



OFFICIAL EXECUTIVE DECISION NOTICE

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HILLINGDON
LONDON

Notice is hereby given that the following decision(s) have been made today by Cabinet Members at the London Borough of Hillingdon:

Title of decision	RURAL ACTIVITIES GARDEN CENTRE
Reference No.	1605
Date of decision	Monday 26 January 2026
Call-in expiry date	Monday 2 February 2026
Relevant Select Committee	Health & Social Care Select Committee.
Relevant Wards	Colham & Cowley, All

Decision made

Cabinet Members making the decision	Councillor Wayne Bridges, Cabinet Member for Community and Environment Councillor Jane Palmer, Cabinet Member for Health & Social Care
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Decision	Agreed That the Cabinet Member for Community & Environment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Health & Social Care: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Had regard to the findings of the public consultation, which found overall that the horticultural and gardening offer is valued and enjoyed by the adults with learning disabilities attending the RAGC site;2. Agreed that the Rural Activities Garden Centre (RAGC) will transition from its current model — which offers horticultural activities, community engagement, and vocational opportunities - to a structured day service provision that represents a shift from an open-access, activity-based approach to a service designed to deliver planned, person-centred support aligned with assessed care needs. The new model will focus on providing meaningful daytime opportunities within a framework that meets statutory requirements and will also support volunteer adults attending the site with a Learning Disability as part of a wider programme to promote individual outcomes.
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	<p>3. Agreed that the management of the RAGC transfers to the Adult Social Care & Health Directorate under Direct Care Services and is incorporated into the in-house day provision and under the management and supervision of Queens Walk Resource Centre.</p> <p>4. Noted and recognised the valued and significant voluntary contributions which have been made over a number of years and that the Council intends to review how volunteers can support in line with the new delivery model on offer at the site.</p> <p>5. Noted from the consultation exercise, the public interest in the future use of the RAGC site as one with community benefit and that any decision on such use should have regard to this feedback.</p>
Reason for decision	<p>The Rural Activities Garden Centre (RAGC) has long been established as a valued location for many adults with additional needs, providing meaningful horticultural activities, social connection, and a sense of belonging. The consultation highlighted just how important this environment is to those who use it, and these views have played an important part in shaping the proposed way forward.</p> <p>However, several challenges now make the current model difficult to sustain. Attendance by adults with assessed social care needs has reduced over time, while the cost of running the service—alongside the upkeep of an ageing site—has continued to rise significantly. The site now supports a relatively small number of people at a high cost, and major capital investment would be required to restore buildings to full use. In addition, some volunteers have been identified as having eligible care needs, meaning the Council is legally required to provide support in a structured and consistent way.</p> <p>The consultation made clear that many people feel deeply connected to the RAGC and are concerned about change. These concerns are fully understood. The intention is not to remove horticultural activities—but to ensure they can continue safely and sustainably for those who rely on them. To achieve this, the gardening offer will become part of the Adult Social Care Day Service model, enabling continued access to valued activities while also offering service users</p>

	<p>a wider range of opportunities that promote independence, wellbeing and social interaction.</p> <p>This approach helps to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect therapeutic gardening activities for adults with learning disabilities. • Provide greater stability and consistency for those with assessed care needs. • Ensure responsible use of public funds, focused on those who need support the most. • Offer broader activity choices across the Council's established day service network. • Maintain continuity for current users, including ongoing access to the RAGC during the transition. <p>Volunteers remain highly valued. Their future roles will be reviewed sensitively to ensure contributions continue to be meaningful and safe within the new structure.</p> <p>Ultimately, the change aims to preserve what residents value most about the RAGC—its sense of community, its therapeutic benefits, and its supportive environment—while ensuring services remain robust, fair and financially sustainable for the future.</p>
Alternative options considered and rejected	<p>In considering alternative options for the current horticultural and gardening offer from the RAGC site, a 'no change' option was explored. While this was the preferred option for many respondents to the consultation and is understandable given the strong attachment to the existing service, it was discounted for several reasons. Maintaining the current model would not best serve the needs of adults with learning disabilities who benefit from structured, outcomes-focused support aligned to assessed care needs.</p> <p>The existing service is financially unsustainable, with high operational costs and low attendance, and does not provide the breadth of opportunities needed to promote independence and social interaction. In contrast, the recommended day service model will deliver tailored activities designed to meet statutory obligations under the Care Act 2014, ensure better use of public resources, and offer access to a wider range of diverse opportunities. Recognising that any change can be unsettling, a carefully designed transition plan will be implemented around the needs of individual service users, including those adults with learning disabilities who currently attend the RAGC site but do not meet an assessed need.</p>
Classification	Part I – Public

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Link to associated report	Here
Relevant Officer contact & Directorate	Dan Kennedy, Corporate Director, Residents Services Sandra Taylor, Corporate Director, Adult Social Care & Health
Any interest declared by the Cabinet Member(s) / dispensation granted	N/A

Implementation of decision & scrutiny call-in

[Internal Use only]	
When can this decision be implemented by officers?	<p>Officers can implement Cabinet Member decision in this notice only from the expiry of the scrutiny call-in period which is:</p> <p>5pm on Monday 2 February 2026</p> <p>However, this is subject to the decision not being called in by Councillors on the relevant Select Committee. Upon receipt of a valid call-in request, Democratic Services will immediately advise the relevant officer(s) and the decision must then be put on hold.</p>
Councillor scrutiny call-in of this decision	<p>Councillors on the relevant Select Committee shown in this notice may request to call-in this decision. The request must be before the expiry of the scrutiny call-in period above.</p> <p>Councillors should use the Scrutiny Call-in App (link below) on their devices to initiate any call-in request. Further advice can be sought from Democratic Services if required:</p> <p>Scrutiny Call-In - Power Apps (secure)</p>
Further information	<p>These decisions, where applicable, have been taken under The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.</p> <p>This is the formal notice by the Council of the above executive decision, including links to the reports where applicable.</p> <p>If you would like more information on this decision, please contact Democratic Services on 01895 250636 or email: democratic@hillingdon.gov.uk.</p> <p>Circulation of this decision notice is to a variety of people including Members of the Council, Corporate Directors, Officers, Group Secretariats and the Public. Copies are also placed on the Council's website.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Democratic Services London Borough of Hillingdon Civic Centre High Street Uxbridge UB8 1UW</p>