

CABINET

Meeting held on Tuesday, 17th March, 2026 at the Council Offices, Farnborough at 7.00 pm.

Voting Members

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

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

The Cabinet considered the following matters at the above-mentioned meeting. All executive decisions of the Cabinet shall become effective, subject to the call-in procedure, from **30th March, 2026**.

76. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –**

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

77. **MINUTES –**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 3rd March, 2026 were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

78. **BUDGET MANAGEMENT - MONTH 10 –** (Cllr Gaynor Austin, Finance & Resources Portfolio Holder)

The Cabinet considered Report No. FIN2611, which set out an update on the Council's forecasted financial position for 2025/26, as at the end of January, 2026.

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 report set out a number of key service variations, mostly where service budgets had been underspent. It was confirmed that, overall, the financial position over the period of the Medium Term Financial Strategy continued to be challenging, with progress being made. Officers would continue to monitor the situation closely and would provide regular updates to Members.

The Cabinet was pleased with the progress that had been made in addressing the Council's challenging financial position.

The Cabinet RESOLVED that

- (i) the revenue budget forecast, as set out in Section 3 of Report No. FIN2611, be noted;
- (ii) the write offs, as set out in Section 4 of the Report, be approved; and
- (iii) the capital budget forecast, as set out in Section 5 of the Report, be noted.

79. **BUSINESS RATES - SUPPORTING SMALL BUSINESS RATES RELIEF 2026 AND PUBS AND LIVE MUSIC VENUE RELIEF 2026/27 –**
(Cllr Gaynor Austin, Finance & Resources Portfolio Holder)

The Cabinet considered Report No. FIN2612, which set out two new schemes of relief that had been announced by the Government in relation to business rates payable by small businesses and pubs and live music venues.

Members were informed that Supporting Small Business Rates Relief Scheme would provide support to businesses experiencing significant increases in business rates payable as a result of the national 2026 Non-Domestic Rating Revaluation. The Pubs and Live Music Venues Relief Scheme would provide support to eligible premises in the form of a 15% relief on 2026-27 liabilities. Both reliefs would be delivered using the Council's Discretionary Relief Powers, under Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 and it was confirmed that the Council would be reimbursed for all relief awarded under these schemes.

The Cabinet RESOLVED that

- (i) the adoption of the local Supporting Small Business Rates Relief Policy for reducing business rates liability, as set out in Report No. FIN2612, be approved;
- (ii) the adoption of the local Pubs and Live Music Venues Relief 2026/27 Policy, as set out in the Report, be approved; and
- (iii) the Finance & Resources Portfolio Holder, in consultation with the Revenue Manager (Council Tax and Business Rates), be authorised to determine the awards of relief and to resolve any disputes regarding eligibility for Support Small Business Rates Relief and Pubs and Live Music Venues Relief.

80. **COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT - GRANT SCHEMES –**
(Cllr Sophie Porter, Healthy Communities & Active Lives Portfolio Holder)

The Cabinet considered Report No. ED2602, which set out an overview of the Pride in Place and Supporting Communities grants for the 2024/25 financial year.

Members were informed that the purpose of the report was to show the impact of the funded projects and to demonstrate how the grants had contributed to the delivery of the Council's priorities.

The Cabinet was pleased that the grants had had a demonstrable effect within the local community and expressed thanks to the Community Team that had administered the schemes.

The Cabinet NOTED the findings of Report No. ED2602, along with the published annual reports, which showcased the grant recipients, the outcomes achieved through the grants and the impact on the local community.

81. **REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY IN RESPECT OF THE LICENSING ACT 2003 –**
(Cllr Christine Guinness, Pride in Place / Neighbourhood Services Portfolio Holder)

The Cabinet considered Report No. OS2607, which set out changes to the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy in respect of the Licensing Act 2003

Members were advised that a review of the Statement of Licensing Policy document was now overdue and had been carried out in light of changes to legislation and guidance. It was confirmed that a public consultation exercise had been carried out, as required by legislation. Comments received as a result of the exercise had been considered and, where appropriate, amendments had been made to the proposed Statement of Licensing Policy. Furthermore, it was explained that the consultation exercise had included reference to the introduction of a proposed cumulative impact policy for Aldershot town centre and that this option had received support.

In discussing the proposed changes, Members felt that the proposed changes would enable the Licensing Objectives to be upheld effectively.

The Cabinet RECOMMENDED TO THE COUNCIL that the proposed policy and cumulative impact assessment, as set out in Report No. OS2607, be approved with immediate effect.

82. **RUSHMOOR BOROUGH COUNCIL ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY (LAND AND BUILDINGS) AND COMMUNITY RENTS AND SUBSIDY POLICY –**
(Cllr Julie Hall, Economy, Skills & Regeneration Portfolio Holder)

The Cabinet considered Report No. PG2604, which set out a proposed Asset Management Strategy (AMS) for the Council.

Members were informed that the purpose of the AMS was to provide a clear corporate framework for the management of the Council's land and buildings estate. Another function of the AMS was to align estate decisions with the Council's Delivery Plan, financial sustainability objectives and risk appetite. This update of the AMS was introducing a structured categorisation of assets, a governance framework for estate decisions and a financial and performance monitoring approach to support transparency and accountability. Also included in the report was a revised Community Asset Rents and Subsidy Policy for approval. This sought to address community concerns around the increase of rents in respect of community-based organisations and would ensure that the Council was not reducing rents to an uneconomical level.

The Cabinet expressed gratitude for the work that had been carried out in reviewing this important element of the Council's operations.

The Cabinet RESOLVED that

- (i) the Asset Management Strategy (AMS), as set out in Appendix 1 of Report No. PG2604, be approved;
- (ii) the supporting governance and financial framework, as set out in Appendices A to C of the AMS, be approved;
- (iii) the relevant Executive Head, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder and relevant statutory officer, be authorised to make minor amendments to the AMS to reflect legislative, financial or organisational changes; and
- (iv) the Community Asset Rent and Subsidy Policy, as set out in Appendix D of the AMS, be approved.

83. 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 items to avoid the disclosure of exempt information within the paragraphs of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act, 1972 indicated against the items:

Minute No.	Schedule 12A Para. Nos.	Category
84	1,3 & 4	Information relating to an individual, financial or business affairs or labour relations
85	3	Information relating to financial or business affairs

**THE FOLLOWING ITEMS WERE CONSIDERED
IN THE ABSENCE OF THE PUBLIC**

84. STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS –
(Mr Ian Harrison, Interim Managing Director)

The Cabinet considered Exempt Report No. MD2601, which set out an update on work underway to put in place new strategic management arrangements.

Members were informed that these new arrangements would enable the Council to maintain services, ensure that the Council Delivery Plan 2026-28 was delivered, the Council's financial positions were appropriately overseen and to manage the impact of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). The exempt report set out the work undertaken to date and the next steps for ensuring that appropriate management structures were implemented with the minimum of disruption, recognising the multiple pressures facing the Council's workforce.

The Cabinet was satisfied that the proposals set out provided the best option to enable the Council to tackle the current significant challenges.

The Cabinet NOTED

- (i) the work undertaken to date and the next steps to put in place new strategic management arrangements for the Council, as set out in Exempt Report No. MD2601;
- (ii) that the Council's Licensing and Business Committee would be requested to:
 - approve a further extension to Ian Harrison's appointment as Interim Managing Director and Head of Paid Service until 31st August, 2026;
 - recommend to the Council that Ian Harrison, Interim Managing Director, continue to be designated as the Council's Head of Paid Service until 31st August, 2026, the role to include the statutory responsibilities of Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer; and
 - recommend to the Council the position of Executive Head of Governance & Law as the Council's designated Monitoring Officer.

85. **DISPOSAL OF NO. 101 HAWLEY LANE, FARNBOROUGH –**
(Cllr Julie Hall, Economy, Skills & Regeneration Portfolio Holder)

The Cabinet considered Exempt Report No. PG2608, which provided an update in relation to the Council's disposal of the freehold interest in No. 101 Hawley Lane, Farnborough following revised terms.

Members were reminded that this disposal had been approved by the Cabinet at its meeting on 16th September, 2025. It was reported that, during the due diligence process, a number of additional cost items and risks with the site development had been identified by the purchaser. This had resulted in a revised offer that was lower than the previously agreed level.

The Cabinet expressed support for the proposed approach to accept this lower offer on the basis that it still represented the best value to the Council in relation to this site.

The Cabinet RESOLVED that

- (i) in principle and subject to final legal due diligence, the disposal of the freehold interest in No. 101 Hawley Lane, Farnborough, as set out in Exempt Report No. PG2608, be approved;
- (ii) in principle and subject to final legal due diligence, the disposal of the St. John's Ambulance freehold linked to the disposal of the freehold interest in No. 101 Hawley Lane, Farnborough, as set out in the Exempt Report, be approved; and
- (iii) the Executive Head of Property and Growth, in consultation with the Executive Head of Finance, Monitoring Officer and Corporate Manager – Legal Services and the Economy, Skills & Regeneration Portfolio Holder, be authorised to confirm the final terms of the disposal.

The Meeting closed at 7.53 pm.

CLLR GARETH WILLIAMS, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL
