Three Rivers House
Northway
Rickmansworth
Herts WD3 1RL

CLIMATE CHANGE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

NOTICE AND AGENDA

For a meeting to be held on Wednesday, 9 September 2026 at 7.30 pm at Penn Chamber, Three Rivers House, Rickmansworth.

Members of the Climate Change and Leisure Committee:-

Councillors:

Chris Lloyd (Chair)
Andrea Fraser
Raj Khiroya
Kerry Milliken
Chris Mitchell
Aidan Bentley (Vice-Chair)
Mike Sims
Jon Tankard
Kavan Trivedi

Joanne Wagstaffe, Chief Executive
Tuesday, 1 September 2026

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. MINUTES (Pages 3 - 12)

To confirm, as being a correct record, the minutes of the Climate Change & Leisure Committee, held on 24 June 2026.

3. NOTICE OF OTHER BUSINESS

Items of other business notified under Council Procedure Rule 30 to be announced, together with the special circumstances that justify their consideration as a matter of urgency. The Chair to rule on the admission of such items.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive any declarations of interest.

5. RSK ASBESTOS

Presentation by Sara Blackmore, Associate Director – Technical from RSK Asbestos.

6. Watersmeet Annual Review 2025-26 (Pages 13 - 40)

Recommendation

That: The report be noted.

7. WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 41 - 42)

To receive the Committee's work programme.

8. OTHER BUSINESS - if approved under item 3 above

General Enquiries: Please contact the Committee Team at
committeeteam@threerivers.gov.uk

The Council welcomes contributions from members of the public on agenda items at the Climate Change and Leisure Committee meetings. Details of the procedure are provided below:

For those wishing to speak:
Members of the public are entitled to register and identify which item(s) they wish to speak on from the published agenda for the meeting. Those who wish to register to speak are asked to register on the night of the meeting from 7pm. Please note that contributions will be limited to one person speaking for and one against each item for not more than three minutes.

In the event of registering your interest to speak on an agenda item but not taking up that right because the item is deferred, you will be given the right to speak on that item at the next meeting of the Committee.

Those wishing to observe the meeting are requested to arrive from 7pm.

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The meeting may be livestreamed and an audio recording of the meeting will be made.

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Climate Change and Leisure Committee MINUTES

Of a meeting held in the Penn Chamber, Three Rivers House, Rickmansworth, on Wednesday, 24 June 2026 from 7.30 pm - 10.00 pm.

Present: Councillors

Chris Lloyd (Chair), Aidan Bentley, Andrea Fraser, Raj Khiroya, Kerry Milliken, Chris Mitchell, Mike Sims, Jon Tankard and Kavan Trivedi

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Officers in Attendance:

Kelly Barnard, Leisure Assets Manager
Charlotte Gomes, Head of Leisure & Natural Infrastructure
Alex Laurie, Principal Trees and Woodlands Officer
Jess Hodges, Natural Infrastructure Programme Manager
Anita Hibbs, Committee Officer
Kimberley Rowley, Head of Regulatory Services

External Attendance:

Nick Egerton, Watford Borough Council
John Sewell, Everyone Active
Billy Johnston, Everyone Active

1/26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

2/26 MINUTES

The Chair advised that he wished to change the order of the agenda to allow officers presenting item 8 to leave early, and will be taking items in the following order, after item 4:

1. Item 8. Revocation of an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) at junction 18 of M25, Chorleywood
2. Item 5. Leisure Facilities Management Annual Report
3. Item 7. Rickmansworth Aquadrome Programme
4. Item 6. Pond Wood Management Plan 2026-36.

The minutes of the Climate Change & Leisure Committee, held on 11 March 2026 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair of the meeting.

3/26 NOTICE OF OTHER BUSINESS

There were no items of other business.

4/26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Mike Sims declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 7. Rickmansworth Aquadrome Programme, being a member of the Rickmansworth Residents Association, and he is also a resident of a property that owns part of the mill stream, which abuts onto the Aquadrome; a private property.

5/26 LEISURE FACILITIES MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT

The Leisure Assets Manager introduced herself and the Everyone Active colleagues; John Sewell, Contract Manager for Three Rivers District Council (TRDC) and Billy Johnston, General Manager for the South Oxhey Leisure Centre, and William Penn Leisure Centre.

John Sewell presented the report.

Members raised several questions, including the reason for the decrease in swimming lessons, figures comparing to the pre-Covid 19 period, and requested information on target membership and customer satisfaction evidence to be included in future reports – **Action – Everyone Active Contract Manager for TRDC**. Members also inquired about the financial performance of the leisure centres.

The Contract Manager responded by explaining that there are seasonal fluctuations in the numbers, however, the decrease in swimming lessons had been noticed by staff across the leisure centres. Promotions in the local community have been increased as well as working with the Council, utilising the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) to provide free swimming lessons, totalling 30 free lessons to the local primary school children who receive free school meals. The leisure centres also worked with local primary and secondary schools, in the Adopt a School scheme, which provide free swimming to children and adults from a local school for a period of one month. In addition, there are also drowning prevention week and water safety within the school swimming lessons programme, and prices are still the best value for money within Hertfordshire. The Contract Manager advised that fitness memberships and swimming lessons have increased, noting that pre-Covid, the Sir James Altham swimming pool had been used, which is smaller, single tank pool, but numbers are getting back to pre-Covid figures. The Leisure Assets Manager added that free swim and free gym are also run during the easter and summer months for under 19's, as part of the youth provision, which is funded by the Council.

The Contract Manager explained that a detailed feedback received from customers via the online portal, verbal logs at reception, and on the 'You Said, We Did' feedback boards, is provided to the Council on a monthly basis.

Members inquired why some of the facilities failed to meet their targets and what corrective actions are being taken. The Contract Manager advised that the exact figures are not included in the annual report, but finances are monitored on a weekly basis and performance on a monthly basis. Financial performance is also reported to the Council on a monthly basis. The speaker referred to the Rickmansworth Golf Course in terms of underperformance, which was due to the separation of the irrigation system from Moor Park Golf Course with no water for a period of time. However, since the installation of the new irrigation system there has been a year on year increase in revenue. A detailed report on financial performance, where it isn't commercially sensitive, to be provided to the Leisure Assets Manager and shared with committee members. – **Action – Everyone Active Contract Manager for TRDC.**

Councillor Mike Sims proposed a summary of the customer satisfaction feedback to be included in the Everyone Active reports in future. – **Action – Everyone Active Contract Manager for TRDC.** The Leisure Assets Manager confirmed that Leisure Officers meet with Everyone Active colleagues on a monthly and quarterly basis to review customer satisfaction feedback and will make sure to include the summary in reports moving forward. The speaker also responded to a question regarding the junior usage of the golf course, clarifying that it has increased on a year on year basis, approximately 75% in the last two years. The junior usage across the facility is what has declined slightly, due to the ‘Happy and Fed’ holiday programme.

Members raised concerns about overgrown vegetation near the car park at William Penn Leisure Centre, which was causing customers to park in unsafe conditions and creating a risk to pedestrians. The Leisure Assets Manager advised that, if the area referred to by Members falls outside the leisure contract, officers would review the matter and discuss it with Members. The officer further explained that the area belongs to the neighbouring property adjacent to the leisure centre and that there had been previous communication with the owner about the site.

The officer also advised that the Council’s Regulatory Services have done a public consultation on the implementation of yellow lines for the car park that may be shared with members. – **Action – TRDC Leisure Officers.**

In response to a question about whether free summer camps at the leisure centres were available to all children, rather than only those with SEND, the officer clarified that the free summer camp schemes are aimed at specific target groups and funded by the Hertfordshire Sports Partnership. The Head of Leisure & Natural Infrastructure also mentioned the Council-run Accessible Childcare for Everyone (ACE) which offers discounts on easter, summer and half-term holidays to families working with professionals or in receipt of financial support.

Members inquired about any major health and safety incidents in the recent period. The Contract Manager responded that there has been a major incident at the South Oxhey Leisure Centre, and they are currently working with the Environment Health Team to formulate an investigation on the incident.

Members expressed enthusiasm about the social value element included in the report, and requested further information to be provided later on in the year on the GP referral scheme and Community Health & Wellbeing Programmes. – **Action – Everyone Active Contract Manager for TRDC.**

Responding to questions regarding the golf pods and summer camps in South Oxhey, the Contract Manager advised that installation of the golf pods will commence on 13 July, and confirmed that the summer camps in South Oxhey are going ahead.

Councillor Andrea Fraser proposed that an interim report on membership targets be provided to the committee and stressed that any major incidents should also be included. The Leisure Assets Manager advised that officers would discuss this with Everyone Active, as an interim report is not part of the leisure contract, and report back to committee members. – **Action – TRDC Leisure Assets Manager.**

The officer responded to a final question on recreational cricket in South Oxhey and Carpenders park, advising that recreational cricket is not covered by the leisure contract.

Councillor Chris Lloyd move the recommendation as set out in the report. On being put to the committee, the motion was declared CARRIED by the Chair, the voting being by general assent.

RESOLVED:

- That the April 2025 – March 2026 annual report from Sports and Leisure Management is noted.
- That public access to the report be immediate.
- That public access to the decision be immediate.

6/26 POND WOOD MANAGEMENT PLAN 2026-36

The Principal Trees and Woodlands Officer presented the report.

Members inquired whether there was any funding available for the management plan. The officer advised that there is no external funding available at the moment but they will explore different options. There is a small management plans budget, which officers can utilise but it is very limited.

Members praised the level of detail in the report and emphasised the importance of biodiversity in the district. Concerns were raised regarding a footpath not being included in the management plan, as public access is important. It was suggested that a social value indicator should be done for projects such as this to add a community wellbeing space. The officer responded that the footpath had been considered, however it is not feasible for it to be included in the plan at this point due to financial constraints. In addition, officers were mindful of the damage and disturbance to wildlife that the construction of a footpath would cause.

Councillor Chris Lloyd move the recommendation as set out in the report. On being put to the committee, the motion was declared CARRIED by the Chair, the voting being by general assent.

RESOLVED:

That the Climate Change and Leisure Committee:

- Adopt the new 10-year Management Plan for Pond Wood
- Give delegated authority to the Director of Finance to enter into a contract or funding agreement above the value of £25,000, subject to securing external funding to facilitate works to support the implementation of the Management Plans.

7/26 RICKMANSWORTH AQUADROME PROGRAMME

The Chair proposed that the discussion of this item is structured as follows:

1. Introduction of the report by the Head of Leisure & Natural Infrastructure.
2. Questions from a member of the public
3. The weir and the hydraulic part
4. Play area
5. Woodland path
6. Any other questions on the Aquadrome item

The Head of Leisure & Natural Infrastructure presented the report and provided a detailed update on the Aquadrome Programme and business as usual activities on site. Key topics highlighted include; public engagement, completion of key studies, such as the hydrology, flood modelling, ecology, SNIFFER assessment, asbestos investigation as well as an accessibility audit. The officer also highlighted the different ways the public engagement was promoted, including online, through social media, onsite notices through My Ricky News and direct letters to households next to the River Colne, along the Uxbridge road. The drop-in session was well attended and valuable feedback received. Unfortunately, the project team, including the consultants and officers experienced significant verbal abuse and aggression from the public during the session. Feedback is currently being collated from the online survey and wider engagement into a comprehensive RIBA stage 3 report, which will show the journey from stage 2 through to stage 3. Officers are also planning a community information session in

September, with further details to follow once the report is complete. A key outcome of the development phase was the accessibility audit, which was very positive and looked at pan disability not just physical disability.

The officer emphasised that the Aquadrome programme focuses on the site as a local nature reserve and on enhancing its ecology. Furthermore, the officer highlighted the importance of hydrology, the aim to improve the ecology and flow of the River Colne and the adjacent mill stream, and also explained that the weir removal and river-bed regrading will improve the chalk stream and support more consistent river levels. Detailed RIBA stage 4 design work is underway to ensure the mill stream levels remain. Current data shows that a riffle, a raised hard section of the river-bed, feeds the mill stream during low flow. This will remain unaffected by the proposals. The officer also emphasised that the Council is committed to maintaining levels in both the main channel and the mill stream. The officer confirmed that works relating to the river will be subject to approval from the Environment Agency and that the EA would not approve any work that would have a detrimental impact on the river and millstream.

The officer also explained that the planning permission will be required for Bury Point, the Visitor Hub, the Woodland Walk and the Pinetum Pathway; the river restoration and the works to the causeway between Bury Lake and Stocker's Lake will require Environment Agency (EA) approval through a flood-risk activity permit (FRAP).

The officer concluded with the confirmation that the work at the Ebury Play Area is progressing well, and it is on track to re-open as advertised.

<u>Question from a member of the public</u>

Mrs. Gillian Lipton spoke on the item, welcoming the Council's investment in the Aquadrome but also emphasising concerns over the lack of direct engagement with the residents since the consultation, particularly about the completed hydrological modelling, the proposed removal of the weir and the implications of the mill stream. The following questions were put to the committee and officers:

- Could the Council explain what assessment has been undertaken regarding the impact of the proposed removal of Bury Weir and associated works on the flood risk, water levels, neighbouring residential properties and the ecology of the mill stream and the River Colne
- Clarify the respective roles of the Council and Environment Agency in determining the future of Bury Weir, and what opportunities remain for residents to influence that process
- Confirm whether the detailed hydrological modelling and supporting assessments will be made available to residents before any final decisions are made, and how affected households will be engaged from this point forward.

Responding to the member of the public the officer reiterated that they are planning a community information session in September, where the outcome of the assessment will be shared, and advised that the RIBA stage 3 report, showing the journey through to stage 4, will be published.

The Natural Infrastructure Programme Manager introduced herself and provided a summary of the assessment that has taken place at the Aquadrome, including baselining that covered a detailed habitat system, river morphology, a suit of species specific surveys, a mammal survey using different methods, including environmental DNA technology. In addition, a bat survey and otter survey were also carried out, as well as the hydrological study and flood modelling, LIDAR scanning of the ground, preliminary ecological assessment, a SNIFFER assessment and a bathymetric survey; looking at the shape of underwater terrain. The officer also explained that the Council is the landowner of the Rickmansworth Aquadrome, and the EA are the regulatory body for main rivers, which both the River Colne and the mill stream are considered to be. The EA will have the final say in the decision through both the informal process and the FRAP (Flood Risk Activity Permit) process. The officer emphasised that the EA would not grant permission to do the work if there was any chance of increase to flood risk. The officer clarified that within the Aquadrome boundary there is an increase to flood risk, however, this benefits the flood plain of the Aquadrome. Outside of the boundary, there is no increase to flood risk.

The Chair proposed to invite the EA to the community feedback session in September and suggested that officers offer a number of possible dates to them to maximise the chance of attendance, and any further questions to be collated and forwarded to the EA, if they are unable to attend the September feedback session. – **Action – TRDC Leisure Officers.**

Councillor Mike Sims and residents present invited the lead officers and committee members on a tour to witness the natural treasures of the area. The Chair confirmed that he would join the tour and would work with the Lead Member to find a suitable date. Officers politely declined to attend the tour. The Chair also requested that Councillor Sims work with the residents to find the best date for everyone involved to attend, and discuss with committee members. – **Action – Councillors Mike Sims, Chris Lloyd.**

The request for officers to attend the tour was emphasised by Cllr Sims.

<u>The weir and the hydraulic part</u>

In response to a question raised seeking assurance that the water level of the mill stream will not be impacted, the officer assured that the EA will not allow anything detrimental to be done to the mill stream or the channel, therefore the water level in the mill stream is not anticipated to be negatively impacted. Further questions were put to the officers on the accuracy of the LIDAR, any risk of erosion, the flow split between the weir and the mill stream at different times of the year, and the next stage to follow the community feedback session in September. The officer confirmed that the next stage will be the FRAP application through the EA, running parallel to the work officer need to undertak to submit the lottery application in November. Officers also confirmed that regular updates on the Aquadrome project will be brought back to the committee, whilst balancing this against resource implications of ensuring the funding bid is completed and submitted to the Lottery in time.

Councillor Jon Tankard proposed that it should be included in the design format as a design generator, that there be no adverse effect on the water level in the mill stream, and to have a detailed explanation on what the RIBA stage 3 involves for the benefit of the public. The officer confirmed that the flow through the mill stream and the water level have always been part of the design format. The officer also explained that signing off the project depends on the Council and the National Lottery Heritage Fund, as the funding party of the project, and the EA through the FRAP approval. The RIBA stages will be detailed in the feedback report. The Chair requested that the wording of the update reports moving forward are simplified without any jargon. Officers also confirmed that there will be a monitoring phase after the work is completed and feedback provided.

Members inquired whether any water circulation or chemical monitoring plans are in place for Bury Lake and Batchworth Lake to prevent toxic green and blue algae from disturbing local wildlife. In response, the officer confirmed that another study being carried out as part of the lottery funding is the regular monitoring of both lakes. However, the algae monitoring system on site is outdated and officers are looking into acquiring a better system that uses ultrasonic, as well as potentially using the nanobubbles technique through lottery funding.

Responding to a question regarding how exactly the mill stream is fed, officers explained that they are not able to advise regarding this as it is not part of the Aquadrome project, and recommended that the Colne Catchment Action Network (ColneCAN) would be better placed to advise. The Chair also recommended that interested parties can be invited to the Three Rivers Environmental Network meetings to further explore these topics.

Ebury Play Area

Members inquired about the cost information regarding the play area and management of the Japanese knotweed throughout the Aquadrome.

The officer responded explaining that all of the budget related to the play area comes through budget monitoring and the next budget monitoring report will come to the committee's September meeting. The officer outlined the management of the Japanese knotweed, including plotting and treatment with stem injection and spraying. In addition, the company that removed the invasive plant has provided assurance that it will regularly monitor and inspect the site to ensure the plant does not return.

Woodland path

Responding to the Chair, the officer explained that the asbestos found on site must be addressed first before any other work can commence, and members of the committee and the public will be regularly updated in the process.

Members asked about the possible construction of any new pathway infrastructure without violating the 'no dig' asbestos management plan along the woodland. The officer clarified that the asbestos management plan identifies the Aquadrome as a 'no dig' site, however it does not restrict any digging as long as it is carried out safely and in the correct way.

Councillor Andrea Fraser proposed a vote on the reopening of the woodland path by the end of the month. The Chair responded and cautioned that the path could not be reopened due to the asbestos risk, and stated that there will be no voting on the reopening of the woodland path at this committee meeting. The officer also pointed out that if the Council is successful in obtaining the funding in spring 2027, the woodland path will be prioritised and works could be completed by the end of 2027, not 2030 as stated by the Cllr, which is the 3 year delivery period for the whole project, not for the woodland path specifically. Members also questioned whether there is a possibility of a wider spread of asbestos across the whole of the Aquadrome and requested further evidence whether investigations have been carried out elsewhere in the area, and whether the closure should apply to the whole of the Aquadrome. The officer explained about the high, medium and low risk categories of the asbestos survey that had been carried out, and emphasised that the restricted area is where high risk asbestos has been found, and therefore further works are required. Members argued that the woodland path should be opened as soon as possible, and pointed out that the woodland path has been closed for nearly two years, and it should not have been closed at all on health and safety grounds. Furthermore, they pointed out the contradiction that if the path is closed why is the public still able to walk around the fencing, potentially disturbing even more asbestos, which is also impacting wildlife. The Chair noted the comments and points raised, and asked officers to feedback to the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive. – **Action – TRDC Leisure Officers**. Officers also confirmed that timescales of the reopening of the woodland path will be provided in due course and will be available publicly once the work to remove the asbestos safely has been established and undertaken. Councillor Andrea Fraser stated that it will cause unnecessary delay and proposed a vote to agree the reopening of the woodland path. The Chair reasserted that he will not take a vote on it this time as there is consensus among the committee to reopen the path, and no one had spoken against it. Councillor Kerry Milliken stated that she was seconding the motion to vote. Councillor Mike Sims proposed a weekly or fortnightly update on the project. Other Members pointed out that pushing for reopening of the path at this point in time could potentially expose officers to legal liabilities. Officers also emphasised that they are bound by the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 legislation, and the Associate Director for Environment and the Chief Executive can be held personally liable under these regulations. Therefore, it is critical that the correct process is followed under that legislation.

Any other questions on the Aquadrome item

Update on Bury Lake Young Mariners (BLYM):

The Head of Leisure & Natural Infrastructure provided an update on the development of the dry-side facility. Officers are supporting BLYM in their Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding application, which is expected to be submitted in the current application window, opened on 1 June 2026.

Members referred back to the woodland path with a question on the loose fill, natural material that will be replacing the existing path, and raised concerns whether this material will be washed away when the Aquadrome floods. The officer explained that there will be connectivity points and bridges along the river to encourage it to flow into the wet woodland, to keep it wet. Unless there is a significant flood event, officers don’t anticipate that the river will flood over the hogging. In the event it does flow over the hogging, the loose fill natural materials are more cost effective and easier to repair than asphalt would be. The officer also described the boundary towards Mill End, where the Council owned land stops in the Aquadrome park. The Chair requested a written response identifying the other landowners responsible for the two bridges outside of the Aquadrome boundary, leading to Uxbridge Road. – **Action – Head of Leisure & Natural Infrastructure.**

The officer also provided clarification on the Café in the Park, which is leased and outside of scope of the Aquadrome project. However, the land in front of the café will be enhanced with more seating, natural land forms and planting as part of the project, and those will be detailed in the RIBA 3 report.

Councillor Andrea Fraser proposed to form a sub-committee of the Aquadrome due to the complexity of the Aquadrome project, and Councillor Kerry Milliken seconded the motion. The Chair reminded the committee that there are other bodies already such as the Aquadrome Steering Group with relevant partners and the Aquadrome Users Forum. Furthermore, the Chair stated that the Climate Change & Leisure Committee is the appropriate committee to discuss the project, therefore he will not take a vote on the proposal. Councillor Kerry Milliken proposed reporting of the Aquadrome project at every meeting of the committee. The Chair stated that officers will report to the committee at appropriate milestones. The officer also emphasised resource implications and capacity strains if there was pressure for more frequent reporting. Councillor Aidan Bentley requested further information on the support for those who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) that was proposed through the green skills programme. – **Action – TRDC Leisure Officers.**

The Chair proposed to combine the committee’s September and November meetings into an October meeting, which would allow for an update report on the Aquadrome to be brought to the October meeting. The officer advised that they will need to review this timing due to the delivery phase bid having to be submitted in November, and that any update may need to be a verbal one. The Chair agreed a verbal report. Officers reiterated that this would still have resource implications and that they could not commit to that at that time, with the priority focused on submitting the funding bid to the National Lottery.

The Chair referred to the second bullet point in the recommendation of the report and asked the officer to explain the reasons behind it. The officer explained that under the Council’s Constitution officers are not permitted to accept external funding above £25,000 or to enter into contracts above the value of £25,000. This delegation enables officers to accept the lottery funding if successful in the bidding process, and to deliver the projects at the Aquadrome making use of that external funding.

Councillor Kerry Milliken pointed out the importance for members to be able to scrutinise expenditure and called for an urgent decision on this. The officer clarified that they can only spend the budget on the projects that this committee approves, and scrutiny is already provided through the budget monitoring process at both service committees and through the Policy & Resources Committee.

Councillor Chris Lloyd move the recommendation as set out in the report. On being put to the committee, the motion was declared CARRIED by the Chair, the voting being For: 6, Against: 0, Abstention: 3.

RESOLVED:

That the Climate Change and Leisure Committee:

- Note the content of the report
- Give delegated authority to the Director of Finance to enter into contracts or funding agreements above the value of £25,000, subject to securing external funding, or where a project is in existing/agreed budgets providing that the purpose of such is in line with the approved Aquadrome Management Plan and actions proposed within this report.

8/26 REVOCATION OF AN AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT AREA (AQMA) AT JUNCTION 18 OF M25, CHORLEYWOOD

The Head of Regulatory Services introduced Nick Egerton, Environmental Health Manager at Watford Borough Council, who provide environmental health commercial services on behalf of Three Rivers District Council, that includes air quality. The officer also presented the report.

Members noted the positive news which shows that the air quality has been below the 10% margin of error for the past three years. The Lead Member advised that he had been in communication with officers to look into the feasibility of issuing closer to WHO standards of air quality.

Officers responded to questions from Members, including the PM 10 monitoring, which is provided by Hertfordshire County Council (HCC), who have received funding which could provide further monitoring. Officers clarified that the recommendation in the report is seeking for the agreement of the revocation of the 2 AQMAs at junction 18 of the M25, not the monitoring of it. Furthermore, officers confirmed that PM 2.5 is being monitored and local authorities will still have a target to continually decrease as part of the national air quality criteria, after the AQMAs are revoked, and to demonstrate a continuous improvement through reporting annually to DEFRA.

Councillor Chris Lloyd moved the recommendation as set out in the report.

On being put to the committee, the motion was declared CARRIED by the Chair, the voting being by general assent.

RESOLVED:

That the report and its recommendations are discussed and noted with the agreed Officer recommendations progressed:

i. To agree the revocation of the 2 AQMAs at junction 18 of the M25 in accordance with DEFRA guidance/legislative provisions under the Environment Act 1995 following stakeholder and public consultation.

ii. The final decision to revoke the 2 AQMAs at junction 18 of the M25 is delegated to the Director of Finance in consultation with the relevant Lead Member following consideration of any responses received to the consultation. If any material objections are raised the matter will be reported back to the relevant Committee.

9/26 WORK PROGRAMME

The Chair mentioned again that he wished to combine the committee's September and November meetings into an October meeting, with a possible verbal update on the Aquadrome, and explained that the request to combine the dates is due to the fact that it is unlikely that there will be a milestone update available in September and he will also be away for the whole of November. The Chair also stated that he wished to be present at the committee's meeting for the next update on the Aquadrome.

The Aquadrome update is to be included in the work programme. The October date to be arranged. – **Action – Committee Officer.**

Councillor Kerry Milliken proposed a review of the Council's 'no mow' areas to be added to the work programme, due to areas where the grass is growing too long with no trees or flowers planted, as rubbish is being hidden in these areas and they are a fire hazard as well. Officers advised that as this was a decision made by Full Council, they would need to come back to Members with the correct process. – **Action – Committee Team to confirm with Monitoring Officer.**

Councillor Kavan Trivedi proposed a conduct of a survey on the needs and demands of young people's food and leisure activities in the South Oxhey and Carpenders Park area. The officer advised that they would need to review and come back on that outside the meeting but advised that the Local Plan Sub-Committee is reviewing a Sport and Recreation study, which includes facilities across the district to identify gaps in provision with a focus on development that is coming forward. Additionally, a survey has been conducted recently in relation to the Council's Sport and Physical Activity Strategy, which is scheduled for Committee's later in the year. – **Action – TRDC Leisure Officers.**

In response to a request by Members, the officer advised that the 6-month review from Everyone Active cannot be pencilled in on the work programme as they will need to wait for confirmation from the Everyone Active colleagues that this is possible. The officer also responded to another request on Tanners Wood advising it will be covered by the Green Spaces Strategy, that officers are currently working on. The Chair highlighted the importance of capturing future reports on the work programme for 2027-2028. – **Action – TRDC Leisure Officers.**

The committee noted the work programme.

10/26 OTHER BUSINESS - IF APPROVED UNDER ITEM 3 ABOVE

None.

CHAIR

COMMITTEE REPORT WATERSMEET ANNUAL REVIEW 2025-26

September 2026

THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL

PART I

WATERSMEET ANNUAL REVIEW 2025-26
(ADCCC)

1 Summary

1.1 The Watersmeet Annual Review Presentation 2025-26. For members to receive a presentation on Watersmeet's performance for financial year 2025-26.

2 Recommendation

2.1 That: The report be noted.

Report prepared by: Tom Harrop, Watersmeet Theatre Manager

3 Details

3.1 The review looks back at the previous financial year at Watersmeet and highlights including:

3.1.1 Core priorities

3.1.2 Business Plan

3.1.3 Programming

3.1.4 2025-26 Performance

3.1.5 Marketing

3.1.6 Financial Position

3.1.7 Capital Projects

3.1.8 Tenants, partners and community engagement

3.1.9 Participation & Accessibility

3.1.10 Sustainability & Environment

3.1.11 Looking Ahead

4 Options and Reasons for Recommendations

4.1 That Members note this review of Watersmeet 2025-2026

5 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications

5.1 None. Any new initiatives requiring additional budget will follow the council's budget and project initiation process.

Financial, Legal, Equal Opportunities, Staffing, Environmental, Community Safety, Public Health, Customer Services Centre, Communications & Website, Risk Management and Health & Safety Implications

None

6 **Financial Implications**

6.1 None

7 **Legal Implications**

7.1 None

8 **Equal Opportunities Implications**

8.1 Relevance Test

Has a relevance test been completed for Equality Impact?	Yes
Did the relevance test conclude a full impact assessment was required?	No

9 **Risk and Health & Safety Implications**

9.1 The subject of this report is covered by the Communications, Customer & Culture service plan. Any risks resulting from this report will be included in the risk register and, if necessary, managed within this/these plan(s).

Data Quality

Data sources:

Local organisation quotations, online information, venue hire rates, CP financial system and historical information.

Data checked by:

Wendy Stratford – Operations & Events Manager

Adele Cassidy – Marketing Officer

Data rating:

1	**Poor**	
2	**Sufficient**	**x**
3	**High**	

Background Papers

APPENDICES / ATTACHMENTS

Watersmeet Annual Review 2025-26

THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

SEPTEMBER 2026

THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL

Project Information	
Project Name *This should clearly explain what service / policy / strategy / change you are assessing*	*Watersmeet Review presentation – September 2026*
Service Area *Main team responsible for the policy, practice, service or function being assessed*	*Communications, Customer & Culture*
EIA Author *Name and Job Title*	*Josh Sills – Head of Communications, Customer & Culture*
Date EIA drafted	25 August 2026
ID number *This will be added by the Strategy and Partnerships Team*	WT004

Executive summary	
Focus of EIA *A member of the public should have a good understanding of the policy or service and any proposals after reading this section.* *Please use plain English and write any acronyms in full first time - eg: 'Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)'* *This section should explain what you are assessing:* • *If the EIA is attached to a report, summarise the report.* • *Provide information on whether any of the following communities could be affected by the policy, practice, service or function, or by how it is delivered?* • *(age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, and marriage and civil partnership) in addition, TRDC recognises other communities may be vulnerable to disadvantage, this includes carers, people experiencing domestic abuse, substance misusers, homeless people, looked after children, (ex) armed forces personnel.*	This is a review presentation to update the committee on Watersmeet's progress for the year 2025-26. Operational decisions are outlined in the previously approved business plan 2024-27. An Equality Impact Assessment will be completed in advance of the approval of the new business plan being prepared for 2027 onwards.

Mitigations		
Protected Characteristic	**Potential Issue** *Against each protected characteristics, make a frank and realistic assessment of what issues may or do occur*	**Mitigating Actions** *How can the negative impacts be reduced or avoided by the mitigating measures? Is further engagement with specific communities needed? Is more research or monitoring needed? Does there need to be a change in the proposal itself?*
Age	n/a	n/a
Disability	n/a	n/a
Gender reassignment (or affirmation)	n/a	n/a
Pregnancy or maternity	n/a	n/a
Race	n/a	n/a
Religion or belief	n/a	n/a
Sex	n/a	n/a
Sexual Orientation	n/a	n/a
Marriage and Civil Partnership	n/a	n/a
The council recognises other communities may be vulnerable to disadvantage, this includes carers, people experiencing domestic abuse, substance misusers, homeless people, looked after children and care leavers, (ex) armed forces personnel.	n/a	n/a

Actions Planned
• *No actions required*

Additional Information
Space to provide any additional information in relation to protected characteristics or equity, diversity, equality and inclusion.

Sign off:

Equalities Lead Officer	Date
Shivani Davé	25/08/2026

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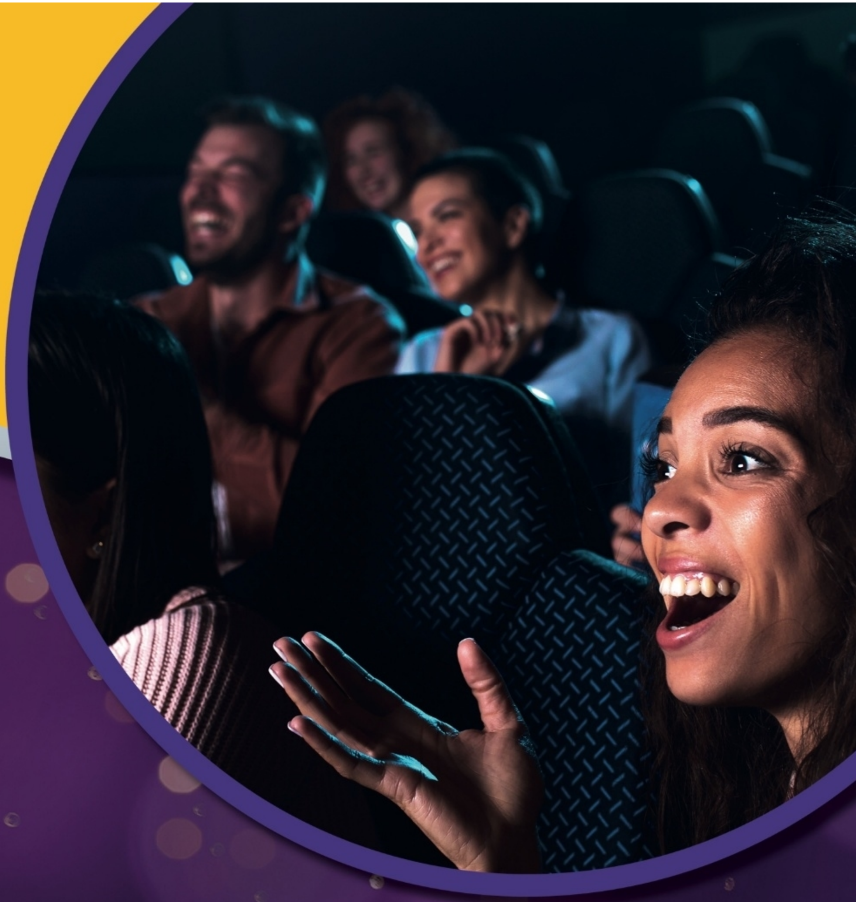
Watersmeet Annual Review

2025-2026

Contents



Watersmeet today

- Watersmeet opened 1 May 1975 and celebrated its 50th anniversary last year.
- Operated and managed by five permanent members of staff, each with specific areas of responsibility
- 50+ casual staff (Duty Front of House Managers, Technical, Box Office & Front of House) supported by 55 volunteers

Corporate Framework

To be recognised as a vibrant entertainment hub for the local community.

To support and contribute towards the Three Rivers District Council's Corporate Framework objectives:

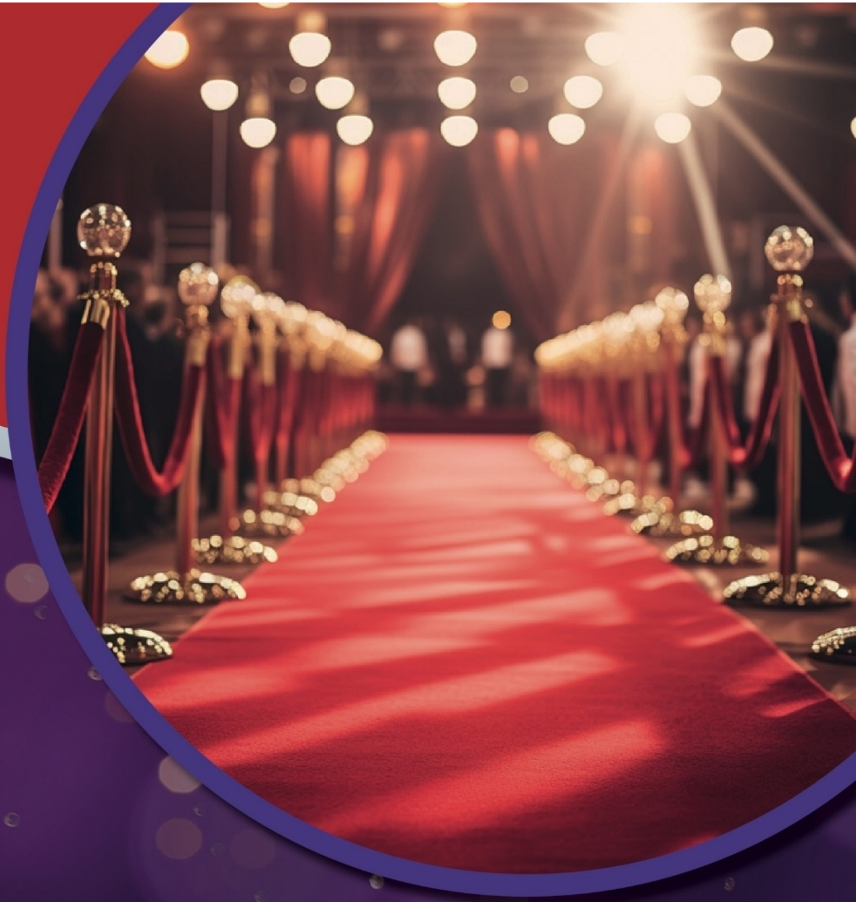
- Responsive, Responsible Local Leadership
- To provide a financially sustainable arts and entertainment for the community
- To deliver outstanding customer experience

- A Great Place to do Business
- To develop relationships with external and internal partners and businesses

- Sustainable Communities
- To provide an inclusive and accessible theatre experience

- Net carbon zero & climate resilience
- To work towards net carbon zero 2030

Core Priorities



To provide a financially sustainable and affordable arts entertainment and hire facility for the residents of Three Rivers and beyond

- To be welcoming, friendly and to provide the community with a venue they can be proud of

- To provide an efficient and reliable service that exceeds expectations

- To improve the energy efficiency and reduce the environmental impact of the facility

- To be accessible to all

Business Plan

The Watersmeet Business plan 2024-27 sets out a clear direction for the theatre. The venue has been implementing the targets and measures detailed in the Document, with preparation beginning for the 2027-30 Business Plan.

So far Watersmeet has:

- Surpassed the KPI of 24,000, selling 28,619 tickets in 2025-26
- An improved understanding of the audience demographic
- Exceeded membership package targets of 100 members with 43% retention rate
- Continued to engage with local businesses to support their event requirements
- Worked with numerous council services to host and support awareness events
- Continued to develop relationships with local amateur dramatic societies

To view the Business Plan, please visit watersmeet.co.uk

Programming

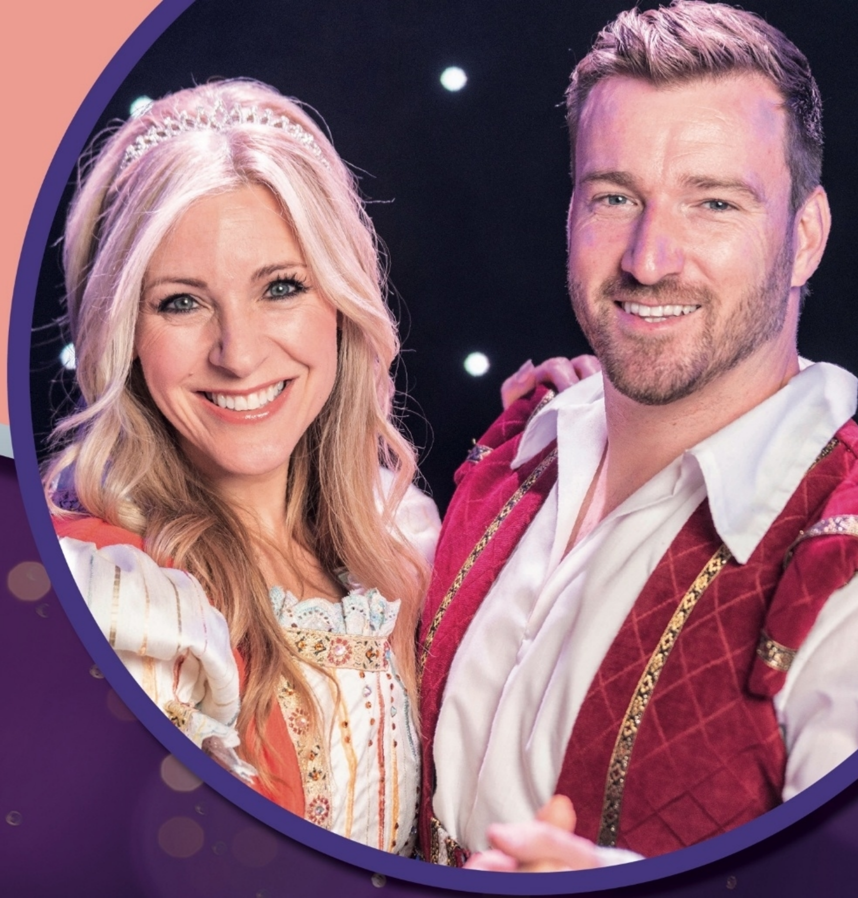
The Watersmeet Business Plan sets out the route for the venue's programming.

For live shows and productions Watersmeet prioritise:

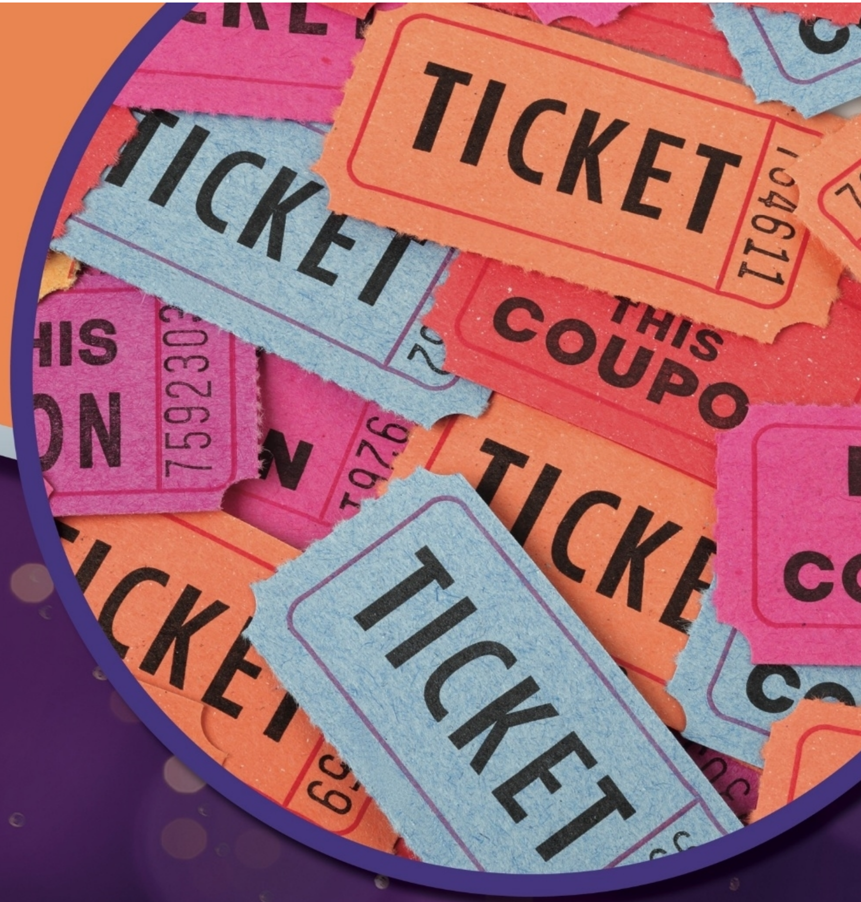
- Annual pantomime
- Commercially successful music acts and children's theatre
- New shows through co-promotion
- Films targeting the audience demographic on a regular programme with inclusion of more diverse titles to attract new audience
- Event cinema with a wide range of genres

In addition, the venue will continue to:

- Develop a well-rounded programme that appeals to a broad demographic
- Embrace the flexibility and a dynamic approach to adapt the programme



Performance 2025-26



Highlights for the 2025/26 financial year include:

- 13,440 tickets sold across 43 co-promoted live theatre shows.
- 5,048 film tickets sold across 52 titles and 24 event cinema screenings.
- 15,179 pantomime tickets sold for Beauty and the Beast starring Eddie the Eagle.
- 67 hires equating to 89 days of venue hire by local theatre groups, schools, commercial organisations and religious celebrations.

Marketing facts & figures

A structured marketing plan, tailored to each genre is in place for every event including promoted shows, film, event cinema and pantomime. In addition to this, themed marketing for children's shows, accessible performances and special screenings are carried out throughout the year.
Our digital engagement increases year-on-year (with the exception of X which is declining nationally)

	April 25	**April 26**
Website visits	261,528	327,360
Instagram	1,987	2,358
X	1,146	1,145
Facebook	2,849	3,182
Email	26,251	26,723

Financial Position

2025/26

- Net turnover of £1,004,657 resulting in a net direct cost to the council of £82,820

2024/25

- Net turnover of £1,031,123 resulting in a net direct cost to the council of £26,497

Capital Projects

Completed projects in 2025/26:

- 30 fire doors have been replaced and a further 25 have been repaired.

- The electrical intake room has been replaced and now has a prolonged life which will safeguard the reliability and compliance of electrical infrastructure in the venue

Prospective projects in 2027:

- An Outline Business Case is being prepared for a modest and necessary venue-wide refurbishment next year.

Tenants and Partners

Watersmeet Tenants:

- G2Film – occupying a section of office space behind the Watersmeet staff office
    - G2Film produced the pantomime media assets for marketing purposes

- Blooming Tulips – tenant of the venue occupying a large section of the ground floor. Meetings continue to take place to build relationships and to develop collaborative working

Partners and Close Working Groups:

- Paul Holman Associates - the pantomime producer

- Friends of Watersmeet

Community Engagement

- 4 x Artistsmeet exhibitions

- Annual Christmas Fair
    - 50 stalls, made up from 37 stall holders

- Events supported
    - 5 Sept – Croxfest
    - 28 November – Rickmansworth High Street Market
    - 30 Nov – Rickmansworth High Street Market

Tickets donated to school fairs and other community events
- 17 film tickets
- 8 family panto tickets

Participation & Accessibility

Participation

- Over 50 volunteers
- Opportunities to audition and perform in the pantomime for 16 young people

Accessibility

- Modern washroom facility
- Infrared induction hearing system including audio describe facility for up to ten patrons attending cinema
- Touch tours (for specific events including pantomime)
- Relaxed and signed pantomime performances

Sustainability & Environment

Watersmeet will continue to take steps to build on the improved energy efficiency and environmental impact of the facility contributing towards the council's Carbon Net Zero target and Corporate Framework objective.

Watersmeet has continued to take a number of steps to improve the energy efficiency and environmental impact including:

- All lighting is now LED and all lesser used rooms e.g. toilets and stores are now on sensors
- Coffee cups are 100% recyclable
- Coffee grounds and tea bags are now recycled through the council's food waste collections
- Cleaning chemicals continue to be switched to more environmentally-friendly products
- Watersmeet had cavity wall insulation installed.

Watersmeet has an energy efficiency rating of '39' (November 2025) which is a category 'B'.

Looking Ahead

- Peter Pan Pantomime 2026, starring Strictly Come Dancing’s Nadiya Bychkova

- Drive net cost to council down, with the aim of reaching a maximum surplus of £15,000.

- Introduce revenue enhancement schemes, such as “Sponsor A Seat”

- Transparent “Restoration Levy” addition to tickets, ringfenced for venue improvements as an EMR.

- Move from a 3 brochure, to 6 brochure per year, to maximise yield and taking advantage of venue wide spikes on brochure drops.

- Introduce “Order At Seat” for live shows, adding both a level of VIP experience and revenue opportunity.

- Implementation of Venue Management System, saving valuable hours and streamlining the operation.

Thank you for listening

We welcome any questions.

We are a local theatre with a big ambition.
Our future is looking bright, exciting and sustainable.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME - 11/03/2026 - 03/02/2027

WORK PROGRAMME

No.	Items to be considered	Date	Purpose of the Report	How the work will be done	Responsible Officer
1.	Control of parking on The Green	TBC			TBC
2.	Watersmeet Annual Review 2025/26	9 September 2026	A presentation on Watersmeet performance during 2025/26 financial year	Presentation	Josh Sills - Head of Communications, Customer & Culture
3.	Sport and Physical Activity Strategy	1 December 2026		Report	Ryan Watson, Sports Development Officer
4.	Rickmansworth Aquadrome Programme	1 December 2026	Update	Report	Emma Sheridan, Associate Director – Environment
5.	Service Plans	1 December 2026		Presentation and report	Rebecca Young - Head of Strategy and Partnerships
6.	P3 Budget Monitoring Report	1 December 2026		Report	Sally Riley – Finance Business Partner
7.	P6 Budget Monitoring Report	3 February 2027		Report	Sally Riley – Finance Business Partner
8.	Scotsbridge Management Plan	3 February 2027		Report	Jess Hodges - Natural Infrastructure Programme Manager

Agenda Item 7

No.	Items to be considered	Date	Purpose of the Report	How the work will be done	Responsible Officer
9.	P10 Budget Monitoring Report	23 June 2027		Report	Sally Riley – Finance Business Partner