

Arena

Special edition • August 2025



Important changes to your council

by Cllr Gareth Williams, Leader of Rushmoor Borough Council

Welcome to our special edition of Arena magazine.

We want to tell you about big changes proposed to Rushmoor Borough Council and the way your services are provided and to let you know how you can be involved.

Inside, you'll find details of proposals to replace us and the county council, with one single council for our area

providing all your services.

We're also keen to find out what you think about the idea of introducing parish or town councils to our area when these new arrangements come into place.

These are important changes so it's really important to us that you give your views on the councils that will be delivering your services in future.

I would urge you to spend a few minutes reading through the following pages and to take time to respond in our survey.

Thank you in advance.

Gareth Williams





New single council for our area

The government wants to reduce the number of councils, opting instead for single councils that provide all your services.

At the moment, you get your local services, like bin collections, parks, street cleaning and planning, from Rushmoor Borough Council, and bigger services like education, roads and adults' and children's social care from Hampshire County Council.

Under the proposals being considered, you would have one 'unitary' council that would do everything.

We've been working with 11 other councils across Hampshire on what we think would work best so that any new councils are big enough to deliver good services efficiently, but small enough to understand local communities and their needs.

In our area, we think the best option to provide this balance would be a unitary council that covers north Hampshire, replacing Rushmoor, Hart and Basingstoke and Deane councils and taking on the county council services.

Over the last few weeks, we've been consulting on these proposals, as we told you in our June edition.

The consultation has now closed, and we will be looking at all your feedback as we prepare and consider our final submission to the government in September.

The government will then carry out its own public consultation on the options it thinks meet its requirements and decide on the final council arrangements. There would be shadow council elections in 2027, with the new councils officially established in April 2028.

Find out more and keep up to date at www.rushmoor.gov.uk/localgovernmentreorganisation

Making sure your voice is heard locally

As we plan for the new, bigger unitary councils, we are also thinking about what, if any, arrangements could be put in place to make sure our communities are still recognised and represented on local issues.

Parish and town councils

Parish and town councils are the same, apart from the name. They can vary in size from a handful of electors to more than 40,000 people but reflect their local identity.

They are elected by residents and directly accountable to their communities.

Depending on the council, they can legally provide a variety of local services, ranging from allotments, cemeteries and crematoriums, to running community centres, events and arts. They can also provide street maintenance including footpaths, litter bins and grass cutting; parking, public toilets and parks and open spaces.

They can comment on planning applications and help shape their local area through neighbourhood plans.

These councils can be funded by grants, fees and charges and a small council tax charge, called a precept. The precept varies depending on the extent of services offered.

Neighbourhood area committees

These are very local committees led by frontline ward councillors, involving members from community groups and public organisations, like the police and health, as needed.

They are created by a bigger council to focus on specific places and to act as a community voice on local issues.

They have no formal powers and have no separate funding.



At the moment, we don't have any town or parish councils in our area. But one option would be to create these to offer very local council services and decision-making. A different option would be something called neighbourhood area committees, or we could do nothing.

Because this would be an important change to our area, we would like to hear your views so we can understand what might work for you and how you feel about potentially paying an additional council tax charge for new parish or town councils.

You can read more here about the different options and how parish and town councils work elsewhere.

We would then really welcome your feedback in our online survey, www.rushmoor.gov.uk/communityreview, which is open until Friday 12 September. If you don't have internet access, please give us a call on 01252 398399 and we will be happy to send you a paper copy of the survey.

We will consider your thoughts as part of our review. Depending on the outcome, we may carry out more



engagement later this year on more detailed proposals.

Farnham Town Council

Services include:

- Town centre events including farmers' markets, food festival, Christmas lights
- Managing green spaces, public gardens and cemeteries
- Community centre and hall management
- Helping to maintain Farnham's bins, benches and bus stops
- Running allotments

Council tax Band D
precept - **£83.45**

Fleet Town Council

Services include:

- Running The Harlington Centre and community centres
- Floral displays
- Managing football pitches, tennis courts, a skatepark and the war memorial
- Managing some parks and play equipment
- Community events and repair cafe

Council tax Band D precept - **£131.27**

Ash Parish Council

Services include:

- Managing allotments and open spaces
- Maintaining play areas, sports facilities, car parks and public toilets
- Collecting litter and disposing of waste
- Cemetery and chapel administration
- Community events, including gardening competition

Council tax Band D
precept - **£78.52**

Neighbourhood area committee examples

Bristol City Council has nine area committees, which decide how local funds, including developer contributions, are spent to improve their own area. This includes local projects like play area refurbishments, traffic calming, park upgrades and accessibility improvements.

Sunderland City Council has five area committees across the city. They identify local priorities for their area and receive a fund from the council to support local initiatives, like youth centres, street lighting, parks and play areas, and tree planting.

Your views matter – take part in our survey

www.rushmoor.gov.uk/communityreview

Closing date Friday 12 September

What's on

We hope you're having a fantastic summer so far. We've still got lots going on in our town centres as we head into the autumn.



Fri 22 Aug, Feel Good Friday, The Landing, Queensmead, Farnborough town centre, 10am - 3pm

Anyone for tennis? Enjoy the comedy tennis shows at 10.30am, midday and 2pm. Pick up a crazy golf club and 'putt' your skills to the test on the nine-hole crazy golf course and putting challenge.



Sat 30 Aug, Playfest!, Union Street and Princes Gardens, Aldershot town centre, 10am - 4pm

Join us for an action-packed day of hands-on fun and games for all ages. From crazy science experiments to messy play, music, dance and karate workshops – there is something for everyone! Go on a virtual reality safari, spray a street art mural and climb inside a giant adventure cave, discover the beehives and dance around our maypole! All the activities are free!



Sat 6 Sept, Farnborough craft fayre, Queensmead, 9am - 4pm

Meet our friendly crafters, search for unique gifts and find your own creative inspiration. Live music while you shop.

Sat 6 Sept, Eco Explorers Club, Union Street, Aldershot, 10am - 2pm

Hands-on family activities and exciting ways to look after nature and the environment.

Sun 7 Sept, Eco Explorers Club, Queensmead, Farnborough, 10am - 2pm

As above, no need to book – just drop in and enjoy the fun!

Fri 12 to Sun 21 Sept, Rushmoor Heritage Festival

Celebrating the history of Aldershot and Farnborough. Look out for guided tours, walks and talks as part of the national Heritage Open Days scheme.

Sun 14 Sept, Rushmoor Eco Festival, West End Centre, 11am - 4pm

Find out more about sustainable living and how to reduce your carbon footprint. Activities for all ages, plus find local businesses selling sustainable, local or upcycled products.

Tues 23 Sept to Fri 3 Oct, Aldershot

Comedy Festival, Princes Hall and West End Centre, Aldershot

Featuring top stand-up comedy from some of the biggest names including Henning Wehn, Marcus Brigstocke, Angela Barnes, Emmanuel Sonubi and Flo & Joan, as well as unpredictable



mayhem from Showstopper! The Improvised Musical and Sh!t Faced Shakespeare.

Sat 4 Oct, Farnborough craft fayre, Queensmead, 9am - 4pm

Meet our friendly crafters, search for unique gifts and find your own creative inspiration. Live music while you shop.

Sat 4 Oct, Eco Explorers Club, Union Street, Aldershot, 10am - 2pm

Hands-on family activities and exciting ways to look after nature and the environment.

Sun 5 Oct, Eco Explorers Club, Queensmead, Farnborough, 10am - 2pm

As above, no need to book – just drop in and enjoy the fun!

Details of all our events at available at www.rushmoor.gov.uk/artsandevents

Have an active summer in Rushmoor!



Aldershot Lido

Aldershot Lido is open every day in August, so there is still time to enjoy the last of the summer weather with family and friends. We will be hosting the very popular dog days

at the lido at the very end of the season. They will be on Saturday 6 September and Sunday 7 September, but tickets are selling fast! To find out more go to www.rushmoor.gov.uk/lido

Active in Rushmoor

If you'd like to try something new, there are some fantastic activities to discover on the Active in Rushmoor pages on our website. The good news is that most clubs and groups offer a free trial session so that you can try it out first.

For more information go to:

www.rushmoor.gov.uk/activeinrushmoor

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