

# Council Events programme

Position Paper – October 2025

## Purpose & Financial context

The Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025-29 Mid Year Review (Report No. FIN2517) identifies that while the *'forecast outturn for 2025/26 is on track with the full £1.8million savings requirement achieved. Most of this saving is of a one-off nature and therefore must be found again in 2026-27 in addition the £1m increase in savings requirement.'*

During the 2025/26 budgetary period, [£146,750 in temporary funding from the Community Recovery Fund](#), was allocated to fund elements of the Rushmoor's 'events programme'. The budgetary pressure of 2026/27, and withdraw of UKSPF and CRF as funding sources, requires the Council reassess its approach to funding these events.

This report identifies the events currently included in the 2026/27 Council Events programme, including the associated spending forecasts and individual event funding position, and offers data and analysis intended to aid a comparative assessment of the value of these events.

## Council events programme

### Programme scope

For the purposes of this report, the 'council events programme' includes all events that *RBC organise and fund* and that the *public can attend voluntarily*. This scope includes 24 events, attended by 91k people with a forecast cost in 2026/27 of £135.3k.

This scope **does not** include:

- Events that are considered part of service delivery or statutory activity, such as committee meetings.
- Economic Development Service's Markets, Craft Fayres and Car Boot Sales as these are focused on economic opportunities for traders & small business, rather than an event we offer directly to the public.
- Events RBC do not organise yet do participate in, promote or in otherwise support.
- Events and activities which have been funded using UKSPF and CRF in 24/25 and 25/26 which are currently not included in the base budget e.g. Feel Good Fridays and therefore not scheduled in 26/27.

# Events analysis

For each event the following basic contextual information has been gathered.

- **Service / Service Manager**
- **Event name & location**
- **Event dates**
- **Event grouping** (where extra context required)
- **Forecast attendance & event capacity:** event attendance figures are based on observations and data sources for 2024/25 events. This assessment uses the best available data sources which, depending on the nature of the event, may include ticket sales, sign-up lists or organiser observations on the day. Town centre events also make use of footfall trackers:
  - Mobile phone detection footfall tracking is used in Aldershot - these track unique mobile phones 'hits' within sensor proximity and provide figures that are doubled to give a truer picture: not all attendees will be captured in this tracking: people without phones, including children who can make up the majority of attendees at some events, and people outside tracking unit proximity.
  - Footfall trackers in The Meads Farnborough give an absolute measure; these are not our trackers and we rely on this data being shared.
  - These data sources are validated against stall holder feedback & event organiser assessments. These observations are important, having this year identified errors in the Aldershot mobile phone tracking system.
- **Forecast cost:** Net costs - income from commercial income (sponsorship/ticket/pitch sales) and event specific *grant income* (*in italics*) are shown in parenthesis. Costs exclude any RBC staff costs.
- **Previous funding profile:** this is the previous funding make-up which may include *core budget*; *non-core* (with the source given); *ringfenced grant* (grant type given); *sponsorship*.
- **Audience reach & key audience:** is the event reach limited to audiences at the *town* or *borough* level or beyond (*borough+*) and is there a key audience for this event, such as families or young people.

For the purposes of this report, a relative assessment is made to identify different elements of each event's value. These assessments are then combined in calculating an overall 'value rating' for the event:

- **Delivery Plan contribution:** is the event *directly/indirectly* or not contributing to a specific delivery plan priority or activity? If it is contributing, is this event the *major* contributor, or *minor*, relative to other action towards this priority/activity?
- **Strategic contribution:** is the event *directly/indirectly* or not contributing to a specific adopted strategy or plan? If it is contributing, is this event the *major* contributor, or *minor*, relative to other action towards this priority/activity?

- **Event expectations:** relative to other events, how *high* is the audience's expectation that an event will happen? The number of years running are also noted for context.
- **Partnership value:** if partner groups or organisations are involved in the event, is the event *directly/indirectly* or not contributing to the specific aims of that partner group/organisation? A 'direct' contribution indicates strong alignment between Rushmoor and the partner(s). If the event is contributing, is this event the *major* opportunity, or *minor*, compared to other opportunities for this partner?

## Event analysis table

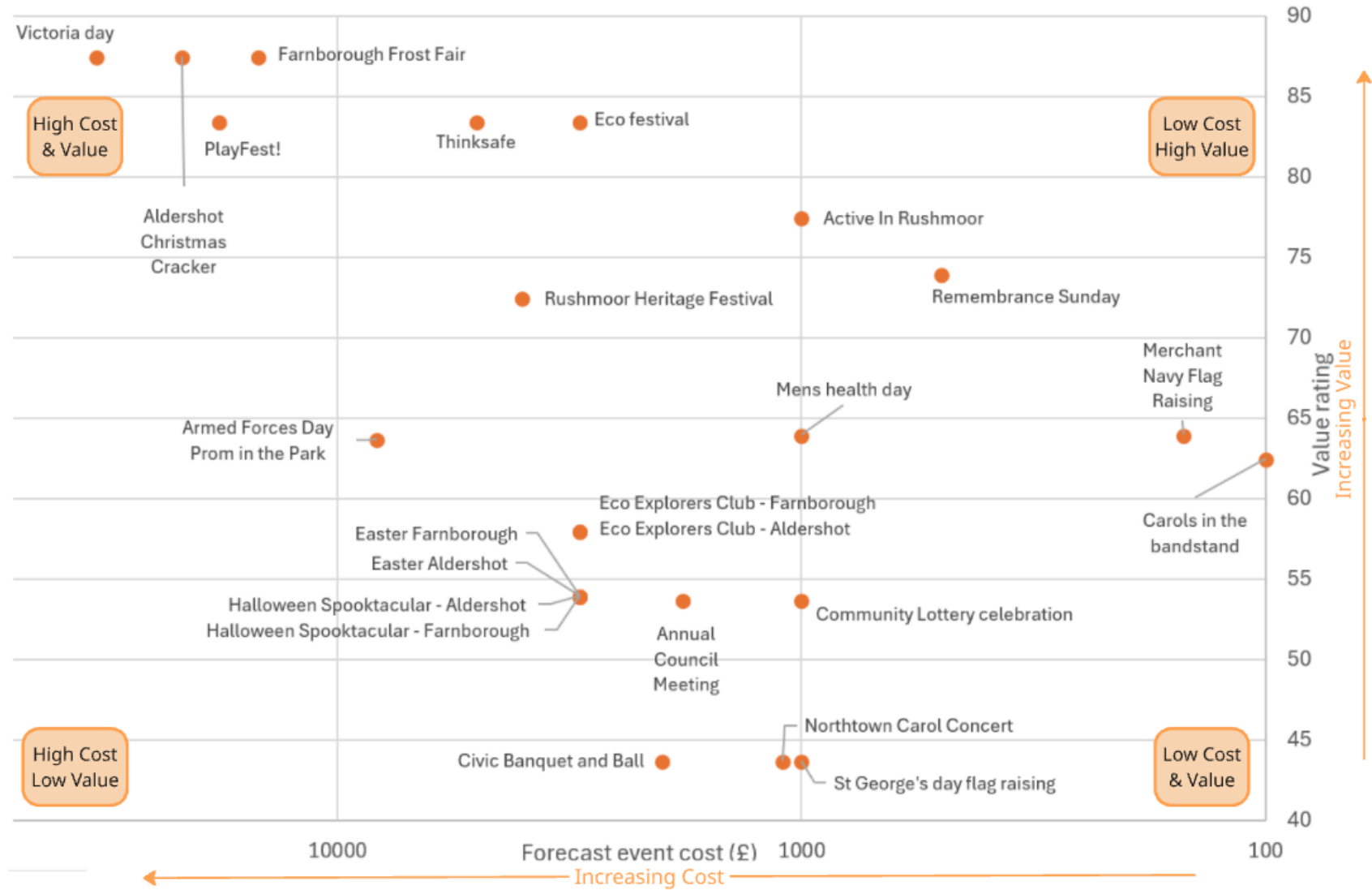
This table summaries key information gathered on events. The full data table can be found [2025-26 Events Analysis - shared.xlsx](#)

Event name (& sub-group colour) (Town Centre events) (Active in Rushmoor events)	Attendance	Net Cost (£) (Commercial /grant)	*Value rating %	Public expectation	Years Running	Reach/Audience
Farnborough Frost Fair	19500	13280 (1520)	87.5	High	8	Borough / Families
Victoria day	15500	30710 (2290)	87.5	High	28	Borough+ / Families
Aldershot Christmas Cracker	15000	18035 (3565)	87.5	High	10	Borough / Families
PlayFest!	16500	18000	83.5	Medium	10	Borough+ / Families
Thinksafe	800	5000	83.5	Medium	15	Year 6 children + Borough
Eco festival	200	3000	83.5	Medium	3	Borough/Families.
Active In Rushmoor	500	1000	77.5	Low	1	Borough/Residents
Remembrance Sunday	500	500	74	High	80	Veterans, Forces Families
Rushmoor Heritage Festival	n/a	4000	72.5	Low	5	Borough+ / All
Mens health day	650	1000	64	Low	1	Borough/Men & Families.
Merchant Navy Flag Raising	50	150	64	Low	1	Veterans, Forces Families
Armed Forces Day Prom in the Park	2750	4169 (63/4018)	63.75	High	80	Older residents / veterans
Carols in the bandstand	450	100	62.5	Medium	10	Town / Families
Eco Explorers Club – Aldershot	1200	3000	58	Low	5	Borough / Young children & families
Eco Explorers Club - Farnborough	1200	3000	58	Low	5	Borough / Young children & families
Easter Aldershot	3750	3000	54	Low	8	Residents on lower income
Easter Farnborough	3750	3000	54	Low	8	Residents on lower income
Halloween Spooktacular Aldershot	3750	3000	54	Low	8	Town/Residents on lower income
Halloween Spooktacular Farnborough	3750	3000	54	Low	8	Town/Residents on lower income
Community Lottery celebration	100	1000	53.75	Low	6	Partners/Participating Community orgs
Annual Council Meeting	120	1800	53.75	High	30	Key community partner representatives
Northtown Carol Concert	300	1100	43.75	Low	7	Ward / Residents
Civic Banquet and Ball	150	2000	43.75	Low	20	Open to all who buy a ticket
St George's day flag raising	100	1000	43.75	Low	1	Borough/Residents

Value rating calculation: the four relative assessments are used to calculate the event's 'value rating'. This calculation uses weighted values for each assessment element to produce a score out of 100. Full details of the calculation and rating are in Appendix 1.

## Event analysis visualisation

This chart shows events in relative positions to their cost and value rating.



**Additional event grouping and context** – This section sets out any important context regarding groups of related events. These groupings identify relationships in terms of strategic value and budget context that are referenced in subsequent analysis.

**Event group name: Town Centre Events**

**Delivery plan context:** These events are associated with the Skills, Economy and Regeneration priority 'Promote the development of Rushmoor's towns to meet the needs of businesses and residents, partnering with experts to deliver strategic transformation of town centres and neighbourhoods' and the Community and Wellbeing priority 'Enable a programme of community and cultural activities that engages everyone. These events are also linked to the following Delivery plan activities:

- Delivering a diverse events programme and encouraging and supporting external event organisers to run more events in the borough
- Encouraging artists, creatives and cultural organisations to apply for relevant funding to increase the number and diversity of events in the borough

**Other strategic context:** This group is linked to Rushmoor's cultural strategy and action plan, which sets out a number of shared priority actions which are underpinned by events and cultural activities. This strategy is currently being reviewed and refreshed.

**Additional resourcing context:** Of the £142,560 2025/26 budget used to deliver this event group in 2025/26, £37,800 was raised from commercial income. £75,500 of that budget came from the 'core' budget code 142230970. Town Centre Events budget has not increased since 2020 while prices have notably risen over the period since.

**Partnership value:** Most of the town centre events have significant partner value with partners heavily involved in the events significantly Victoria Day and Armed Forces Day. The events have also been used to successfully leverage in funding from partners including Arts Council England.

**Event group name: Active in Rushmoor events**

**Delivery plan context:** 'Active in Rushmoor' is a key project/output of activity under the Community and Wellbeing theme (Priority: 'Make sure all residents have access to opportunities for physical exercise including a new leisure centre in Farnborough'). The project is a campaign over the summer months, involving a presence at many events rather than one direct event. The 'Feel Good Friday' events are connected with Active in Rushmoor.

**Other strategic context:** The campaign also contributes to the objectives of the Rushmoor Together programme, which is itself an output of activity under Community and Wellbeing theme (Priority: 'Enable a programme of community and cultural activities that engages everyone and improve feelings of belonging').

**Additional resourcing notes:** Funding has been used for promotional material (banners and others signs that were used at events and used as prompts to support the campaign on

social media) and other resources including equipment used at feel good Friday events. (skipping ropes, giant hoops etc).

**Partnership value:** Campaign events have good engagement with local sports clubs and promote relevant opportunities. Men's Health Day sits within the campaign as a single event to promote mental health and local support services, with the involvement of 20 partner organisations.

## Additional relevant context

- The 'Partnership value' element of event value reflects additional value added primarily to external partners, but many events that deliver this value also serve as a platform for internal services. For instance, the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy and engagement towards the Local Plan development would both make use of many of the town centre events as means to reach their community audiences. Town centres events are currently being used as a means to engage residents on the Community Governance Review.
- This analysis has not captured forms of 'added value' that arising from the relationship's events develop in the community and how the council may leverage that in formats beyond the events themselves. For example, the community built around Eco Explorers has delivered further value as a result with that community participating in council planting days.
- Armed Forces Day Prom in the Park – the current event format is managed around existing staff resource, with no capacity to deliver a larger event (the event date is set by the MOD and falls 2-3 weeks after Victoria Day. There is no Armed Forces Day RBC budget. The current event is 100% fundraised through an MOD grant and sponsorship when available. The Democracy team are discussing changing the format of event next year, in partnership with the RBC military network. We are awaiting response to Rushmoor's application to host the 3-day long national Armed Forces Day weekend in 2026, which, if successful, would have very significant implications for Armed Forces Day plans and resourcing.

## How cost or value could change

In compiling the information presented, contributing event 'owners' have noted ways in which their events' cost/value propositions might be changed. In general terms, these are as follows:

- Increase the 'value' events without increasing costs – this may be possible by:
  - Increasing public and/or external partner awareness and participation
  - Further coordination with internal services to improve participation and focus on aligned strategic or service outcomes.
- Decrease the cost of events – this may be possible by:
  - Shifting towards facilitation & enabling of an event with less direct funding their delivery and operation.
  - Focusing on cost saving in standard delivery and operational decision making. Stripping out elements which add value e.g. fireworks at the Aldershot Christmas Cracker, removing interactive performances all town centre events, limiting promotion.



- Many events contribute to outcomes and outcome measures such as ‘improved satisfaction in town centres’ and ‘improve feelings of belonging’. These outcomes are assessed in quite general terms via the residents survey. This assessment does not equip us to evaluate the success of individual events. We plan to introduce event specific feedback capture at town centre events, and could at all events. This would provide event specific insight, direct from attendees, as to the contribution these make to our outcomes.
- Increased business sponsorship might be achieved by raising an event’s profile, creating new sponsorship opportunities, engaging more local business to encourage sponsorship or adopting a more corporate approach to business sponsorship. Sponsorship and grants are typically ad hoc, based on the economic climate, and so cannot be relied upon – this is a significant financial risk to running events.

# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Value rating calculation

The Value Rating offered in the 'Event Analysis table' assigns weighted numerical values to each of the four assessed contribution types: Delivery Plan; Strategic; Expectations; and Partnership. That value (C) is multiplied by a weighting assigned to that Contribution Type (CT). This produces four values, each between 0 & 1, which are added together to give a total between 0 & 4. This value is then divided by 4 and multiplied by 100 to give a final 'Value Rating' figure between 0 & 100. The weightings used in this analysis are as follows:

<b>Contribution (C)</b>	<b>Weighting</b>	<b>Contribution Type (CT)</b>	<b>Weighting</b>
Major/Direct	1	Delivery	1
Minor/Direct	0.8	Strategic	0.9
Major/Indirect	0.7	Partner	0.8
Minor/Indirect	0.5	Expectation	0.8
None/None	0.3		
<b>Expectation (C)</b>			
High	1		
Medium	0.8		
Low	0.5		