

# RUSHMOOR BOROUGH COUNCIL RECORD OF EXECUTIVE DECISION



## Decision taken by individual Cabinet member

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

### DECISION MAKER (Name and designation)

Councillor Gareth Williams, Leader of the Council

### DECISION AND THE REASON(S) FOR IT

The decision is to submit the Council's formal response to the Government's Green Paper: 'Pathways to Work: Reforming Benefits and Support to Get Britain Working'. This response reflects the views of the Council, informed by a local consultation with residents, community organisations, and disability advocacy groups.

The reason for this decision is to ensure that the voices of vulnerable resident, particularly those with disabilities, long-term health conditions, and mental health challenges are represented in national policy discussions. The Council has received significant feedback expressing concern about the potential negative impacts of the proposed reforms, including:

- **Delays in Access to Work assessments** (up to 32 weeks), which result in lost employment opportunities.
- **Concerns about changes to Personal Independence Payment (PIP)** eligibility, which could disproportionately affect individuals with overlapping or less visible conditions, and young people aged 16–18.
- **The need for accessible communication**, especially for visually impaired residents and non-English speakers, including the Council's large Nepali community.
- **Support for a new Unemployment Insurance scheme**, provided it includes at least six months of financial support and tailored mental health and employment services.
- **Opposition to delaying access to the health element of Universal Credit until age 22**, due to the potential harm to vulnerable young people.
- **Calls for reform of the Disability Confident scheme**, including mandatory employer training and stronger accountability.
- **Recommendations for a hybrid Access to Work delivery model**, combining national consistency with local responsiveness.
- **Emphasis on safeguarding**, with a call for mandatory training for DWP staff and clearer safeguarding pathways.

### DATE DECISION TAKEN

01 July 2025

**ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

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

The Leader and Councillor Jules Crossley, Policy, Performance & Sustainability Portfolio Holder, consulted with relevant portfolio holders in making this decision. The submission of this survey was also informed by the [recent letter](#) the Council sent to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, Liz Kendall and Alex Baker MP regarding the impact the changes will have on the residents of Rushmoor.

The only alternative option would be to not respond to the proposed reform. However, due to the significance of expected impacts on the council and residents, this is not considered an appropriate option.

**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 \_\_\_\_\_

(Decision maker)

**Designation: Leader of the Council**