

RUSHMOOR BOROUGH COUNCIL RECORD OF EXECUTIVE DECISION



Decision taken by an officer in consultation with a Cabinet member

(All sections must be completed (mark "N/A" as applicable))

DECISION MAKER (Name and designation)

Tim Mills, Head of Property and Growth (in consultation with Cllr Keith Dibble, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Planning)

DECISION AND THE REASON(S) FOR IT

This decision approves the adoption of the Southwood Woodlands Habitat Management Plan with Costs (April 2025) produced for Rushmoor Borough Council by the Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership (BVCP). This follows a Cabinet decision in April 2019 to undertake relevant surveys and update the Management Plan for the Southwood Woodlands SANG.

Southwood Woodlands provides Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to enable recreational opportunities for the residents of Rushmoor Borough Council in mitigation for adverse impacts on Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (TBH SPA). SANG is provided in accordance with the Thames Basin Heaths Delivery Framework (February 2009) to which Rushmoor Borough Council is a signatory.

This costed Management Plan sets out the existing ecological value of Southwood Woodlands; opportunities for ecological gains; management objectives and presents a suite of management activities. Management activities seek to retain existing ecological value and achieve ecological enhancements where funds allow. Management activities ensure that Southwood Woodlands is managed in compliance with the Framework and therefore compliance with statutory obligations relating to the protected features of TBH SPA.

The management plan activities are primarily delivered by our partners in site management – the BVCP - and their volunteer work parties. It provides clear annual, biannual and desirable activities costed in accordance with the current Service Level Agreement between BVCP and Rushmoor Borough Council.

This Management Plan has regards to and supersedes previous management plans and assessments, including the Southwood Woodland Habitat Management Plan 2021-2031 and a Species Surveys and Assessment report (July 2020) (both produced by Arcadian Ecology Ltd).

DATE DECISION TAKEN

9th June 2025

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

(Those examined by officers and generated by consultation, etc)

To not produce a management plan. This would not ensure that the SANG was managed appropriately and provide no basis to manage and control expenditure and was therefore rejected

ANY CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED

(conflict of interests of any executive member who is consulted by the officer which relates to the decision. A note of dispensation should be attached).

N/A

Signed



Tim Mills

(Decision maker)

Designation: Head of Property and Growth



Dibble

Designation: Portfolio Holder for Housing and Planning

Guidance notes for using this form

Recording executive decisions

New regulations¹ came into effect on 10 September 2012, under which Council officers and Cabinet members are required to record every decision they take which is connected to the discharge of a function which is the responsibility of the Executive (Cabinet). This applies whether the decision is taken by an officer or an individual Cabinet member. This record must be published on the Council's website.

Which executive decisions must be recorded?

The regulations state that any decision connected to the discharge of a function, which is the responsibility of the Cabinet, must be recorded and published. However, at Rushmoor we are restricting the recording requirement to those decisions that are 'closely' (rather than remotely) connected with the discharge of a function of the Cabinet. For guidance, this includes any decision that is either:

- A 'key decision'; or
- Delegated to an officer(s)/Cabinet member at a Cabinet meeting; or
- Delegated to an officer in consultation with a Cabinet member (within the scheme of delegation or authorised at Cabinet); or
- Any executive decision, whether or not it is in the Cabinet Scheme of Delegation, where there is a reasonable expectation of public interest in the matter being decided because it may have an impact on a community living or working in Rushmoor; or
- The subject of urgent action outside the Scheme of Delegation

Decisions which are administrative in nature – for example, purchasing low value items or are otherwise minor or routine, need not be recorded.

In addition, some decisions would be considered exempt from publication because, for example, they affect particular individuals rather than the public in general or concern the business affairs of any person (including the Council) where the information could be claimed to be commercially sensitive.

What are key decisions?

Key decisions are not usually taken by individual Cabinet members or officers, unless specifically delegated by the Cabinet.

A key decision is one which is likely to:

¹ The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012

- result in the Council incurring expenditure or making savings which are significant in as much as they will have a material effect on the level of Council tax or balances or contingencies in relation to the Council's overall budget; or
 - be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards within the Borough
- 1 approximately £100,000 or more

