

LICENSING AND CORPORATE BUSINESS COMMITTEE

Meeting held on Thursday, 5th March, 2026 at the Council Offices, Farnborough at 7.00 pm.

Voting Members

Cllr Jacqui Vosper (Chair)
Cllr Sarah Spall (Vice-Chair)

Cllr C.W. Card
Cllr A.H. Crawford
Cllr Jules Crossley
Cllr P.J. Cullum
Cllr Rhian Jones
Cllr Bill O'Donovan

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Cllrs Sue Carter, Lisa Greenway and P.G. Taylor.

Cllrs C.P. Grattan and S.J. Masterson attended the meeting as Standing Deputies.

8. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 15th January, 2026 were agreed and signed as a correct record of the proceedings.

9. PAY POLICY STATEMENT, GENDER PAY GAP AND ETHNICITY PAY GAP REPORT

The Committee considered the Executive Director's Report No. PEO2602, which sought approval for a Pay Policy Statement for 2026/27. The Pay Policy Statement set out the framework within which pay was determined within the Council and provided an analysis comparing the remuneration of Chief Officers with other employees of the Authority. The Report also set out the calculations of the Gender Pay Gap, which the Council was required to publish annually under the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities Regulations 2017) and the Ethnicity Pay Gap, which was reported on for the first time.

The Committee noted that the comparisons looked at the ratio between the Managing Director and the full-time equivalent salary for a permanent member of staff employed in the lowest grade within the structure. The ratio for 2026/27 was 1:5.07. The second ratio included within the analysis looked at the relationship between the median remuneration of all staff compared to the Managing Director. The ratio for 2026/27 was 1:2.96. The recommendation of the Hutton Report (2010) was that public sector organisations should comply with a maximum pay multiple of 1:20. Rushmoor was well within this multiple.

The Committee noted that the mean Gender Pay Gap equated to 16.04%, as at 31st March 2025, with the average female salary being lower than the average male salary. The gap had increased from 12.75% in the previous year. The median gender pay gap equated to 13.17%, as at 31st March 2025, with the female median rate being lower than the male median rate. The gap had increased from 9.84% in the previous year. The Committee noted that, to address the gender pay gap, the new People Plan for 2026-2028 included further initiatives to encourage and support the personal development of employees, such as upskilling and mentoring opportunities as well as secondments, cross council project working and flexible working.

The Committee noted it was not mandatory for the Council to provide an Ethnicity Pay Gap report and it was being voluntarily reported on to demonstrate the Council's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. The Ethnicity Pay Gap was calculated by comparing the average pay of white employees, with that of employees from black and minority ethnic groups (BAME). The mean ethnicity pay gap equated to 9.5%, with the non-white average salary being lower than the average white salary, which represented a decrease of 3.2% from the previous year. The median ethnicity pay gap equated to 0.2% with the non-white median rate being lower than the white median rate, which represented a decrease of 5.1% from the previous year. The ethnicity pay gap would be reported retrospectively, as of the 31st of March, in any year. The Committee noted that whilst both the mean and medium ethnicity pay gaps had decreased, the Council would continue to review the ways they worked to encourage a more diverse and inclusive workforce. They would continue to review the recruitment, secondment and development processes and opportunities to address their commitment to be a more inclusive organisation.

During discussion, Members raised questions regarding the reasons for the increase in the gender pay gap and enquired about details of how the gap was being addressed by the Council. Members were informed that the recent decrease in females in the upper quartile (higher paid roles), who had not been replaced, and an increase in number of females joining the Council in the lower quartile (lower paid roles), had contributed to the gender pay gap increase. Members were advised that the People Plan included initiatives the Council were taking to address the gender pay gap, including secondments, mentoring opportunities, career pathway and upskilling support, flexible working and job-shares.

ACTION:

What	By Whom	When
Distribute information to Members, regarding the details of the increase in the gender pay gap.	Belinda Tam – Corporate Manager - People	Before the 4th June 2026 Committee meeting.
Outline how the Council's initiatives specifically focus on encouraging females to take up opportunities to strive for higher paid roles.	Belinda Tam – Corporate Manager - People	Before the 4th June 2026 Committee meeting.

The Committee

- (i) **RECOMMENDED TO THE COUNCIL** that approval be given to the Pay Policy Statement 2026/27, as set out in Appendix A of the Report;
- (ii) **RESOLVED** that the Gender Pay Gap calculations for 2024/25, as set out in the Report, be noted; and
- (iii) **RESOLVED** that the Ethnicity Pay Gap calculations for 2024/25, as set out in the Report, be noted.

10. **SELECTION OF MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR 2026/27**

The Committee considered the Managing Director and Corporate Manager – Democracy’s Report No. DEM2602, which set out the outcome of the selection process for the Mayor and Deputy Mayor for the 2026/27 Municipal Year.

The Council had established a process and criteria for selecting the Mayor and Deputy Mayor which was adopted as part of the Council’s Constitution. In accordance with the procedure, the Managing Director wrote to all Councillors in December 2025 to invite expressions of interest in the role of Deputy Mayor for 2026/27, progressing to the position of Mayor in 2027/28.

The Committee was advised by the Corporate Manager – Democracy that the Deputy Mayor, Cllr Peter Cullum, had confirmed his wish to proceed through the normal progression to the position of Mayor for 2026/27.

It was reported that, for the position of Deputy Mayor, Cllr Akmal Gani had expressed his interest in the mayoralty role and, from amongst those who submitted their interest, was the councillor who best met the criteria by order of seniority and eligibility. By May 2026, Cllr Gani would have served for 4 years having been elected to Fernhill Ward in 2022. He was standing for re-election in May, and consequently it might be necessary to revisit the appointment following the election.

During discussion, Members supported the nominations and advised that the new Mayor and Deputy-Mayor be offered training to be prepared to Chair Council meetings.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED TO THE COUNCIL** that:

- (i) Cllr Peter Cullum be appointed as Mayor-Elect for the 2026/27 Municipal Year; and
- (ii) Cllr Akmal Gani be appointed as Deputy Mayor-Elect for the 2026/27 Municipal Year.

11. **UPDATES TO THE CONSTITUTION - MEMBER CHAMPIONS**

The Committee considered the Corporate Manager – Democracy’s Report No. DEM2603, which set out proposed updates to the Constitution in respect of Member Champions.

The Committee noted that arrangements for Cabinet Champion roles were first established by the Cabinet in 2018 as part of a review of portfolios carried out by the Leader at that time. The Champion roles were intended to enable capacity to ‘champion’ council plan priorities which were crosscutting of portfolios and to provide leadership development opportunities for Members who are not on the Cabinet.

The Committee were advised that the change to the make-up of the Council to no overall control had prompted further consideration about the Champion roles, and at its meeting on 4th December 2025, the Council agreed a Notice of Motion committing to the principle that the Champion roles should be non-executive, non-political roles, open to all councillors, with appointments made by the Council or a non-executive committee. The proposals had been considered and supported by the Constitution Working Group at its meeting on 12th January, 2026.

During discussion, Members raised questions regarding the name ‘Member Champions’, parameters for nomination, and the process of dismissing Champions if they failed to meet the expectations of the role.

The Committee were advised that the following additions would be included in the recommendation:

- The name Member Champions would be replaced by ‘Champions’.
- Any Member, excluding the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Members, could be nominated
- There would be no Shadow Champions.
- The Committee would have the authority to appoint and dismiss Champions.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED TO THE COUNCIL** that, subject to the additional points requested by the Committee, the updates to the Constitution to introduce new arrangements for Champion Roles, be approved.

12. **UPDATE ON POLLING PLACE - NORTH TOWN NB**

The Committee considered the Corporate Manager – Democracy’s Report No. DEM2605, which reports on a proposed change to the permanent polling place for North Town NB.

The Committee noted that, prior to 2022, the North Town Community Base was the permanent polling place for North Town NB polling district. When redevelopment work started on North Lane, it was necessary to change to an alternative polling place as the Community Base was unavailable. The polling place for North Town NB was temporarily located at the 1st Aldershot Scout Hut on Eastern Road until the redevelopment work was complete and the new North Town Community Centre built.

The new Community Centre was now open and available for use. The Elections Team had visited the new facility and, with agreement from the Returning Officer, it was considered to be ideal for use as a polling place for the local Elections in May 2026. The ward councillors and the county councillor for the area were consulted and were in support of the proposal to move back to the community centre. The change was also supported by the Elections Group at its meeting on 23rd February 2026. During discussion at the Elections Group, it was confirmed that additional information would be included with poll cards to advise electors of the change of polling place to the Community Centre along with information on the Elections web pages, to accompany the 'Check I'm registered' facility.

During the discussion, consideration was given to the new venue's accessibility; especially its parking arrangements.

ACTION:

What	By Whom	When
Check parking arrangements at the community centre.	Jill Shuttleworth – Corporate Manager - Democracy	Before the elections

RESOLVED: That the polling place for the North Town NB Polling District will return to the North Town Community Centre on North Lane, Aldershot.

13. 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:

Item No.	Para. No.	Category
7	1	Information relating to an individual

14. APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY ALDERMEN

The Committee considered the Corporate Manager – Democracy's Exempt Report No. DEM2605, which outlined nominations received for the conferment of the title of Honorary Alderman of the Borough.

RESOLVED: That Members had requested further information.

The meeting closed at 9.17 pm.

CLLR JACQUI VOSPER (CHAIR)
