

COUNCIL MEETING – 16TH OCTOBER 2025

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3 (2) – PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

No	Question from	Question	Response from	Response
1	William Doody Cove & Southwood Ward	Rushmoor Pension Fund ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) Investment I've looked through the Hampshire Pension Fund's 2023/24 Annual Report and its Responsible Investment policy but can't find any clear breakdown showing how much of Rushmoor's pension contributions are invested under ESG or 'responsible investment' criteria. Given that ESG investment appetite is possibly now wavering, can you please disclose — for the record — how much of Rushmoor's share is currently invested in ESG-linked companies or funds, which organisations those investments are with, how long those commitments last, and under whose oversight (e.g., Cllr Mark Kemp-Gee / Cllr Tom Thacker) this was approved?	Portfolio Holder for Finance & Resources Cllr Gaynor Austin	<p>This information is technical by its nature, and the question has been referred to the Hampshire pension fund for consideration, and the response will be shared as soon as we have it.</p> <p>Response from Hampshire County Council:</p> <p>The Pension Fund does not have any specific ESG or RI investments – all the Fund's investments are managed in accordance with the RI policy Hampshire Pension Fund Responsible Investment Policy. The primary goal of all the Fund's investments is to earn the return required to ensure that the Pension Fund can meet its future obligations to pay pensions. The Pension Fund Panel and Board has made a number of decisions on RI that have changed the Fund's investments; specifically setting the goal of investments having net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 at the latest and working towards disinvesting from fossil fuels. Both of these decisions were carefully considered and not done so at the expense of accepting any reduction in the Fund's target investment returns. The Panel and Board has also set target levels for the percentage of private market investments that are sustainable or impact investments, again this was not done with any reduction in target investment returns.</p> <p>All these decisions were made collectively by the Pension Fund Panel and Board Committee details - Hampshire Pension Fund Panel and Board About the Council Hampshire County Council. Investments are monitored by the Pension Fund's officers who report to the Panel and Board.</p> <p>The Pension Fund's investments are managed collectively on behalf of all employers in the Fund and all employers' contributions are invested in the same way. So the percentage allocations in the Pension Fund's investment strategy (shown on p106 of the Annual Report Hampshire Pension Fund Annual report and accounts 2023/24) apply to all employers.</p>
2	Gillian Bailey Cherrywood Ward	Event Spend Could the council please advise the public on how much was spent by the council on the following in 2024/25? 1) The Pride Parade 2) The Rushmoor Eco Festival 3) The Rushmoor cultural day	Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Healthy Communities and Active Lives Cllr Sophie Porter	1) Pride - £1147 2) Rushmoor Eco Festival - £1500 3) Rushmoor Cultural Day - £0

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3	Maria Goodacre Manor Park Ward	Flags Flags are now being put up in front of people's houses and windows. Where will it end? Please confirm what steps the Council is taking to limit the number of flags per road.	Leader of the Council Cllr Gareth Williams	<p>I note with concern reported incidents where residents have been harassed and filmed when asking not to have flags outside their own property, and even council staff placing Remembrance poppies have been questioned. It is clear that, for some, the installation of the flags goes beyond simple patriotism and has become an opportunity to intimidate and bully those whose opinions differ from their own, thus removing their voice.</p> <p>The flags are almost all attached to lamp columns and street furniture. These are all owned by Hampshire County Council and Rushmoor has no power to remove them, even if they have been attached without seeking permission from the owner.</p> <p>We are in discussion with Hampshire to ascertain their position on the matter, but residents can write directly to their County Councillor or contact Hampshire CC directly via their website to request the removal of any objects they believe to be dangerous or threatening. Incidents of threats or intimidation should be reported to the police.</p>
4	John Peckham Cherrywood Ward	Unpaid Council Tax What is the current sum outstanding in unpaid Council Tax, and what are the council doing to recover the debt and at what further cost to the local taxpayer?	Portfolio Holder for Finance & Resources Cllr Gaynor Austin	For the full Council Tax year of 2024/25 the Council issued bills totalling £70.4m. During that year just short of £69m was paid. Leaving £1.5mx outstanding at 31 st March 25. This represented a payment rate of 98%. This is a similar rate of payment to previous years. The Council has continued to work with those residents who still owe money, taking Court action where appropriate. Council Tax that remains outstanding from earlier years currently amounts to £5.3m. The cost to collect the Council Tax each year is around £308k at the current year's value.
5	Veronica Graham-Green Cove and Southwood Ward	Walk this Waste Could the Leader of the Council please state what evaluation has taken place of the 'Walk this Way Skips' pilot and what were the results on the success or failure of the pilot. Further could he make public the full cost including officer time of the pilot compared with the original costings including officer time and whether fly tipping has been reduced as a result of it."	Portfolio Holder for Pride in Place/Neighbourhood Services Cllr Christine Guinness	<p>The Walk this Waste trials were a fantastic success in so many ways!</p> <p>While the main aim was to see if the initiative could reduce fly-tipping, the real achievement was the incredible amount of bulky waste collected and the brilliant response from our residents. Across the nine events, we collected over 8 tonnes of bulky household items from 178 residents — a huge amount of waste that might otherwise have been left around properties or even ended up being fly-tipped.</p> <p>The trials cost around £5,700 to run, and every pound was well spent on helping residents dispose of their unwanted items responsibly, keeping our neighbourhoods cleaner and tidier.</p> <p>The feedback we received was absolutely amazing — residents told us how much they appreciated the service, how easy it was to use, and how friendly and helpful the staff were. Our social media posts reached thousands of people, with some of the highest engagement we've ever had and so many positive comments about how much residents loved the trial.</p>

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				Even though the data didn't show a direct reduction in fly-tipping, the trials clearly made a positive difference in our communities — helping people take pride in their local areas, promoting responsible disposal, and showing that there's real enthusiasm for this kind of community-focused service.
6	Karen Lynch Resident of North Town	Community Cohesion Fund Can I ask the council what became of the £50k allocated purely to facilitate the voices of those in the Rushmoor community that felt they were (are) unheard? Where was this money spent? Who spent it, who received it and what for? Is there any left, how much and where is that destined?	Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Healthy Communities and Active Lives Cllr Sophie Porter	<p>In August 2024, Councillors agreed to work together to address residents' concerns arising from increased community tensions. A budget of £50,000 was approved to support this work, with expenditure overseen and agreed by a cross-party working group.</p> <p>The group unanimously agreed to commission the Belong Network to deliver a programme of activities and support. Over the past year, the Council has worked in partnership with Belong to deliver a range of initiatives, including the facilitation of community events and meetings known as Rushmoor Voices, the delivery of workshops and training sessions for community groups and leaders, and support and expertise to consider the development of a Council cohesion plan.</p> <p>To date, £32,300 of the £50,000 allocation has been spent. The remaining £17,700 will be utilised over the next year to build on Rushmoor voices and facilitate and deliver local community place meetings for residents, aimed at continuing to build cohesion and strengthen communities.</p>
7	G. Olivier Wellington Ward	Homeless People Why does the council fail to remove homeless people that are sleeping in military estates, in areas where small children regularly play. I reported an incident earlier this year and all the council did was leave a note and water in the tent? Why not remove the belongings and then leave a note saying if you want your stuff back come and get it? By not taking decisive action you are prioritising an adult drug users rights above the safety of our children.	Portfolio Holder for Housing & Planning Cllr Keith Dibble	<p>The council has a statutory duty to support individuals who are homeless. Our outreach team works proactively to engage with people sleeping rough, offering support and encouraging them to come off the streets. If someone is not present during a visit, we leave a calling card with contact details, so they know how to reach us. In hot weather, we may also leave bottled water to help safeguard their wellbeing.</p> <p>Where tents or personal belongings are placed on military land or private property, it is the responsibility of the landowner to decide whether and how to address their removal.</p> <p>Anti-social behaviour, including drug use, is a matter for the police. However, we work closely with the police and other partner agencies to respond to street homelessness and any associated issues in a coordinated and compassionate way.</p>
8	Peter Crerar Manor Park Ward	Local Government Reorganisation Please can the council confirm why Rushmoor residents were never consulted on whether they did or did not want Rushmoor Borough Council abolished? We have been given absolutely no say in this issue when so many residents are strongly against losing our local council.	Leader of the Council Cllr Gareth Williams	<p>The reasoning is the same that the Conservative Government under Margaret Thatcher applied when abolishing the Greater London Council without consulting London residents, i.e. the structures of local government are delegated from Parliament and cannot be decided by a minority of subjects who wish to assert their independence.</p> <p>The council was asked to submit a proposal for new unitary councils, not whether it agreed with the policy. The alternative to engaging with the process would have been to accept the Conservative-led County Council proposal to merge Rushmoor with a group of 5 councils and create an authority stretching almost to the South Coast.</p>

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				Residents have had the opportunity to have their say on our proposal through responding to our surveys, and the government will consult further on this later in the year.
9	Dylan Fowdar Knellwood Ward	Asylum Hotel What about that Migration Hotels in Farnborough, are they still going to be used, or closed down gradually? Where will the migrants move to?	Leader of the Council Cllr Gareth Williams	Rushmoor currently has one contingency hotel within the borough, operated by the Home Office. While the Government has committed to reducing its reliance on hotels for accommodating asylum seekers, the Council has not yet received confirmation regarding the future closure or timeline for this facility.
10	Steven Kavanagh Manor Park Ward	Housing As a military town, can you tell us how many homeless veterans have been housed and for comparison can you tell us the number of asylum seekers that have been housed in social housing	Portfolio Holder for Housing & Planning Cllr Keith Dibble	Veterans The council records information on veterans applying for housing; however, the data is not considered robust. This is because it relies on applicants voluntarily stating their veteran status on the housing application form, and the field is not mandatory. In many cases, individuals apply for housing years after leaving the armed forces and may not disclose their service background. As a result, the data may underrepresent the actual number of veterans seeking housing support. Asylum Seekers The council does not record the number of asylum seekers rehoused into social housing. However, data is collected on applicants rehoused by ethnicity. Approaches for rehousing from Contingency Hotels are low, as most individuals are single and, once granted the legal right to remain, often relocate to join family or established communities in other areas—typically London or other major cities. When asylum seekers approach the council for housing advice and assistance, they are assessed in the same way as any other applicant. If eligible for housing due to specific circumstances, they are typically placed into temporary hostel accommodation while being supported to secure alternative long-term housing. No preferential treatment is given.
11	Nigel Ashwood Empress Ward	Illegal activities Over the last 2yrs I've reported many illegal activities being carried out by illegal immigrants, and nothing has been done by the police, not even when suspected terrorist activity is going on. <i>What is the Council doing about this issue?</i>	Portfolio Holder for Pride in Place/Neighbourhood Services Cllr Christine Guinness	Whilst the council meet regularly with our constabulary colleagues and discuss a number of important issues, complaints about policing decisions, deployment or delivery should be directed to our policing colleagues by calling 101, visiting a police station, online or by letter. The council does not act as a point of contact for complaints in relation to policing. The IOPC (independent Office for Police Conduct) are also able to take complaints who will then forward your complaint to the relevant police force or Police and Crime Commissioner for you.

Public Questions submitted and not accepted for a response at the Council Meeting:

No.	Question	Reason not accepted
1	<p>School Services</p> <p>Please can the council explain why they see fit to send staff to check on a 16-year old's parents to find out why their child hasn't attended school when their child is going through severe cancer treatments. Can it be explained why school services are not communicating effectively and putting added pressure onto residents who are already completely devastated at what is going on, without this heavy- handed behaviour to something that communication would have prevented? Surely the time taken for two staff members to do this, would be better served looking at housing overcrowding and other general housing issues.</p>	<p>This is a specific matter and for Hampshire County Council and will be forwarded to the County Council's Portfolio Holder for Children's Services.</p>

NOTE: Some residents submitted more than one question, and in these cases, one was accepted for response.