fee
Eastleigh	£85	£275	£460	£460	£1075-£2190
Fareham	£0	£300	£240	£900	£POA
Gosport	£20	£131	£65	£265	£661 - £1050
Hart	£65	£200	£200		25% of planning fee capped at £6930
Havant	£54-£98	£133 - £255	£133 - £255	£383	£577
Isle of Wight	£52.50	£157.50	£157.50	£262.50	£892.50
New Forest DC	£130	£396	£726	£796	£1188
New Forest NP	£60	£125	£225-£450	£650	25% of Planning fee

Southampton	£42	£180	£360	£360	£840/10% of planning fee
South Downs NP	£0	£240	£360	£360	£1800/10% of planning fee
Test Valley	£58	£144	£108-£540	£432	10% of planning fee

*Figures available at July 2020

Table 1. indicates that of the 15 bodies for which information was available, Rushmoor's charges ranked approximately 12th for Householder, listed building and advertisement enquiries; 6th for Single dwellings/changes of use; 12th for other minor developments; 5th for medium scale residential developments; and 14th for Major developments.

3.2 Table 2. below, records Rushmoor's pre-application receipts in the financial year 2019-2020 by number and type.

Table 1

Month	Estimated receipts	Actual receipts	No of enquiries*	Major	Minor	Householder
Apr 2019	£2,417	£1,727	25	0	8	17
May	£2,417	£2,699	23	0	7	16
Jun	£2,417	£835	10	0	1	9
Jul	£2,417	£1,733	24	0	11	13
Aug	£2,417	£2,020	16	0	3	13
Sept	£2,417	£1,553	21	0	8	13
Oct	£2,417	£1,217	15	0	4	11
Nov	£2,417	£2,170	18	3	5	10
Dec	£2,417	£2,027	10	1	5	4
Jan 2020	£2,417	£2,304	21	2	9	10
Feb	£2,417	£3,387	27	1	7	19
Mar	£2,417	£1,912	11	1	4	6
Total	£29,000	£23,584	221	8	72	141
% of Total Number				3.6%	32.6%	63.8%

*38 cases on the system are recorded with no fee paid against them. These comprise principally internal pre-application enquiries where no fee is payable.

3.3 Whilst the charges levied by other authorities represent background information, and indicate that our charges are currently among the lowest in the County for householder, minor developments and major developments, the legal basis on which charging is permitted remains one of cost recovery. Any analysis of, and decision to amend our pre-application charges should therefore be based on more detailed information regarding the actual costs we incur in responding to them.

3.4 Initially consideration was given to trying to establish the overall cost of individual development projects and to ascertain whether a charging regime proportionate to this should be explored. However first, there is no reliable basis for establishing this in a simple category-based manner; secondly, the pricing and cost models of different builders and developers are not comparable and this potentially would require a detailed and separate analysis of the costs of each scheme before

discussion could be entered into as the Council has no access to detailed or verifiable information on the contractual arrangement between them and their clients; and thirdly, this would break the legally required link between the actual cost of the service provided by the Council and the charge levied.

3.5 In order to examine the cost recovery implications of the service provided, information was collected by officers within the planning service during the first three months of the current financial year. They were asked to take a sample of the typical pre-application cases they were dealing with, and to record and report the time actually spent on researching and responding to them. The hourly cost to the Council of officer time on various salary grades together with on costs was provided by the finance department. This information has been brought together in table 3. Below.

Table 3

Development Type	Time Spent	Officer Level	Cost Estimate (Rounded up from hourly salary plus on costs)	Current Charge
Householder, single storey extensions, roof extensions and garden buildings. Advertisement Consents etc.	1-2 Hours	Development Officer (£38 ph)	£40-80	£40
Householder, two storey and large scale extensions	3-5 Hours	Development Officer	£110-190	£40
Changes of Use	1-6 Hours	Planning Officer (£45 ph)	£45-270	£240
Simple Minor Developments (Single dwellings etc.)	4-14 Hours	Planning Officer	£180-630	£240
Small majors and medium sized housing schemes	4-14 Hours plus meeting.	Principal Planning Officer (£57 ph)	£230-800	£720
Large scale major developments	14-28 Hours plus 1 hour per additional meeting	Principal Planning Officer plus Corporate Planning Manager (70 ph) or Head of Service (80 ph)	£800-1596 plus £130-£200 per additional meeting	£720

3.5 The information in table 3 indicates that, whilst our current simple three tier charging arrangement results in effective cost recovery in relation to changes of use, simple minor developments and small majors/medium householder developments, it does not cover the cost of providing householder pre-application advice – particularly for more complex extensions, or of major redevelopment schemes. It is notable that our current middle ‘minor’ charging category involves,

year on year, approximately one third of the pre-application cases we deal with, but contributes in excess of half the total pre-application income.

- 3.6 With regard to householder proposals this makes the case for splitting the category between simple single storey extensions and others.
- 3.7 With regard to major redevelopment projects, pre-application discussion can typically involve a preliminary meeting, assessment in detail of a complex proposal, discussion with internal consultees and the involvement at various stages of the case officer, Corporate Planning Manager and Head of Economy, planning and Strategic Housing. Furthermore, rather than the single meeting which normally suffices for a small major application, these schemes can involve multiple (typically 3-6) follow-up meetings. Each individual meeting therefore has a staffing cost implication upwards of £130. Whilst benchmarking information indicates that some authorities set pre-application charges based on percentages of the planning fee for the application itself (mostly 10% but in some cases as much as 25%) it is difficult to see how this can fairly and reasonably relate to the cost of providing the service. It should be further noted in any event that fee income from the small number of Major projects that come before the authority constitutes a substantial proportion of the planning fee income received by the service, generally exceeding the cost of processing the application itself. This being so a fixed fee based on officer time with an additional charge for subsequent meetings is considered more appropriate.
- 3.8 Attempting to create a 'best fit' between the officer time costs and development types suggests our current three tiers could be divided into six with amended charges as set out in table 4 below. The final column in the table show approximately where this charging schedule would place Rushmoor in relation to the July benchmarking exercise with other Hampshire authorities.

Table 4

Development Type	Current Charge	Recommended Amended Charge	Approx change in Position relative to other 14 Hants authorities.
Householder, single storey extensions, roof extensions and garden buildings. Advertisement Consents etc.	£40	£70	12 th to 7 th
Householder, two storey and large scale extensions	£40	£120	12 th to 3 rd
Changes of Use	£240	£240	6 th no change
Simple Minor Developments (Single dwellings etc.)	£240	£405	12 th to 6 th
Small majors and medium sized housing schemes	£720	£860	5 th to 3 rd

Large scale major developments	£720	£1340 plus £195 per additional meeting	14 th to 6 th

4. Exceptions and Exemptions from Charging

- 4.1 Our current arrangement specifies three exemptions. First in respect of the Wellesley (Aldershot Urban Extension) development, the reason being that Grainger PLC, through the S.106 agreement associated with the development, are providing funding for a full time Council Officer post for a ten year period. The responsibilities of that officer include providing pre-application advice on future stages of implementation of the project.
- 4.2 The second is in respect of the Council’s own occasional, and often small-scale planning applications, for works to its own properties and display of advertisements etc. and queries from Hampshire County Council where they relate to the provision of public services in the Borough. This does not however relate to development schemes where the Council is involved as a partner or developer in commercial development and regeneration.
- 4.3 The third relates to schemes submitted for pre-application advice by locally registered charities which serve the people of Rushmoor, and takes the form of the minimum charge (applicable to householder schemes and minor developments) regardless of the scheme involved.

5. Risks

- 5.1 Risks identified in previous reports were the possibility of public concern over a fee being taken from developers for private discussions, meetings and advice, in advance of planning applications giving rise to a perception that subsequent decisions on the applications would not be impartially taken; potential conflict with developers who have paid for advice but whose applications are unsuccessful; that charging would deter pre-application engagement and interrupt the flow of work through the system; that the proposed measures will not result in savings and additional income at the levels estimated; and that additional costs in staff and resources would be incurred in administering the new measures.
- 5.2 No formal complaints regarding the practice or ethics of pre-application charging have been received since introduction and existing staff resources are available to cope with the associated work. The planning service continues to provide informal ‘free’ advice to callers and this is not recorded as pre-application cases on the Uniform system.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 There are considered to be no legal implications.

7. Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 In the three years since the introduction of charging, the number of recorded pre-application cases and the costs recovered through charges rose and then fell in line with the varying period of economic and political uncertainty. Total cases in the three financial years 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20 were 368, 327 and 261 and charging receipts were £31,136; £32,363; and £23,584.
- 7.2 Any estimate of the financial implications of the new recommended charges will be dependent on a number of variables including the likelihood of demand continuing at current levels, the number of major redevelopment schemes coming forward, and the actual proportion of different types of proposal resulting from the splitting of development types into more categories. Even if previous years' demand were subject to exhaustive detailed analysis by type, the reliability of this information as a basis for estimating future receipts would not necessarily be enhanced. It has been noted in the quarterly and annual reports to the Development Management Committee that the recent periods of 'lockdown' have seen a significant fall in numbers of medium sized applications and small housing schemes and a large increase in applications to carry out works to TPO trees (which command no fees). The important factor with regard to the new recommended charges is that if adopted, they will be more closely and demonstrably relatable to the actual cost of meeting the demand for pre-application advice.
- 7.3 If the recommended charging categories were applied to the 221 cases dealt with in 2019/20 applying a simple 50/50 split between the 141 smaller and larger householder proposals, the same between the 72 changes of use and simple minor developments currently in the minor category, and again to the 8 applications in the major category (assuming each larger scheme involved three additional meetings), the income recovered from charging in a full year would be in the region of £48,000. If the split between lower and higher charged applications were assumed to be 25/75. The estimated figure would be approximately £41,000. After deduction of VAT this would amount to £32,800 - £38,400 compared to the £23,584 of actual receipts in 2019-2020 under the current fee scheme.

8. Equalities Impact Implications

- 8.1 There are considered to be no equalities impact implications.

9. CONCLUSIONS

- 9.1 The introduction of pre-application charging has, in its first three years, come close to delivering the financial returns predicted when it was introduced and provided added value to the provision of the planning service and delivery of development. The factors outlined as risks prior to introduction have not given rise to organizational or reputational issues during this initial period. Increasing the charges to reflect more accurate information on the cost of providing this discretionary service would be appropriate.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Town and Country Planning Act 1990
Development Management Procedure Order
National Planning Policy Framework

CONTACT DETAILS:

Report Author - John Thorne – john.thorne@rushmoor.gov.uk 01252 398791

This page is intentionally left blank

CABINET

**COUNCILLOR MARTIN TENNANT
MAJOR PROJECTS AND PROPERTY
PORTFOLIO HOLDER**

19th JANUARY 2021

REPORT NO. RP2101

KEY DECISION: NO

**ALDERSHOT REGENERATION UPDATE –
UNION STREET, ALDERSHOT**

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

SUMMARY:

This report sets out a progress update in relation to the redevelopment of Union Street, Aldershot. It also seeks to establish a Cabinet Working Group in order to support the completion of the due diligence processes and make recommendations to the Cabinet in respect of the delivery approach and funding options for delivery of the consented scheme.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Cabinet

1. Notes the update on the demolition works being undertaken and the next steps with the development;
2. Notes the update on the due diligence process being undertaken in respect of the delivery of the consented scheme;
3. Agrees to the establishment of a Cabinet Working Group consisting of the Major Property and Projects Portfolio Holder, the Corporate Services Portfolio Holder and the Leader of the Labour Group to work alongside officers on the due diligence being undertaken associated with the delivery of the consented scheme.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The regeneration of land at Union Street in Aldershot Town Centre is a Council priority. Delegated authority was provided to the Executive Head of Regeneration and Property (RP2005) to submit planning applications and secure the appropriate permissions as required to enable the Union Street regeneration scheme in Aldershot Town Centre. The planning application

was submitted in early March 2020 and was approved by the Development Management Committee on 24 June 2020.

- 1.2. This report provides Cabinet with a further update as at the start of January 2021 and seeks further approvals to assist with the delivery of the scheme.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The regeneration of Aldershot Town Centre is a corporate priority and Union Street is identified as a key site allocation for regeneration within the Rushmoor Local Plan (adopted February 2019) and the Aldershot Prospectus SPD. It has formed part of the portfolio of sites being progressed by the RDP since its inception in late 2018.
- 2.2. Following Cabinet approval (RP2005), a planning application was submitted to the Local Authority by the RDP on the 4th March 2020 for a mixed use scheme comprising 100 residential units, purpose built student accommodation (PBSA) (128-bed spaces) for the University for the Creative Arts (UCA) and ground floor commercial uses (2,237sqm GEA) focused around a 'Creators Yard'. The submission followed on from a period of public consultation in January/February 2020, with two public drop-in sessions held in Aldershot town centre on the 16th and 18th January. From the responses received to the feedback forms, approximately 80% of respondents supported the proposals that were presented and 97% agreed that Aldershot town centre needs regeneration.
- 2.3. The planning application was validated on the 6th March 2020 and was considered by Development Management Committee at its meeting on 24 June 2020 and agreed subject to suitable legal agreements to secure the required planning obligations.
- 2.4. Cabinet Report RP2008 set out that the detailed Project Plan associated with the Union Street scheme from the Rushmoor Development Partnership (RDP) was being considered and due diligence was commencing on matters including commercial, property, legal and finance assumptions and procurement options associated with the delivery of the scheme.

3. SITE PROGRESS UPDATE

DEMOLITION

- 3.1. Cabinet approved (RP2011) the procurement of the demolition contract through a procurement framework either as a direct award or through a mini competition. The Southern Housing Group Framework was identified as an appropriate route and a Briefing Document was issued to the companies registered on the framework lot. Only one company expressed an intention to submit a proposal, Hill Partnerships Limited, who were subsequently identified as the preferred partner to oversee the works.

- 3.2. The Council appointed Lawson Queay to perform the role of Technical Advisor/Employer's Agent for the purposes of contract negotiations and scrutiny associated with the delivery of the works.
- 3.3. As at January 2021, the contracts associated with the works have been agreed by both parties and issued for execution and a pre-start meeting is scheduled for mid-January with the intention to mobilise later this month. The programme of works is identified to be approximately 20 weeks.
- 3.4. The contract value is approx. £1.2m and this cost is being covered by the external grant funding secured from the Enterprise M3 LEP.
- 3.5. Following the granting of planning permission, the next stage that needs to be undertaken is work associated with RIBA Stage 4: Technical Design. This takes the drawings submitted for planning as the baseline and develops the design in sufficient detail e.g. mechanical and electrical (M&E) requirements / structural engineering calculations, to enable a design pack to be prepared which can be passed to the contractor and their supply chain to construct the development.
- 3.6. A further report will be presented to Cabinet setting out the options available to the Council for taking forward this element of work in due course.

DUE DILIGENCE

- 3.7. The Council commissioned Grant Thornton UK LLP and, more recently, Lambert Smith Hampton (LSH) to support the due diligence and consider the implications of a number of different options for delivery, funding and potentially ongoing management of elements of the scheme which could be retained by the Council:
- 3.8. The due diligence covers the following:
 - Delivery structures – the approach to managing control, risk and return for the Council including an overview of the relative merits of the alternative delivery options available, the governance arrangements and the financial implications to the Council;
 - Funding scenarios – appraisal of funding scenarios available for the Scheme, including the use of equity investment, borrowing under the Prudential Works Loans Board (PWLB), grant income and other third-party borrowing;
 - High-level affordability – outputs from the financial development appraisal working paper assessment of Scheme viability.
- 3.9. Once the funding and delivery approach has been agreed the procurement options for construction can be considered and further legal advice may be required at that time.
- 3.10. The Council is now in receipt of the two key reports (Phase 1 and Phase 2) and awaiting the final report that brings together the key recommendations. There is a relatively detailed piece of work to be undertaken over the next

six weeks to evaluate the due diligence outputs and prepare a cabinet report and recommendation which will eventually need to be agreed by full Council. Given the level of investment and risk associated with this project it is proposed that a small Cabinet Working Group is established on a task and finish basis to work alongside officers, to undertake this work and review the outcomes of the due diligence reports and to make recommendations to Cabinet in support of the delivery of the consented scheme. It is suggested that the Working Group include the Major Property and Projects Portfolio Holder, the Corporate Services Portfolio Holder and the Leader of the Labour Group given his role on the Property and Project advisory group. In addition, a number of briefing seminars for all Members will be facilitated to ensure that all are informed ahead of further key decisions by Cabinet/Full Council.

4. IMPLICATIONS

Risks

- 4.1. The key risk to consider is the ability to progress with the Council's regeneration aspirations in accordance with timescales that are driven by external funding milestones (HIF). In order to secure the £5m of funding to assist with scheme costs, the delivery route needs to be confirmed in line with milestones agreed with Homes England.

Legal Implications

- 4.2. The Council has entered into contract with Homes England in respect of the £5m of HIF funding. The contract sets out the milestones that the Council needs to meet in order to secure the funding. The inability to meet these milestones would result in the Council defaulting on its legal obligations and put at risk the funding drawdown. A similar implication applies in respect of LEP funding towards the scheme but this is set to be drawn down as part of the approved demolition works.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 4.3. The outputs from the due diligence will inform a further report to Cabinet in respect of the recommended financial approach to taking forward the delivery of the scheme.

Equalities Impact Implications

- 4.4. There are no known equalities impact implications arising from this proposal.

5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1. This report sets out a progress update in relation to the redevelopment of Union Street, Aldershot as at January 2021. It also seeks to establish a Cabinet Working Group in order to support the completion of the due diligence processes and make recommendations to the Cabinet in respect of the delivery approach and funding options for delivery of the consented scheme.
- 5.2. The recommendations set out within this report align with the 'Place' priority within the Council's Business Plan (April 2019) by continuing to drive forward the regeneration of Aldershot and Farnborough town centres.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Cabinet Report RP2011: Regenerating Rushmoor Programme – Union Street, Aldershot Regeneration Scheme

Cabinet Report RP2008: Rushmoor Development Partnership – Union Street, Aldershot

CONTACT DETAILS:

Report Authors

Nick Irvine – Service Manager - Regeneration
Nick.Irvine@rushmoor.gov.uk
01252 398739

Karen Edwards - Executive Director
Karen.Edwards@rushmoor.gov.uk
01252 398800

This page is intentionally left blank