

CABINET

Report of the meeting held on Tuesday, 8th July, 2025 at the Council Offices, Farnborough at 7.00 pm.

Voting Members

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

Cllr A.H. Crawford, Finance & Resources Portfolio Holder
Cllr Keith Dibble, Housing & Planning Portfolio Holder
Cllr Christine Guinness, Pride in Place / Neighbourhood Services Portfolio Holder

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Jules Crossley and Councillor Julie Hall.

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 July, 2025**.

9. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

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

10. MINUTES –

The Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 3rd June, 2025 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

11. BUDGET MANAGEMENT - OUTTURN 2024/25 – (Cllr Alex Crawford, Finance & Resources Portfolio Holder)

The Cabinet considered Report No. FIN2512, which set out an update on the Council's budget outturn position for 2024/25.

Members were reminded that the Council had approved the 2024/25 budget with a deficit of £5.379 million, partly mitigated by a savings target of £740,000 to be achieved in year, resulting in a £4.639 million drawdown from the £12.075 million of available reserves. It was reported that, by year end on 31st March, 2025, the Council had made an overall saving of £5.155 million, resulting in only £224,000 being required from reserves. A savings target of £1.784 million had been set for 2025/26 and this had already been achieved, with £2.1 million of savings identified.

The Cabinet was pleased with the progress that had been made in addressing the Council's challenging financial position and expressed gratitude to the finance team for its work in this respect. It was noted that prudent financial management would continue to be required for the foreseeable future.

The Cabinet RESOLVED that

- (i) the unaudited budget outturn position for 2024/25, currently drawing £224,000 from reserves but subject to further due diligence and audit, as set out in Report No. FIN2512, be noted;
- (ii) the revenue budget carry forward schedule and capital slippage, as set out in paragraph 2.9 of the Report, be noted;
- (iii) the future presentation of an updated Medium Term Financial Strategy at the Cabinet meeting in September, 2025 be noted;
- (iv) the supplementary estimates for Property, Legal and the Crematorium project, as set out in the Report, be approved;
- (v) the additional Capital projects, to be funded by S106 funding, as set out in paragraph 3.4 of the Report, be approved; and
- (vi) the Savings Review proposals, as set out in paragraph 3.8 of the Report, be approved.

12. FILM STUDIO RATE RELIEF POLICY –
(Cllr Alex Crawford, Finance & Resources Portfolio Holder)

The Cabinet considered Report No. FIN2511, which set out a new scheme of relief that had been announced by the Government in relation to business rates payable by film studios.

Members were informed that the scheme would provide up to 40% relief on net rates payable. It was intended that the scheme would be in place for a limited period only, so instead of introducing legislation in this respect, the Government was asking authorities to award relief using discretionary powers. It was confirmed that the Government would reimburse any film studio relief awarded.

The Cabinet RESOLVED that the Film Studio Relief Policy, as set out in Appendix A of Report No. FIN2511, be approved.

13. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION - UPDATE –
(Cllr Gareth Williams, Leader of the Council)

The Cabinet considered Report No. ED2504, which provided an update on work carried in respect of the ongoing Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) process.

Members were reminded that the interim LGR plan had been submitted by the deadline of 21st March, 2025, with the final business case to be submitted to the Government by 26th September, 2025. The interim plan had been drawn up collaboratively by all authorities in the Hampshire and Isle of Wight area and had expressed the Council's preference, taking into account sense of place and the economic geography of the area, for the formation of a unitary council formed from Rushmoor Borough Council, Hart District Council and Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council. KPMG had been appointed to support Councils across Hampshire

and the Isle of Wight to prepare the necessary evidence base and support the development of a business case to enable final proposals to be agreed and submitted to the Government. The Report also set out the arrangements for engagement with residents, businesses, partners and voluntary organisations. This engagement would include seeking residents' views on the establishment of parish councils and/or Neighbourhood Area Committees, as part of a Community Governance Review.

In discussing the Report, the Cabinet expressed strong support for the LGR process and felt that this would enable better, joined-up services to be delivered to local residents. Members also considered it was important to allow residents to express views on subjects such as the formation of parish/town councils before the Council's view was formed.

The Cabinet RECOMMENDED TO THE COUNCIL that

- (i) the update on the LGR programme to date and the continuing collaboration with eleven other councils on options that would replace the current fifteen councils with four new unitary councils on the mainland, keeping the Isle of Wight as its own unitary Council, as set out in Report No. ED2504, be noted;
- (ii) confirmation that the formation of a unitary council based on the areas of Rushmoor, Hart and Basingstoke and Deane continued to be the preferred option for Rushmoor, be approved, based on the assessment criteria and representing the best balance of a Council large enough to deliver high quality services and value for money but small enough to be connected to the place and the needs of the people the council would serve;
- (iii) the programme of engagement being undertaken to ensure that all residents, businesses and partners had an opportunity to feed into the process, as set out in the Report, be noted; and
- (iv) the endorsement of the Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee's recommendation to the Council to approve the Terms of Reference for the Community Governance Review, as set in Report No. LEG2510, be approved.

14. RUSHMOOR TOGETHER –

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

The Cabinet considered Report No. ED2503, which set out the priorities and plan for Rushmoor Together, the new partnership plan for 2025/26 for supporting communities and tackling inequality in the Borough.

Members were advised that Rushmoor Together was a follow up to the existing Supporting Communities Plan 2021-24 and built on the foundations and successes that that plan had delivered. It was a collaborative approach to addressing the challenges facing local communities and was focussed around three priority areas:

1. Physical and mental health
2. Economic wellbeing
3. Community belonging

During discussion, Members stressed the importance of demonstrating best practice in the local area during the future transition to a new, unitary authority. It was felt that a unitary authority would be better placed resolve some of the challenges identified in Rushmoor Together. The Cabinet was supportive of the proposed approach and expressed appreciation for the outcomes that had been achieved as a result of the previous Supporting Communities Plan.

The Cabinet RESOLVED that Rushmoor Together, a partnership plan for supporting communities for 2025/26, as set out in Report No. ED2503, be endorsed.

15. COMMUNITY RECOVERY FUND –

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

The Cabinet considered Report No. ED2502, which set out the Council's spending in relation to the Community Recovery Fund.

Members were reminded that, following the public disorder that took place in July and August 2024, the Council had received the sum of £600,000 from the Community Recovery Fund (CRF), made available by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. The report outlined the Council's spending so far, which had included strategic communication and media training for Members and officers and the employment of security staff at Council meetings. Also set out were the items planned to utilise the remaining budget, including the development of a Community Mediation Service and a grant to Rushmoor Together.

The Cabinet RESOLVED that

- i) the spend so far and how this supported wider community cohesion and resilience, as set out in Report No. ED2502, be noted;
- ii) the remaining allocation of funding, as set out in the Report, be endorsed; and
- iii) the alignment of the spending to the Council's Delivery Plan, along with the priorities of Rushmoor Together, a partnership plan for tackling inequalities and supporting the local community, be noted.

16. RENEWAL OF THE ALDERSHOT PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER –

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

The Cabinet considered Report No. OS2508, which proposed the renewal of a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) for Aldershot town centre, following a period of public consultation. Members were informed that the purpose of the Order was to assist in managing ongoing antisocial behaviour related to the consumption of alcohol in a public space and other associated behaviours, including public urination and defecation. The existing PSPO had been in place since July 2022 and data,

along with the consultation responses, had demonstrated the ongoing need for the order.

The Cabinet expressed support for the the renewal of the order, which had enabled swift action to be taken to deal with the identified antisocial behaviour in Aldershot town centre, for the benefit of local residents and businesses and visitors to the town.

The Cabinet RESOLVED that the renewal of the Aldershot Public Spaces Protection Order, as set out in Report No. OS2508, be approved.

17. **FARNBOROUGH LEISURE CENTRE - UPDATE AND NEXT STEPS –**
(Cllr Sophie Porter, Deputy Leader and Healthy Communities & Active Lives Portfolio Holder)

The Cabinet considered Report No. REG2503, which set out an update and the next steps in relation to the provision of a new leisure centre in Farnborough.

The Cabinet was reminded that, in February 2025, the Cabinet had agreed to progress with the revised approach for the delivery of a leisure centre in Farnborough, utilising the remaining Levelling Up funding. Approval had been given to progress design works to the end of RIBA Stage 3, to submit a planning application and to commence the procurement of the leisure operator. Members were now receiving an update on progress with the project and with the leisure operator procurements. The report also set out the next steps in relation to delivering the project within the parameters of the Levelling Up Fund timescales. It was confirmed that a planning application was expected to be submitted in September, 2025.

The Cabinet was supportive of the progress to date and felt that this would deliver an important, affordable facility for the Borough.

The Cabinet RESOLVED that

- (i) the progress with the design of the leisure centre and the changes made as a result of the preliminary market engagement sessions with operators, as set out in Report No. REG2503, be noted;
- (ii) the conclusion of RIBA Stage 2 on schedule, the commencement of RIBA Stage 3 and the timetable for the project to the conclusion of RIBA Stage 4, as set out in the Report, be noted;
- (iii) the extension of the current Access Agreement for RIBA Stage 4, on the conclusion of RIBA Stage 3, subject to the forecasted operator income being in line with expectations, be approved, with costs for RIBA Stage 4 of up to £660,000 to be drawn from the Levelling Up Fund;
- (iv) the arrangements for the pre planning consultation, as set out in the Report, be noted;

- (v) the revised operator procurement consultation, as set out in the Report, be noted; and
- (vi) the setting up of special meetings of the Cabinet and the Council, as required, to enable the concurrent entering into of both the build and operator contracts, be approved.

The Meeting closed at 8.15 pm.

CABINET

Report of the meeting held on Tuesday, 5th August, 2025 at the Council Offices, Farnborough at 7.00 pm.

Voting Members

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

Cllr A.H. Crawford, Finance & Resources Portfolio Holder
Cllr Keith Dibble, Housing & Planning Portfolio Holder
Cllr Julie Hall, Economy, Skills & Regeneration Portfolio Holder

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Cllrs Jules Crossley and Christine Guinness.

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 **18th August, 2025**.

18. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

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

19. MINUTES –

The Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 8th July, 2025 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

20. BUDGET MANAGEMENT - MONTH 3 –

(Cllr A.H. Crawford, Finance & Resources Portfolio Holder)

The Cabinet considered Report No. FIN2513, which set out an update on the Council's forecasted financial position for 2025/26, as at the end of June, 2025.

Members were reminded that the Council had a statutory obligation to set and maintain a balanced budget. It was reported that, in February 2025, the Council had identified a significant challenge to its future financial sustainability. Members were informed that the forecast outturn for 2025/26 was on track, with the full £1.8 million savings requirement achieved. The level of external borrowing had reduced through careful cashflow management, which had delayed and reduced the need to borrow externally. It was confirmed that work would continue to identify long term sustainable savings to achieve financial sustainability and resolve the £2.784 million savings requirement for 2026/27 and £3.781 million for 2027/28, as set out in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

The Cabinet was pleased with the progress that had been made in addressing the Council's challenging financial position and expressed gratitude to the finance team for its work in this respect.

The Cabinet RESOLVED that the revenue budget forecast, as set out in Section 3.1 of Report No. FIN2513, be noted.

21. **COUNCIL PLAN, PERFORMANCE AND RISK REGISTER QUARTERLY UPDATE Q1 APRIL TO JUNE 2025/26 –**
(Cllr Jules Crossley, Policy, Performance and Sustainability Portfolio Holder)

The Cabinet received Report No. ED2506, which set out the performance monitoring information for the Council Delivery Plan and key service measures for the first quarter of 2025/26. Members were informed that key projects and activities from the Council Plan and key service indicators and measures used by the Council to monitor how the Council runs services were included in the Report. The Cabinet heard that the Council's Corporate Risk Register tried to identify factors that could impact on the future delivery of the Council's key priorities. A summary of those risks was provided in the report for discussion.

In discussing the Report, Members were satisfied with the progress made by the Council so far towards this year's Council Delivery Plan.

The Cabinet NOTED the progress made towards delivering the Council Delivery Plan, the latest performance information and the changes highlighted in the Council's Corporate Risk Register, as set out in Report No. ED2506.

22. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC –**

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

Minute No.	Schedule 12A Para. No.	Category
23	3	Information relating to financial or business affairs

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

23. **ALDERSHOT CREMATORIUM - PROPOSAL TO INCREASE BUDGET FOR REFURBISHMENT –**
(Cllr Christine Guinness, Pride in Place / Neighbourhood Services Portfolio Holder)

The Cabinet considered Exempt Report No. OS2513, which set out the financial position for the major refurbishment of the Aldershot Crematorium and requested the approval of an increase in the capital funding allocation to enable the scheme to be completed and for services to resume at the facility.

Members were informed that the Cabinet had agreed the full business case and the requested capital funding at its meeting in September, 2023. At that time, it was noted that an accurate assessment of refurbishment costs would become available once a main contractor had been appointed. It was reported that, as anticipated, several technical matters that had not been possible to accurately assess until the project had been underway had been identified. This had adversely impacted the overall forecasted project cost. The report set out details of where costs had increased and the reasons for this. Members were informed that a number of these increases were disputed and that the Council had appointed specialist consultants to assist in this regard. It was noted that the Council had also faced additional costs arising from capitalised interest and unrecoverable VAT that had not been included in the original estimates.

In discussing this, the Cabinet considered that the reasons for the increases in the costs of this project should be thoroughly investigated and that lessons should be learnt to inform future projects of this nature. This resulted in the agreement of an additional resolution, as set out at (i)(b) below.

The Cabinet

(i) **RESOLVED:**

- (a) that the additional funding requirement, as set out in Exempt Report No. OS2513, be approved; and
- (b) to ensure that the scope of the planned audit of the project would identify the factors that had led to the overspend and would include a lessons learned report to be taken into consideration for future capital projects; and

- (ii) **RECOMMENDED TO THE COUNCIL** that approval be given to an additional capital allocation totalling the sum set out in Exempt Report No. OS2513 for the crematorium refurbishment project, over and above the £5,519,430 already agreed as part of the existing Capital Programme funded by borrowing to be factored into the 2025/26 estimates, with the 2025/26 Treasury Management and Capital Strategies being adjusted accordingly.

The Meeting closed at 8.09 pm.

CABINET

Report of the meeting held on Tuesday, 16th September, 2025 at the Council Offices, Farnborough at 7.00 pm.

Voting Members

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

Cllr A.H. Crawford, Finance & Resources Portfolio Holder
Cllr Keith Dibble, Housing & Planning Portfolio Holder
Cllr Christine Guinness, Pride in Place / Neighbourhood Services Portfolio Holder
Cllr Julie Hall, Economy, Skills & Regeneration Portfolio Holder

The Cabinet considered the following matters at the above-mentioned meeting. All executive decisions of the Cabinet shall become effective, subject to the call-in procedure, from **29th September, 2025**.

24. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –**

Having regard to the Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors, the following declaration of interest was made:

Item No.	Member	Interest	Reason
28	Cllr A.H. Crawford	Personal and non-pecuniary	Member of Hampshire County Council

25. **MINUTES –**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 5th August, 2025 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

26. **LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION –** (Cllr Gareth Williams, Leader of the Council)

The Cabinet considered Report No. ED2507, which provided an update on work carried in respect of the ongoing Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) process and sought a recommendation to the Council to approve the submission of the proposal and to confirm the Cabinet's preference of the three options for the southern area of Hampshire.

Members were reminded that the proposal would set out how a single tier of local government could be established across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. At its meeting in July, 2025, the Cabinet had recommended to the Council that a unitary council based on the areas of Rushmoor, Hart and Basingstoke and Deane councils should continue to be the preferred option for Rushmoor as, in line with the assessment criteria, it represented the best balance of a Council large enough to

deliver high quality services and value for money but small enough to be connected to the place and needs of the people the council served. At its meeting on 10th July, the Council had agreed that recommendation and had noted the programme of engagement being undertaken to ensure that all residents, businesses and partners had had an opportunity to feed into the process. KPMG had continued to support twelve Councils across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight to prepare the necessary evidence base and support the development of a business case to enable final proposals to be agreed and submitted to the Government. The Report also set out the arrangements for engagement with residents, businesses, partners and voluntary organisations. This engagement had included seeking residents' views on the establishment of parish councils and/or Neighbourhood Area Committees, as part of a Community Governance Review.

The Report set out the three options that were contained within the draft proposal as Options 1, 2 and 3. In each of these, the preference for the north of the county was a unitary council based on the areas of Rushmoor, Hart and Basingstoke and Deane councils. Legal advice had been received that recommended that any proposal requiring a modification or boundary change should be seen as being derived from an option created from a combination of complete authority areas. Because Option 3 had been derived from Option 1, the twelve authorities involved had agreed to rename Option 3 as Option 1A, with recommendations revised accordingly. An addendum to Report No. ED2507 had been created and had been published on the Council's website.

The Cabinet was informed that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had considered the proposal at its meeting on 4th September, 2025 and requested that its concerns should be brought to the attention of the Cabinet. These were set out in the Report and included concerns over the amount of detail provided in the financial information. The Committee also suggested that the Council should be seeking assurances from the Government in relation to full funding costs for the LGR process being guaranteed. The Cabinet thanked the Committee for its input but decided that this would not affect its recommendation to the Council. Furthermore, it was agreed that the Cabinet would not write to the Government as requested by the Committee.

The Cabinet discussed the Report at length. In particular, Members considered the financial implications of the LGR process. A view was expressed that the proposal was not financially sustainable and that it was wrong to recommend an option that impacted the south of Hampshire without having a detailed knowledge of the circumstances and residents' wishes in those areas. This view was not supported by the other members of the Cabinet. In response, it was clarified that all Hampshire Councils were obliged by the Government to state preferred options for the whole of the county when submitting proposals. The majority of the Cabinet was supportive of the LGR process and felt that this would enable better, joined-up services to be delivered to local residents.

The Cabinet RECOMMENDED TO THE COUNCIL that approval be given for the proposal 'Close Enough to be Local, Big Enough to Stay Strong' to be submitted to the Government by the 26th September deadline confirming that

- (i) a five-unitary Council structure, with four new mainland unitary councils plus the Isle of Wight, would best meet the Government's criteria and provide the

most effective solution for local government reorganisation in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight;

- (ii) a unitary council based on the areas of Rushmoor, Hart and Basingstoke & Deane is the recommended option for Rushmoor as, in line with the assessment criteria, it represents the best balance of a council large enough to deliver high quality services and value for money but small enough to be connected to the place and the needs of the people the council serves; and
- (iii) the Council's preferred option in the proposal that brings together entire existing Council areas is Option 1. The Council would though request the Secretary of State to make a modification to that option involving a range of boundary changes as shown in Option 1A in the proposal, using the modification powers under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, as this represents a stronger case for change.

27. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC –**

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

Minute No.	Schedule 12A Para. No.	Category
28	3	Information relating to financial or business affairs

THE FOLLOWING ITEM WAS CONSIDERED IN THE ABSENCE OF THE PUBLIC

28. **NOS. 16-18 THE MEADS, FARNBOROUGH - COMMERCIAL LETTING –** (Cllr Julie Hall, Economy, Skills & Regeneration Portfolio Holder)

The Cabinet considered Exempt Report No. REG2504, which set out a proposal to consider letting a Council-owned property at Nos. 16-18 The Meads, Farnborough.

Members were informed that, whilst this was a positive opportunity to bring an anchor tenant to the town and to the Council's shopping centre asset, the agreement for the new lease as proposed would require significant investment in capital works and a fit-out contribution by the Council. The Exempt Report set out the financial details involved with the proposal and it was noted that it needed to be considered in light of the Council's ongoing financial challenge and recovery plan. It was felt, however, that this would provide an important step forward in the Council's economic and social regeneration plans for Farnborough town centre. It was also envisaged that securing this particular tenant was likely to have a positive impact on the future prospects for the Meads and would increase its commercial viability.

In discussing this option and acknowledging the significant investment required, the majority of the Cabinet was in agreement that this proposal offered an exciting

opportunity with regards to the Council's ongoing priority to regenerate Farnborough town centre and to promote a nighttime economy in that area.

The Cabinet RESOLVED that

- i) the letting of Nos. 16-18 The Meads, on the Heads of Terms set out in paragraphs 2.4 – 2.5 of Exempt Report No. REG2504, be approved;
- ii) the Executive Head of Property and Growth, in consultation with the Council's Interim Monitoring Officer and Corporate Manager – Legal Services, be authorised to negotiate the lease;
- iii) the allocation of the capital budget, in the sum set out in the Exempt Report, to enable the works and contribution for fit out costs to be funded from capital receipts allocated to commercial lettings in the 2025-26 capital programme, be approved; and
- iv) the Executive Head of Property and Growth, in consultation with the Finance and Resources Portfolio Holder and the Executive Head of Finance, be authorised to exceed the capital estimate by the sum set out in the Exempt Report, with any additional expenditure beyond that amount being subject to further Cabinet approval.

The Meeting closed at 8.43 pm.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE, AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Report of the meeting held on Wednesday, 2nd July, 2025 at the Council Offices, Farnborough at 7.00 pm.

Voting Members

Cllr Bill O'Donovan (Chairman)
Cllr Rhian Jones (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr P.J. Cullum
Cllr C.P. Grattan
Cllr M.J. Roberts
Cllr Sarah Spall
Cllr Jacqui Vosper

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Cllr Gaynor Austin, Cllr C.W. Card, Cllr Sue Carter and Cllr P.G. Taylor.

Cllr Thomas Day and Cllr S.J. Masterson attended the meeting as Standing Deputies.

Non-Voting Member

Mr. Tom Davies – Independent Member (Audit)

10. PROPOSAL TO START A COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

The Committee considered the Monitoring Officer's Report No. LEG2510, which set out a proposal to start a Community Governance Review in response to Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). The review aimed to ensure that community governance arrangements would continue to be effective, convenient, and work in the interests of local residents in the event of the establishment of a unitary council for North Hampshire.

The report and the attached proposed terms of reference described the process and schedule for a Community Governance Review to be completed by January 2026, to ensure there was sufficient time to set precepts and transfer any assets and/or services to any new Parish Councils that the Council may choose to establish.

During discussion, Members raised questions regarding potential costs of setting up Town or Parish Councils, the services provided by Town and Parish Councils and the differences between the two.

The Committee noted that residents would need to have clarity about the consultation in order to seek their views, as there were several consultations ongoing with regards to LGR.

It was noted by the Committee, that the Council would consider a final report and draft Community Governance Reorganisation Order by January 2026 in advance of potential Parish Council elections in May 2026. An alternative option for the Council, was the decision to not make any changes to community governance, having given regard to the consultation results.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED TO THE COUNCIL** that the terms of reference for a Community Governance Review, as set out in the Monitoring Officer's Report No. LEG2510, be approved.

11. **CONSTITUTION AND COMMITTEE REVIEW UPDATE REPORT (2)**

The Committee considered the Corporate Manager – Democracy Report No. DEM2506, which set out proposed updates to the Constitution in respect of:

- (1) All proposed new amendments to the Constitution as described in the schedule in Appendix 1;
- (2) Updates to the Standing Orders for the Regulation of Business and Scheme for Public Questions as set out in Appendix 2 and Appendix 3;
- (3) Updates to the Terms of Reference for Committees; 'Role and Responsibilities of Council Decision-Making Committees', 'Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Terms of Reference' and 'Policy & Project Advisory Board – Terms of Reference as set out in Appendix 4 to come into effect from October 2025;
- (4) An update to the Code of Conduct for Councillors as set out in Para 2.1 of the Report; and
- (5) All previously agreed amendments and updates to the Constitution since the last review in February 2023 as set out in the schedule in Appendix 5.

During discussion, Members raised questions regarding the necessity of splitting the Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee (CGAS), considering the upcoming Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). The Committee noted that due to the CGAS Committee's numerous functions and responsibilities, reports from external bodies had strongly advised that focus was given to financial management and ensuring that Members felt they had the capacity to have the required specialism and in-depth knowledge. There was also the need for a strong pool of trained Members for licensing, with daytime availability, that had to be drawn from the CGAS Committee. Members could serve on both new Committees, if required.

Members also raised questions concerning the time allocated for questions at Council meetings. The Committee noted that the Mayor would have the ability to extend the time for public questions, if they considered it necessary.

- (i) The Committee **RECOMMENDED TO THE COUNCIL** that the proposed updates to the Council's Constitution, following consideration by the Constitution Working Group, as set out in the Corporate Manager -

Democracy Report No. DEM2506, be approved subject to the inclusion of the following additional amendments:

- that the terms of reference for the Licensing and Corporate Business Committee include reference to the Committee having responsibility for matters regarding the remuneration of the Head of Paid Service; and
- that the 'Scheme for Public Questions at Full Council' be updated at para 1.8 to state that the Managing Director, *in consultation with the Mayor*, may reject a question for Council for inclusion on the agenda.

The meeting closed at 8.05 pm.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE, AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Report of the meeting held on Wednesday, 23rd July, 2025 at the Council Offices, Farnborough at 7.00 pm.

Voting Members

Cllr Bill O'Donovan (Chairman)
Cllr Rhian Jones (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr Gaynor Austin
Cllr C.W. Card
Cllr Sue Carter
Cllr P.J. Cullum
Cllr C.P. Grattan
Cllr M.J. Roberts
Cllr Sarah Spall
Cllr P.G. Taylor

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Cllr Jacqui Vosper.

Non-Voting Member

Mr. Tom Davies – Independent Member (Audit)

12. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 May, 2025 were agreed and signed as a correct record of the proceedings.

13. INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT

The Chairman welcomed Neil Pitman, Head of Southern Internal Audit Partnership (SIAP), the Council's internal auditors, who joined the meeting remotely via Microsoft Teams.

The Committee received SIAP's Report No. SIAP25/03 which set out the Internal Audit Progress Report, for the June 2025 accounts, which provided the Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee with an overview of internal audit activity against assurance work completed in accordance with the approved audit plan. The Report also provided an overview of key updates pertinent to the discharge of the Committee's role, in relation to internal audit.

It was noted by the Committee, that there was an error in the agenda pack. On Page 10, Para 1.4, Members were asked to disregard the first two sentences.

During discussions, questions were raised regarding IT contingency plans and Disabled Facilities Grants. Members noted that James Duggin, Executive Head of Operations, had not been available to attend the meeting to answer questions

relating to how the funds were spent in relation to the Disabled Facilities Grants. Members agreed to request an action plan from Mr Duggin, with dates and those responsible for actions, to be completed in time for the Committee meeting in November.

ACTION:

What	By Whom	When
Action plan with dates completed and officer responsibility in relation to the Disabled Facilities Grants.	James Duggin, Executive Head of Operations	November 2025

RESOLVED: That SIAP's Report No. SIAP25/03, be noted.

14. ANNUAL CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT

The Committee received the Executive Director's Report No. ED2505, which provided an update on the ongoing development and maintenance of the Council's corporate health and safety arrangements in 2024/25 and the plans in place for 2025/26.

It was noted that, following the response to Covid and the significant changes made to working practices across the majority of the Council's services during that period, the health and safety risk profile of the Council's business activities had stabilised, with more employees routinely working from home and other remote locations. The overall health and safety risk profile of the Council remained low, with the majority of high-risk work activity contracted out, and only a few specific roles with an enhanced level of risk. Examples of these were technical staff working at Princes Hall and members of the Place Protection team.

It was noted that, the Corporate Health and Safety Advisor maintained a reporting regime on corporate health and safety matters that was taken quarterly to the Corporate Management Team (CMT). This related predominately to operational matters. The numbers of accidents/incidents and violence at work incidents, including trends and a summary of those reports, were also routinely reported to CMT and Cabinet via the quarterly performance management report. The number of accidents and incidents seen at the Council was low and had remained relatively stable for a number of years.

During discussions, Members raised questions regarding near misses, details of incidents and whether unions and officers were involved in discussions involving health and safety. Members noted that a Corporate Health, Safety and Welfare Group, which consisted of officers from all services and levels of management, along with a union representative, met regularly to discuss matters involving health and safety at work. It was also noted that, as verbal abuse and threats had lessened, the data could be used to re-evaluate the use of security considering the costs involved.

ACTION:

What	By Whom	When
Incorporate into the Committee's Work Plan quarterly reporting on the Risk Management Process.	Roger Sanders, Service Manager – Risk, Performance and Procurement	September 2025

RESOLVED: That the Executive Director's Report No. ED2505, be noted.

15. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION - ANNUAL UPDATE REPORT 2025

The Committee received the Data Protection Officer's Report No. LEG2502 which set out information about Freedom of Information (FOI) requests received by the Council, and performance on responses to FOIs. The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA 2000) provided public access to information held by public authorities. Freedom of Information requests encouraged openness and scrutiny of the Council's decisions. Rushmoor Borough Council had a statutory duty to fulfil its obligations under FOIA 2000.

The Committee noted that the Council's performance on FOIs continued to steadily improve and was responding within the target response rate. There was further work planned, including training, and publishing more information online to continue improvements already made. A new Microsoft Lists system had been launched part way into Q2 to improve resilience, and increase oversight by senior management.

In response to a question, it was confirmed that the Council had not received any fines so far from the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) for not complying with the FOIA 2000. During discussions, the Committee noted that the Council rarely received subject access requests (SARs). They were managed within the time frame and were slightly different to FOI requests, in that the Council were able to self-apply for an extension.

RESOLVED: That officers:

- (i) continued their work on reducing the number of overdue FOIs within the system in 2025 and continued to ensure that 90% of requests were responded to within the statutory 20 working days, as per the ICO target;
- (ii) continued to raise FOI awareness and knowledge across employees, through regular training and guidance; and
- (iii) published as much information proactively to reduce the number of FOI requests.

16. ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS REPORT

The Committee received the Executive Head of Finance's Report No. FIN2514, which provided an update to the Committee including the unaudited statement of accounts for 2024/25, which were published on 27th June 2025, in-line with statutory deadlines.

The Committee noted that the preparation of the Statement of Accounts and the audit scrutiny provided reassurance that the accounts gave a true and fair view of the financial position of the Council. The process of clearing down the backlog of the Annual Statements meant full audit sign off had not been achieved for the three years 2020-2023, therefore risks of the Council's financial accounts not showing a true and fair financial position, were increased.

During discussions, the Committee noted an error in the report on Page 41, Para 7.2, which stated 'Waverley' instead of 'Rushmoor'. Members raised questions regarding the Local Government Pension Scheme's (LGPS) longevity forecasting and the impact on the Council's budget from increases in employer National Insurance Contributions (NICs).

ACTION:

What	By Whom	When
Query with the Actuary the discrepancy between the LGPS's longevity forecasting and the forecasting of the Office for National Statistics (ONS).	Peter Vickers, Executive Head of Finance.	September 2025

RESOLVED: That the Executive Head of Finance's Report No. FIN2514, be noted.

17. 2024/25 TREASURY MANAGEMENT OUTTURN AND 2025/26 Q1 TREASURY PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS REPORT

The Committee received the Executive Head of Finance Report No. FIN2515 which set out the activities of the Treasury Management and non-Treasury Investment Operations for quarter one in the financial year 2025/26 and reported on compliance with Prudential Indicators along with 2024/25 outturn figures. The report was a statutory requirement under the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management.

The Committee noted that all treasury activity had been conducted within the approved Treasury Management Practices.

The Committee noted that the majority of the Council's borrowing was short-term Local Authority (LA), although the report showed that there had been a change, in-line with the Strategy, to have more longer term borrowing with the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) locking in rates at equivalent to, or lower than, the borrowing rate set within the MTFS (4.78%), which diversified the borrowing the Council held.

During discussions, Members raised questions regarding the frequency of treasury management reviews, the effect of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) on the Council's debt and the accuracy of Arlingclose, the independent treasury advisor company used by the Council. The Committee noted that data from Royal London, Bank of England and Arlingclose was used by the Council.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED TO THE CABINET** that the contents of the Executive Head of Finance's Report No. FIN2515 report, in relation to the treasury management and non-treasury investment operations carried out, be approved.

The meeting closed at 8.25 pm.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Report of the meeting held on Wednesday, 30th July, 2025 at the Concorde Room,
Council Offices, Farnborough at 7.00 pm.

Voting Members

Cllr C.P. Grattan (Vice-Chairman) (In the Chair)

Cllr Thomas Day
Cllr Peace Essien Igodifo
Cllr A.H. Gani
Cllr S.J. Masterson
Cllr Dhan Sarki
Cllr Calum Stewart
Cllr Jacqui Vosper

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Cllr Gaynor Austin, Cllr Lisa Greenway and Cllr Ivan Whitmee.

Cllr Nadia Martin attended the meeting as a Standing Deputy.

Non-Voting Member

Cllr Keith Dibble (Housing & Planning Portfolio Holder) (ex officio)

13. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest for this meeting.

14. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 25th June, 2025 were approved and signed as a correct record of proceedings.

15. REPRESENTATION BY THE PUBLIC

In accordance with the guidelines for public participation at meetings, the following representations were made to the Committee and were duly considered before a decision was reached:

Application No.	Address	Representation	In support of or against the application
24/00748/FUL &	Land at Orchard	Mr Tom Rumble,	In support

24/00746/LBCPP	Rise No.127 & La Fosse House No.129 Ship Lane & Farnborough Hill School, No. 312 Farnborough Road, Farnborough	Director, Woolf Bond Planning Ltd
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16. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

RESOLVED: That

- (i) permission be given to the following application, as set out in Appendix "A" (as required), subject to the conditions, restrictions and prohibitions (if any) mentioned therein:

*	24/00746/LBCPP	Land at Orchard Rise No.127 & La Fosse House No.129 Ship Lane & Farnborough Hill School, No. 312 Farnborough Road, Farnborough.
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25/00318/FULPP	No. 54 Fellows Road, Farnborough
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- (ii) the following application be determined by the Executive Head of Property and Growth, in consultation with the Chairman, subject to the prior completion of a S106 legal agreement and the conditions as detailed in the report:

*	24/00748/FUL	Land at Orchard Rise No.127 & La Fosse House No.129 Ship Lane & Farnborough Hill School, No. 312 Farnborough Road, Farnborough.
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- (iii) the following application be deferred to the next Committee meeting, due to an administrative error:

25/00209/FULPP	The Royal Staff, No. 37A Mount Pleasant Road, Aldershot.
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- (ii) the applications dealt with by the Executive Head of Property and Growth, where necessary in consultation with the Chairman, in accordance with the Council's Scheme of Delegation, more particularly specified in Section "D" of the Executive Head of Property and Growth's Report No. PG2525, be noted

- (iii) the current position with regard to the following applications be noted pending consideration at a future meeting:

21/00271/FULPP	Block 3, Queensmead, Farnborough
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23/00713/FUL	Manor Park Cottage, St. Georges Road East, Aldershot
23/00794/REVPP	Farnborough Airport, Farnborough
24/00237/FUL	Nos. 235-237 High Street, Aldershot
25/00287/REMPP	Zone G Pennefathers, Aldershot Urban Extension, Alison's Road, Aldershot

* The Executive Head of Property and Growth's Report No. PG2525 in respect of these applications was amended at the meeting.

17. LAND AT ORCHARD RISE NO.127 & LA FOSSE HOUSE NO.129 SHIP LANE & FARNBOROUGH HILL SCHOOL, NO. 312 FARNBOROUGH ROAD, FARNBOROUGH - APPLICATION NO. 24/00748/FUL

The Committee considered the Executive Head of Property and Growth's Report No. PG2525 (as amended at the meeting) regarding the demolition of the existing care home and dwelling, repairs and works to the kitchen garden wall and the erection of 20 residential dwellings, associated access works, drainage works, tree works, car parking, hard and soft landscaping.

RESOLVED: That

- (i) an additional condition, relating to an Employment and Skills Plan, be explored with the applicant prior to final determination of the application; and
- (ii) the Executive Head of Property and Growth, in consultation with the Chairman, be authorised to GRANT planning permission, subject to a Section 106 Agreement.

18. THE ROYAL STAFF, NO.37A MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD, ALDERSHOT - APPLICATION NO. 25/00209/FULPP

The Committee were due to consider the Executive Head of Property and Growth's Report No. PG2525 regarding the change of use of public house (sui generis) to a day nursery (use class E(f)) and demolition of rear outbuilding at No.37A Mount Pleasant Road, Aldershot.

RESOLVED: That

due to an administrative error, the planning application was scheduled without the correct notification period for all interested parties. Therefore the item was **DEFERRED** to a later meeting.

19. **LAND AT FORMER LAFARGE SITE, HOLLYBUSH LANE, ALDERSHOT - APPLICATION NO. 24/00140/REVPP**

The Committee received the Executive Head of Property and Growth's Report No. PG2527, regarding Planning Application No. 24/00140/REVPP – Land at Former Lafarge Site, Hollybush Lane, Aldershot. The application sought a Minor Material Amendment comprising "Variation of Condition of planning permission 20/00400/FULPP dated 24 March 2023 as amended by non-material amendment 23/00800/NMAPP dated 5 December 2023 to increase number of floating holiday lodges from 9 to 21 units".

RESOLVED: That

subject to the prior completion of a satisfactory s106 Legal Agreement to:

- (i) secure the SAMMs SPA financial contribution in respect of the 12 additional floating holiday lodges, together with associated s106 Administration & Monitoring Fee; and
- (ii) replicate the requirements of the original s106 dated 24 March 2023 in respect of SPA contributions for the original 9 floating holiday lodges and the restoration/reinstatement and retention thereafter of the original line of the Blackwater Valley Path.
- (iii) the Executive Head of Property and Growth, in consultation with the Chairman be authorised to GRANT planning permission subject to the following conditions and informatives:-

4.2 Conditions and Informatives as agreed previously.

20. **PLANNING (DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT) SUMMARY**

The Committee received the Executive Head of Property and Growth's Report No. PG2526, which provided an update on the position with respect to achieving performance indicators for the Development Management Section of the Planning Service and the overall workload of the Section for the quarter from 1st April 2025 to 30th June 2025.

The Committee noted that, in relation to major applications, current performance was below the government target of 60%. However, only two applications had been determined so far, meaning an improvement to more than 60% was likely in the future.

Members also noted that, regarding income, there were corrections to the report and the amendment sheet, which were due to an error in the budget forecasting and which had reported only a partial figure for the month of June.

RESOLVED: That the Executive Head of Property and Growth's Report No. PG2526 be noted.

The meeting closed at 8.11 pm.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Report of the meeting held on Tuesday, 12th August, 2025 at the Concorde Room,
Council Offices, Farnborough at 7.00 pm.

Voting Members

Cllr Gaynor Austin (Chairman)
Cllr C.P. Grattan (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr Lisa Greenway
Cllr S.J. Masterson
Cllr Dhan Sarki
Cllr Calum Stewart
Cllr Jacqui Vosper

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Cllrs A.H. Gani, Thomas Day,
Peace Essien Igodifo and Ivan Whitmee.

Cllr P.J. Cullum attended the meeting as a Standing Deputy.

Non-Voting Member

Cllr Keith Dibble (Housing & Planning Portfolio Holder) (ex officio)

21. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest for this meeting.

22. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 30th July, 2025 were approved and signed as a
correct record of proceedings.

23. REPRESENTATIONS BY THE PUBLIC

In accordance with the guidelines for public participation at meetings, the following
representations were made to the Committee and were duly considered before a
decision was reached:

Application No.	Address	Representation	In support of or against the application
25/00209/FULPP	The Royal Staff,	Ms Magdalena	In support

No. 37A Mount Szymanska-Queiroz
Pleasant Road, (applicant)
Aldershot

24. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

RESOLVED: That

- (i) the following application be determined by the Executive Head of Property and Growth, in consultation with the Chair, subject to the conditions as amended at the meeting:

* 25/00209/FULPP The Royal Staff, No. 37A Mount Pleasant Road, Aldershot.

* The Executive Head of Property and Growth's Report No. PG2528 in respect of these applications was amended at the meeting.

25. THE ROYAL STAFF, NO.37A MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD, ALDERSHOT - APPLICATION NO. 25/00209/FULPP

The Committee considered the Executive Head of Property and Growth's Report No. PG2528 regarding the change of use of public house (sui generis) to a day nursery (use class E(f)) and demolition of rear outbuilding at No. 37A Mount Pleasant Road, Aldershot.

RESOLVED: That

- (i) Condition 5 of the recommendation be amended to include reference to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that order); and
- (ii) the Executive Head of Property and Growth, in consultation with the Chair, be authorised to GRANT planning permission, subject to the Executive Head of Property and Growth and the Chair being satisfied that the marketing materials provided demonstrate that the asking price for the Public House was reasonable.

The meeting closed at 8.24 pm.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Report of the meeting held on Wednesday, 10th September, 2025 at the Concorde Room, Council Offices, Farnborough at 7.00 pm.

Voting Members

Cllr Gaynor Austin (Chairman)
Cllr C.P. Grattan (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr Thomas Day
Cllr Peace Essien Igodifo
Cllr A.H. Gani
Cllr S.J. Masterson
Cllr Dhan Sarki
Cllr Jacqui Vosper

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Cllrs Lisa Greenway, Calum Stewart and Ivan Whitmee.

Non-Voting Member

Cllr Keith Dibble (Housing & Planning Portfolio Holder) (ex officio)

26. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest for this meeting.

27. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 12th August, 2025 were approved and signed as a correct record of proceedings.

28. REPRESENTATIONS BY THE PUBLIC

In accordance with the guidelines for public participation at meetings, the following representations were made to the Committee and were duly considered before a decision was reached:

Application No.	Address	Representation	In support of or against the application
24/00644/FULPP	Land to the Rear of No. 105 Park Road, Farnborough	Mr Dan Hughes (resident)	Against

24/00644/FULPP	Land to the Rear of No. 105 Park Road, Farnborough	Mrs Charlotte Hughes (resident)	Against
24/00644/FULPP	Land to the Rear of No. 105 Park Road, Farnborough	Mr James Deverill, MCA Architects (agent)	In support

29. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

RESOLVED: That

- (i) permission be given to the following application, as set out in Appendix “A” (as required), subject to the conditions, restrictions and prohibitions (if any) mentioned therein:

* 24/00644/FULPP Land to the Rear of No. 105 Park Road, Farnborough.

- (ii) the applications dealt with by the Executive Head of Property and Growth, where necessary in consultation with the Chairman, in accordance with the Council’s Scheme of Delegation, more particularly specified in Section “D” of the Executive Head of Property and Growth’s Report No. PG2529, be noted
- (iii) the current position with regard to the following applications be noted pending consideration at a future meeting:

21/00271/FULPP	Block 3, Queensmead, Farnborough
23/00713/FUL	Manor Park Cottage, St. Georges Road East, Aldershot
23/00794/REVPP	Farnborough Airport, Farnborough
24/00237/FUL	Nos. 235-237 High Street, Aldershot
25/00287/REMP	Zone G Pennefathers, Aldershot Urban Extension, Alison’s Road, Aldershot

- * The Executive Head of Property and Growth’s Report No. PG2529 in respect of these applications was amended at the meeting.

30. **LAND TO THE REAR OF NO. 105 PARK ROAD, FARNBOROUGH - APPLICATION NO. 24/00644/FULPP**

The Committee considered the Executive Head of Property and Growth's Report No. PG2529 regarding the erection of a one bedroom flat with parking below following demolition of garages at Land to the Rear of No. 105 Park Road, Farnborough.

RESOLVED: That

- (i) Condition 3 of the recommendation be amended to include reference to glazed screening being used;
- (ii) Condition 5 of the recommendation be amended to include that parking spaces could not be used for storage ***including*** caravans, boats or trailers; and
- (iii) the Executive Head of Property and Growth, in consultation with the Chair, be authorised to GRANT planning permission.

The meeting closed at 8.04 pm.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE, AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Report of the meeting held on Wednesday, 24th September, 2025 at the Council Offices, Farnborough at 7.00 pm.

Voting Members

Cllr Bill O'Donovan (Chairman)
Cllr Rhian Jones (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr Gaynor Austin
Cllr C.W. Card
Cllr Sue Carter
Cllr P.J. Cullum
Cllr C.P. Grattan
Cllr M.J. Roberts
Cllr Sarah Spall
Cllr P.G. Taylor
Cllr Jacqui Vosper

Non-Voting Member

Mr. Tom Davies – Independent Member (Audit)

18. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 2nd July 2025 and 23rd July 2025 were agreed and signed as a correct record of the proceedings.

19. INTERNAL AUDIT - AUDIT UPDATE

The Chairman welcomed Neil Pitman, Head of Southern Internal Audit Partnership (SIAP), the Council's internal auditors.

The Committee received SIAP's Report No. SIAP25/04, which set out the Internal Audit Progress Report, for the August 2025 accounts. The Report provided an overview of internal audit activity against assurance work completed in accordance with the approved audit plan and key updates pertinent to the discharge of the Committee's role, in relation to internal audit.

During discussion, questions were raised by Members regarding audit review sponsors, cyber security and outstanding audit actions. It was noted that there needed to be wider awareness around outstanding audit actions and there should be performance reporting to Cabinet by Service Managers. The Committee noted that the Chair wished to meet with the Leader of the Council to discuss outstanding audit actions.

ACTION:

What	By Whom	When
Provide a key for the sponsors in the audit review, for clarity.	Neil Pitman, Head of Partnership at SIAP	November 2025
The Chair of the Committee to meet with the Leader of the Council to discuss outstanding audit actions.	Cllr Bill O'Donovan, Chair of the Committee	Before the next meeting on 26th November

The Committee received SIAP's Report No. SIAP25/05, which outlined the proposed approach for the Southern Internal Audit Partnership's external quality assessment. The external quality assessment needed to be performed at least every five years by a qualified, independent assessor or assessment team.

The Committee received SIAP's Report No. SIAP25/06, which presented the Internal Audit Strategy 2025-28. The Committee noted that it was a plan of action designed to achieve objectives over the medium term. The strategy included a vision, strategic objectives, and supporting initiatives for the internal audit function to support the fulfilment of the internal audit mandate.

RESOLVED: That:

- (i) outstanding audit actions form part of Service Mangers' performance reporting to Cabinet;
- (ii) the Internal Audit Progress Report be noted;
- (iii) the arrangements for the pending external assessment of the Southern Internal Audit Partnership against the Global Internal Audit Standards in the UK Public Sector, be noted; and
- (iv) the Internal Audit Strategy 2025-2028, be noted.

20. CORPORATE POLICY AND GUIDANCE ON SURVEILLANCE AND THE USE OF THE REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT 2000

The Committee considered the Corporate Manager – Legal Report No. LEG2503 which set out a review of the Council's corporate policy on the use of covert investigatory techniques, including surveillance, within and outside the scope of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA).

The Committee was advised that much of the surveillance carried out by officers was overt, where officers would go about Council business openly. It was noted that all RIPA authorisations needed to be approved by the Magistrates Court before any surveillance could take place. The Committee was advised that no covert surveillance had been undertaken by the Council during 2024/25. The Council's Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) policy and procedure was up-to-date and complied with current guidance. In June 2023, the Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office confirmed that it was content with the Council's policies and RIPA activities.

RESOLVED: That the Corporate Surveillance and RIPA Policy Report No. LEG2503, be noted.

21. ANNUAL OMBUDSMAN COMPLAINT REVIEW LETTER 2025

The Committee considered the Monitoring Officer's Report No. CS251908, which summarised the outcomes and findings of the Annual Review Letter 2024/25 from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO).

It was noted that the LGSCO had received two complaints in respect of Rushmoor Borough Council. Both complaints were closed on the Ombudsman's initial enquiry.

RESOLVED: That:

- (1) the Committee note the Annual Review Letter; and
- (2) the Council commends officers on the continued improvement in services demonstrated by the lack of LGSCO involvement.

22. UPDATE ON APPOINTMENT OF INTERIM MANAGING DIRECTOR AND HEAD OF PAID SERVICE

The Committee considered the Leader of the Council's Report No. DEM2507 which provided an update on the appointment of the Interim Managing Director and Head of Paid Service.

The Committee noted that, at its meeting on 10th April 2025, the Council approved the appointment of Ian Harrison as the Council's Interim Managing Director and Head of Paid Service for an initial period of six months with effect from 11th April 2025. At the same meeting, it was also agreed that the post of Corporate Manager – Legal Services be designated as the Council's Monitoring Officer for an initial period of six months from 11th April. The Committee were advised that as the initial period was ending, it was timely to review the position and agree the next steps.

Since April, there had been a significant demand on the Interim Managing Director to carry out work linked to Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), particularly following the departure of the Assistant Chief Executive. In view of this, it had not yet been possible to complete the work to review the organisation's management structure, which was required as part of the initial period of the interim appointment, to ensure organisational alignment to deliver objectives in the Delivery Plan and the future requirements of LGR. The Report proposed that the Interim Managing Director would conclude their work to review the management structure over the next few months, which would also provide the basis for Group Leaders to collectively consider the permanent arrangements for the appointment of a Head of Paid Service for the Council. It was recommended that an extension be made to the appointment of the Interim Managing Director post to conclude the work on the management structure and ensure cover for the elections in 2026.

During discussion, questions were raised regarding the £11,094 additional cost. The Committee noted that the additional cost was related to the role of Interim Managing Director and Head of Paid Service but not the Corporate Manager – Legal Services role.

- (i) **RESOLVED** that the Committee approve an extension to Ian Harrison's appointment as Interim Managing Director and Head of Paid Service until the Annual Council Meeting in May 2026, or until alternative arrangements are agreed by the Council arising from the conclusion of work on the management restructure, if that is sooner;
- (ii) **RECOMMENDED TO THE COUNCIL** that Ian Harrison, Interim Managing Director, continue to be designated as the Council's Head of Paid Service until the Annual Council Meeting in May 2026, or until alternative arrangements are agreed by the Council if that is sooner. The role to include the statutory responsibilities of Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer; and
- (iii) **RECOMMENDED TO THE COUNCIL** that the post of Corporate Manager – Legal Services continue to be designated as the Council's Monitoring Officer until otherwise designated by the Council.

The meeting closed at 7.50 pm.