



Meeting	Winchester Town Forum
Date and Time	Wednesday, 9th November, 2022 at 6.30 pm.
Venue	Walton Suite, Winchester Guildhall

Note: *This meeting is being held in person at the location specified above and the following arrangements apply. Members of the public should note that a live audio feed of the meeting will be available from the councils website (www.winchester.gov.uk) and the video recording will be publicly available on the council's YouTube channel shortly after the meeting.*

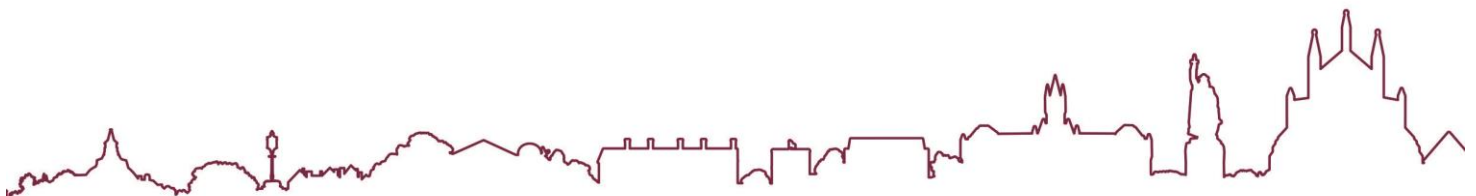
For members of the public who are unable to utilise this facility, a limited number of seats will be made available at the above named location however attendance must be notified to the council at least 3 clear working days before the meeting. Please note that priority will be given to those wishing to attend and address the meeting over those wishing to attend and observe

AGENDA

- 1. Apologies**
To record the names of apologies given
- 2. Disclosures of Interests**
To receive any disclosure of interests from Members and Officers in matters to be discussed.
Note: Councillors are reminded of their obligations to declare disclosable pecuniary interests, personal and/or prejudicial interests in accordance with legislation and the Council's Code of Conduct.

If you require advice, please contact the appropriate Democratic Services Officer, prior to the meeting.

- 3. Chairperson's Announcements**
- 4. Minutes of the previous meeting** (Pages 5 - 12)



That the minutes of the meeting adjourned on 15 September 2002 and reconvened on 22 September 2022 be signed as a correct record.

5. **Public Participation**

To receive and note the questions asked and statements made from members of the public on issues relating to the responsibility of this Forum.

Members of the public and visiting councillors may speak at the Forum, provided they have registered to speak three working days in advance. Please contact Democratic Services **by 5pm on Thursday, 3 November 2022** via democracy@winchester.gov.uk or (01962) 848 264 to register to speak and for further details.

6. **Winchester Town Account Medium Term Financial Position (WTF313)**
(Pages 13 - 24)

7. **Upgrades/Replacements to Bus Shelters (WTF312)** (Pages 25 - 36)

8. **Tree Strategy (CAB3351)** (Pages 37 - 98)

9. **Local Plan update – Regulation 18 public consultation (Presentation)**
(Pages 99 - 134)

10. **Informal Group - Verbal Update** (Pages 135 - 136)
Optional: The Chairs of any of the informal groups may briefly update the Forum on any recent developments from their group.

11. **Work Programme** (Pages 137 - 138)
To note the current version of the Work Programme for 2022/23.

Laura Taylor
Chief Executive

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1 November 2022

Agenda Contact: Claire Buchanan, Senior Democratic Services Officer
Tel: 01962 848 438 Email: cbuchanan@winchester.gov.uk

**With the exception of exempt items, Agenda, reports and previous minutes are available on the Council's [Website](#)*

MEMBERSHIP

Chairperson: Craske (Liberal Democrats)

Vice-Chairperson: Becker (Liberal Democrats)

Liberal Democrats

Batho
Edwards
Ferguson
Green
Learney
Radcliffe
Reach
Tippett-Cooper
Thompson
Tod
Westwood

Conservatives

Scott

Quorum = 5 members

The two County Council Members representing the Winchester Town area are invited as observers.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A public question and comment session is available at 6.30pm for a 15 minute period. There are a few limitations on the questions you can ask. These mainly relate to current applications (including grants), personal cases and confidential matters.

To reserve your place to speak, you are asked to register with Democratic Services three clear working days prior to the meeting –Please contact Democratic Services via democracy@winchester.gov.uk or (01962) 848 264 to register to speak and for further details.

VOTING

- apart from the Chairperson, every Member has one vote when a matter before the meeting requires a decision.
- in the event of an equality of votes, the Chairperson may exercise a casting vote and that vote may be exercised in any way seen fit.
- a Member may abstain from voting, or vote differently from how they may have indicated during the debate, without further explanation.

The way each Member voted will not be recorded in the minutes, unless a motion to have a Recorded Vote has been passed.

Disabled Access

Disabled access is normally available, but please phone Democratic Services on 01962 848 264 or email democracy@winchester.gov.uk three clear working days prior to the meeting to ensure that the necessary arrangements are in place.

FILMING AND BROADCAST NOTIFICATION

This meeting will be recorded and broadcast live on the Council's website. The meeting may also be recorded and broadcast by the press and members of the public – please see the Access to Information Procedure Rules within the Council's Constitution for further information, which is available to view on the [Council's website](#).

Public Document Pack Agenda Item 4

WINCHESTER TOWN FORUM

Thursday, 15 September 2022
(adjourned to Thursday, 22 September 2022)

Attendance:

Councillors

Craske (Chairperson)

Batho
Becker
Edwards
Ferguson
Learney

Radcliffe
Reach
Tippett-Cooper
Tod
Westwood

[Full audio recording and video recording – 15 September 2022](#)

[Full audio recording and video recording – 22 September 2022](#)

Adjourned session of Winchester Town Forum held 15 September 2022

1. CHAIRPERSON ANNOUNCEMENT - HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN

At the start of the 14 September meeting, the Chairperson announced that since the summons for this meeting was issued last week, the very sad news of the death of Her Majesty the Queen had been received. However as it was not considered appropriate for discussions of the issues on the published agenda to proceed during the period of National Mourning for Her Majesty, it was proposed that the meeting be adjourned.

The Chairperson made a brief statement to the Forum and the meeting then stood in silent tribute.

RESOLVED:

That the meeting be adjourned and reconvene on Thursday 22 September 2022 at 6.30pm

Reconvened session of Winchester Town Forum held 22 September 2022

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Green, Scott and Thompson.

3. **DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS**

Councillor Tod declared a personal (but non prejudicial) interest concerning agenda items that may be related to his role as a County Councillor.

Councillor Tippett-Cooper declared a personal (but not prejudicial) interest in respect of item 8 (Town Forum Grants Programme) as a volunteer and director of Unit 12 who were a recipient of small grants and crowdfunding.

4. **CHAIRPERSON'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairperson thanked the Forum for their attendance at the reconvened meeting.

5. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 16 JUNE 2022**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 16 June 2022 be approved and adopted.

6. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Mike Slinn (on behalf of Kings Barton Residents' Association), Chris Gilham (on behalf of the Transport Group of WinACC), Nigel Davison (on behalf of the residents of Harestock Road), Charles Crawford and Andy Key (for Cycle Winchester) spoke during public participation regarding Andover Road and road networks in the north of the city, as summarised below. In addition, Ian Tait also spoke during public participation and his comments are summarised below:

Mike Slinn made reference to the following points:

- The 'Keep Andover Road Open' petition submitted to Hampshire County Council in July 2022 and to the comments made by the 3,000 signatories.
- Residents of Weeke and Harestock as well as Kings Barton had also expressed concern that their housing estates would be used a 'rat run' following the closure of the Andover Road.
- The consequences if the Andover Road was to close including heavy traffic movement through the Kings Barton development, reductions in road use by pedestrians and cyclists and increases to noise, air pollution and carbon emissions.
- Misconceptions that roads create traffic when it should be noted that it was people that created traffic, not whether Andover Road was closed or not. The problems he suggested were being caused by people using the City Centre to and from the Andover Road as a rat run through to Junction 9 avoiding traffic congestion on alternative routes to and from the A34.

- Improvements to bus, cycling and pedestrian for the residents of Kings Barton to reduce the amount of traffic were sought.

Andy Key made reference to the following points:

- Cycle route plans rely on Andover Road not being a through road for traffic.
- He suggested that Winchester Avenue could be made a low traffic neighbourhood with reduced traffic access for vehicles as this would be a useful active travel route.
- Traffic congestion issues.
- Additional cycling friendly routes.

Chris Gilham made reference to the following points:

- Significant concern that the closure of Andover Road would increase total road traffic capacity.
- Cannot accept that Winchester's central traffic should be reduced through a policy of imposing junction congestion.
- If there was an argument for retaining Andover Road that road capacity must be constrained by other means.
- Solutions had to be about sustainable transport planning and there was continuing concern that the Winchester Movement Strategy had lost its way, with its main aim to reduce traffic currently unaltered.

Nigel Davison made reference to the following points:

- Representing several residents of Harestock Road which was the main diversion route for traffic from the M3 roadworks. He asked that consideration be given to wheelchair users with existing pavement width offering inadequate space in this area.
- Sought traffic calming, speed reduction and road maintenance repairs to be carried out along Harestock Road.

Charles Crawford made reference to the following points:

- Expressed concern regarding the 40mph speed limit along Chilbolton Avenue and Harestock Road.
- Speed limits at the top and bottom ends of Chilbolton Avenue are currently set at 30mph and the rest of the road should be reduced to the same speed limit.

In response to the highway matters raised above, the Chairperson reminded those in attendance that highways were the responsibility of Hampshire County Council. However, it was noted that Hampshire County Councillor Heron had been asked to attend the next meeting.

Councillor Tod responded to points raised during public participation in his capacity as Hampshire County Councillor. He acknowledged the concerns of

residents in relation to how the road would run from the north and general concerns regarding under specification of the road and severance points. He highlighted the importance of taking a balanced view of the issues and the need for a comprehensive road system plan for the whole of the north of Winchester that also enabled residents to choose sustainable transport.

In conclusion to points raised by the Forum, the Leader agreed to contact Hampshire Highways and Highways England on behalf of the council, to address the diversion issues being experienced across the city and to address the wider road issues in the north of Winchester.

Ian Tait made reference to the following point:

- Begging in the city centre – Mr Tait thanked that council for the actions taken in Kings Walk which had been successful. He continued to be concerned regarding the number of beggars on city centre streets and made reference to the diverted giving scheme to allow residents/visitors to deposit funds into an appropriate channel for beggars which needed further promotion to raise general awareness of its existence.

At the conclusion of public participation, the Chairperson thanked all those in attendance for their contribution.

7. **WINCHESTER TOWN ACCOUNT FINANCIAL PLANNING 2022/23 (WTF310)**

The Finance Manager (Strategic Finance) introduced the report and provided an update of the current financial position of the Winchester Town Account and financial projections over the medium and long term to support the development of a refreshed financial strategy with final budget recommendations due for consideration by Town Forum in January 2023, prior to final approval by Cabinet and Council. In addition, he stated that feedback from the Winchester Town Forum Accounts Informal Group had been incorporated within this report and that a further report on the budget options would come forward for consideration by the Town Forum at its meeting on 9 November 2022.

The Leader and the Finance Manager (Strategic Finance) responded to detailed questions from Members in relation to additional cost pressures, changes as a result of recent significant increases to inflation, the assumed town precept, the strategic use of community infrastructure levy (CIL) to address the needs of the entire district area, resource implications, anticipated forecast changes to the existing budget and budget pressures and sensitivities.

During debate, the Forum recognised the budget challenges ahead as a result of the impacts of contract inflation, general rises to costs and the additional demands on town funds and emphasised the need to prioritise, manage spending and work together as a forum going forward.

RESOLVED:

1. That the financial projections, set out in Appendix A of the report be noted and the budget timetable for 2023/24, be agreed.

8. **TOWN FORUM GRANT PROGRAMME**
(WTF311)

The Funding and Development Manager introduced the report which set out the town forum community grants awarded in 2021/22 and the grant programmes proposed for the current financial year 2022/23 and highlighted the important role of the forum in helping to increase awareness of the grant schemes on offer. The Chairperson emphasised key points including the underspend on grant funding over the last few years raising concern that the grants programme was launched too late during September. It was suggested that a rolling grant programme be explored to enable the grants to be spent throughout the year.

Councillor Batho reported that the Town Vision Informal Group would be carrying out an audit, in line with vision principles, to investigate where the money was being spent and identify good practice where successful organisations had taken advantage of the grant programme in order to identify gaps, in discussion with Town Forum Members.

The Service Lead: Community and Wellbeing and the Funding and Development Manager responded to detailed questions from Members in relation to ward areas for small grants and analysis of grants by sector, crowdfunding review, limited use of the crowdfunder, matched funding, uplifts to small grant limit awards, funding assistance and advice to raise awareness of the grant process.

The Forum welcomed the report and thanked the small grants team for an informative report.

RESOLVED:

1. That the report be received and noted; and
2. That the following be approved:
 - (i) That delegated authority be given to the Corporate Head of Economy and Community to approve the grant criteria and allocations, in consultation with the Town Forum Vision Informal Group;
 - (ii) The reopening of the small grants scheme with immediate effect with the following updates:
 - (a) Increasing the maximum award from £500 to £1,000 in response to the cost of living crisis and rising inflation; and
 - (b) Amending the criteria to include an element of core costs, where the cost of living is having an impact on the organisation.

- (iii) Reopening of the Crowdfund Winchester Town Community Fund with immediate effect until 15 November 2022, with the following update:
 - (a) Amending the criteria to include an element of core costs, where the cost of living is having an impact on the organisation.
- (iv) That the £40k grant budget be used flexibly to allocate funds between different grant programmes to meet the demand for small grants and crowdfunding.

9. **KGV NEW BUILD PAVILION - REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL BUDGET (CAB3363)**

Councillor Ferguson introduced the report which sought the forum's approval for the additional allocation of £200,000 Town CIL funding, bringing the total funding from Town CIL to £450,000, towards the cost of procurement for the new pavilion at King George V (KGV) playing fields. It was noted that the request for additional CIL funding had arisen due to the ongoing and significant escalation in building costs, labour and materials since the initial allocation of the pavilion project funding was set.

The importance to replace the two existing outdated pavilions on site with one larger sustainable modern pavilion was recognised which would contribute to the provision of a hub of quality sport venues, along with the facilities at the Winchester Sports and Leisure Park and Winchester University.

Councillor Ferguson and the Corporate Property Surveyor responded to points raised including the potential to seek additional/increases to grant funding and income streams, future sponsorship opportunities to generate revenue, the likelihood of further increases in construction costs and the district wide users and groups anticipated to use the new facility.

The Forum noted that Cabinet had considered and agreed the report at its meeting earlier in the day and welcomed the progression of the new pavilion project at KGV.

RESOLVED:

That the additional £200,000 of Town CIL funding, bringing the total funding from Town CIL to £450,000, be approved.

10. **INFORMAL GROUP - VERBAL UPDATE**

The Forum received individual updates from the Chairpersons of various Town Informal Groups. Each summarised the work that had been carried out by the respective groups over the previous two-month period.

Councillor Craske – Planning for the future in Winchester Town Group

A town forum zoom meeting had taken place on 5 September regarding the SHELAA sites which had been recorded and was available to share and view. Feedback was positive and the consultation process was due to proceed as planned with a special meeting of The Scrutiny Committee due to take place on 29 September 2022.

Councillor Radcliffe – Parks and Recreation Informal Group

North Walls River Park – It was reported that the council had adopted an ambitious ten year programme of improvements where soaring construction costs were creating challenges. Officers were working on costings towards the initial phase of planned works and carrying out a technical study.

St Giles Hill Improvements – Progress was slow with some sundry works undertaken but larger scale works remained some way off pending agreement of a new park management plan. Practical suggestions had been reported back to officers. However, due to current staffing constraints, the draft park plan had not yet been developed.

Other Updates - Work was advancing on playground improvements, the refurbishment of the Abbey Gardens play area had commenced and would take up to six months to complete. Officers had carried out a thorough consultation process to gauge what facilities/equipment should be included. Refurbishment works to the play area at North Walls Recreation Ground was due to commence in Spring 2023 and a coffee van was now stationed at the entrance to the park three days a week on a trial basis initially.

Councillor Edwards – City Centre Group.

It was noted that various works had been carried out over the last six months these included: the repair and refurbishment of high street benches, planters on blocks had been removed, litter bins would be replaced or repaired throughout the city and bin stores were being addressed. Working with Winchester Bid it was noted that there had been a concerted effort to remove graffiti and cleaning and maintenance of public toilets had been improved whilst a strategy for refurbishment was being investigated.

Councillor Tippett-Cooper – Heritage Group

He thanked Hyde 900 for the community dig weekend. The King Alfred statue had recently been waxed and cracks in his cloak were being monitored and treated. A contractor had been identified to repair the wall at Nuns stream which officers were in the process of arranging this. Pigeon proofing at Hyde Gate had improved the area. Also at Hyde Gate the structural repair and restoration work was ongoing following a summer survey carried out at the request of Historic England and the public realm work was being explored further by Cabinet and officers.

RESOLVED:

That the updates received from the Town Informal Groups, be noted.

11. **WORK PROGRAMME 2022/23**

The Forum considered the work programme for the remainder of the municipal year, 2022/23.

During discussion, Members suggested the consideration of the council's Tree Strategy and the Local Plan be added to the work programme for the November meeting. In addition, the Chairperson requested that the University of Southampton be invited to a future meeting of the Forum.

Reference was made to Multi-use Games Area (MUGA) provision and a previous request that this come forward for consideration by the Forum. However, it was noted that it had been agreed that this matter be considered by Health and Environment Policy Committee, with the report placed on their work programme for 6 December 2022.

RESOLVED:

That the 2022/23 work programme be noted, subject to the revisions set out above.

The reconvened meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and concluded at 9.10 pm

Chairperson

REPORT TITLE: WINCHESTER TOWN ACCOUNT MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL POSITION

9 NOVEMBER 2022

REPORT OF FINANCE MANAGER (STRATEGIC FINANCE)

Contact Officer: Darren Kennedy Tel No: 01962 848464 Email
dkennedy@winchester.gov.uk

WARD(S): WINCHESTER TOWN

PURPOSE

To provide an update on the current budget setting options and considerations for the four year medium term period from 2023/24 to 2026/27. This planning will enable the Town Forum to recommend a budget and precept for 2023/24 to Cabinet in January 2023.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Identify any budget issues to consider further in advance of recommending a Town Account Budget to Cabinet in January.
2. Consider any feedback to Cabinet in relation to the wider budget consultation.

IMPLICATIONS:

1 COUNCIL PLAN OUTCOME

- 1.1 This report sets out the current financial position including the latest medium term financial projections. Budget options will be considered in line with the Council Plan.

2 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1 Identifying and analysing the financial risks and pressures helps to ensure the effective prioritisation of resources in order to deliver the Council Plan and maintain a balanced budget.

3 LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 None identified

4 WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None

5 PROPERTY AND ASSET IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This paper reflects the budgets and funding associated with town assets such as play areas and sports facilities.

6 CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

- 6.1 This report has been discussed with the town account informal group, relevant staff and advisors.

7 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 Environmental considerations will be part of the business case supporting any budget proposals.

8 PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

- 8.1 None

9 DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 9.1 None

10 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 10.1 The main source of funding for baseline recurring expenditure is the town precept. As a stable source of funding overall financial risk is therefore relatively low but consideration must be taken of the requirement for the town

to keep within government referendum limits (a restriction not currently applicable to parish councils).

- 10.2 In recent years one-off expenditure (capital or revenue) has been funded up-front from the town reserve or external funding. This policy needs review due to the current financial estimates and pressures from both inflation and unavoidable growth.

Risk	Mitigation	Opportunities
<i>Failure to set a balanced budget over the medium term.</i>	<i>Financial projections are shown up until 2026/27 and the scenario planning highlights the potential sensitivities. Planning over a longer period will help to ensure understanding of the scale of the financial challenges and early planning enables enough lead in time for the implementation of the budget options.</i>	<i>Long term strategic planning. Innovative funding streams. Transformational efficiency savings.</i>
<i>Council's service priorities are not reflected in the budget.</i>	<i>The budget planning process, including the process of outcome based budgeting and the informal account group meetings which review the detailed budgets and strategy.</i>	<i>Ensure the prioritisation of resources to best meet the outcomes of the authority.</i>
<i>High levels of contractual inflation and the continuation of current precept referendum limits.</i>	<i>Medium term financial planning and sensitivity analysis highlighting the challenges posed by high inflation.</i>	<i>Transformational efficiency savings.</i>

11 SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

Background

- 11.1 WTF310 Winchester Town Account Financial Planning 2023/24 introduced the budget setting process, the key principles, and updated medium term financial projections to 2026/27.

- 11.2 The Winchester Town Forum (Informal Account) Group met in October 2022 in order to establish the key focus of the budget process and any priority resource considerations to bring back to the Town Forum.

Winchester Town Precept

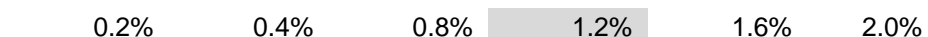
- 11.3 The town precept for 2022/23 was set at £76.71 (per band D property). The decision on the level of council tax for 2023/24 will be taken at Council in February.
- 11.4 The town will need to consider its proposed strategy for the Town Precept but will need to bear in mind that any decisions will be subject to 'referendum limits' and may be impacted by decisions taken on the level of district Council tax.
- 11.5 It is currently anticipated that the overall referendum limit for the Council in 2023/24 will remain at either 2% or £5, as was set for 2022/23. This would mean the maximum district and town increase would be c2.9% (with the maximum increase for the town or district interrelated with each other, for example if the district increased by a lower percentage then the town could increase by a higher percentage and still remain within the overall referendum limit).
- 11.6 The potential additional annual income generated by increasing the Town Precept is shown in the table below. The financial projections in Appendix A currently assume a 3% increase.

Effect of increasing the Town Precept 2023/24*

% MAX District Increase	% TOWN Precept Increase	Additional Income £000	Precept
	0%		£76.71
	1%	11	£77.48
2.90%	2.90%	32	£78.93
2.85%	3.00%	33	£79.01
2.70%	4.00%	44	£79.78
2.50%	5.50%	61	£80.93
2.00%	9.00%	99	£83.61

* To note these estimates are prior to finalisation of the council tax base for 2023/24 so are subject to change.

- 11.7 The forecasts are currently calculated using an average increase in properties of 1.2% per annum. The final budget will be updated when the forecast Council Tax Base is approved in December. The effect of increases to the base on income are illustrated below:



Increase in Properties	29	58	115	173	230	288
Increase in Council Tax (£000)	2	5	9	14	18	23

Budget Review 2023/24

11.8 As highlighted in September's financial planning paper (WTF310), the town account is facing significant financial pressures due to high levels of forecast contractual inflation and additional revenue budget pressures. Detailed consideration of the potential budget options is needed to ensure a balanced budget is able to be set for 2023/24 as well as ensuring an adequate town reserve balance over the medium term.

11.9 Appendix 1 shows the latest forecasts including the growth bids identified in 11.12 below. Savings of £112k to be identified for 2023/24 or £156k per annum over the four year period to the end of 2026/27, in order to maintain the reserve target balance of 10%.

	2023/2024 Forecast	2024/2025 Forecast	2025/2026 Forecast	2026/2027 Forecast
Forecast reserve balances	(5,631)	221,662	352,521	494,402
Shortfall to 10% Reserve Target	111,808	344,302	478,482	623,686

11.10 Given the scale of the financial challenge the informal accounts group have highlighted a number of areas for review and welcome feedback from the wider town forum on which options should be considered further ahead of recommending a budget in January:

- a) A review of the play area refurbishment programme is underway in order to determine what options are available within the current programme. Whilst still at very early stages it is likely that options will involve the decommissioning of one or two underused play areas, adaptation of the current programme where some existing equipment remains in good working order, and the potential to delay one or two projects. The focus of the review is to continue to maintain a high standard of play areas within the town area but to consider both the best use of funds and the environmental impact of replacements.
- b) Review the current capital funding strategy in order to determine whether to fund the play area refurbishment programme from borrowing rather than the town reserve. This could improve the town reserve position over the four year medium term period by between £200k - £250k. Whilst this is not a saving because the borrowing would be repaid in full plus interest, it would significantly improve reserves in the medium term and mean savings could be identified over a much longer timeframe.

- c) Increase the precept by more than the current estimate of 3%. The ability to do this would depend on the district precept for 2023/24, examples are shown in 11.6 above.
- d) Review all discretionary budgets in order to prioritise resources. This could mean either permanent or temporary reductions to certain discretionary spend. Discretionary budgets are considered to be:
 - i. Grants bidding process and vision delivery - £33k
 - ii. Theatre Royal - £20k. Consideration to be given that this grant award has been offered in principle to the end of 2024/25, subject to budget availability.
 - iii. Night Bus contribution - £10,935.
 - iv. Additional recreation grounds and open spaces budget (approved in February 2022) - £50k.
- e) Recreation and Open Spaces net expenditure accounts for almost 70% of the total town budget and therefore a review is planned to obtain a better understanding of the areas of expenditure (for example is it possible to obtain data on different types of sports) and whether there are options to reduce the current contractual expenditure. Reducing contractual expenditure would need to be within the scope of the existing contract and it is likely that detailed options will not be ready for January Town Forum meeting.
- f) Review the growth bids that have been identified in 11.12 below and either reject or reduce these proposals.
- g) A review of fees and charges covering cemeteries and open spaces. Whilst it is anticipated there is limited scope to generate significant additional income it is important to ensure that fees are appropriately benchmarked on an annual basis to ensure they are set at the right level.

11.11 The following budget growth proposals have been identified during the budget review process:

- a) Urgent tree maintenance expenditure is rapidly increasing after being identified during the current tree survey programme. A proposal has been made which estimates that additional town expenditure of £21,864 is required in 2022/23 and then subsequently £11,864 from 2023/24 onwards.
- b) A review of bus shelters has been undertaken and WTF312 identifies additional budget requirements of £10k per annum from 2023/24.

11.12 Along with the options above it is important not to lose sight of the below priorities, which may have medium and long term financial implications on the town account:

- a) The Vision for Winchester 2030 (update per WTF300) details an ambitious plan to help shape the future of the city over the next ten years. Whilst not all elements of the plan will require a financial contribution, it is clear that resources will be required over the medium term.
- b) The town is committed to the development of high quality sports provision, with two major sports pavilion projects planned at North Walls and KGV. Both of these projects are likely to require both capital and ongoing revenue resources. The financial projections will be updated as soon as these details are known and approved.

11.13 **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)** – the Neighbourhood CIL (Town) receivable balance stood at £1.209m as at April 2022. Commitments include £0.295m towards North Walls Pavilion; £0.250m towards KGV Pavilion, £0.099m Fencing and Floodlighting improvements at North Walls; £0.050m towards a proposal from Abbots Barton Scouts; £0.073m towards Weeke access road; and a £0.010m Milland road bid.

- The principles for spending the Winchester Town Forum's share of CIL were approved in November 2016 (see WTF245), in order to provide for the community led improvement of the environment and infrastructure in the Winchester Town.
- A budget of £100k has been set for 2022/23 in order to progress the awarding and payment of CIL contributions to agreed projects. Consideration is to be given as to whether a similar budget should be set for 2023/24.
- Planning is underway to understand the facilities required at North Walls after the closure of River Park Leisure Centre. Additional infrastructure plans will be considered for CIL funding allocations.
- Based on historic receipts around £150k to £200k of town CIL is expected per annum. There are risks around relying on this funding as reductions in development in the town area or changes to the CIL scheme could significantly impact on future receipts. As such this future forecast is used for planning purposes but is not to be committed to schemes as certain funding.

11.14 The following central case assumptions have been used in the financial forecast shown in Appendix 1:

	2022/2023 Forecast	2023/2024 Forecast	2024/2025 Forecast	2025/2026 Forecast
Assumptions:				
Contract inflation	7%	10%	5%	4%
Utilities	200%	5%	5%	5%
Percentage increase in tax	3%	3%	3%	3%
Tax Base	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%

11.15 The sensitivity of the above assumptions is as follows:

- a) Contract Inflation is around £6k per 1%. If inflation were 15% for 2023/24 then this would cost an additional £30k per annum.
- b) Utilities costs were approximately £11k in 2021/22 so a 200% forecast increase for 2022/23 is an additional cost of £22k per annum.
- c) A 1% precept increase generates additional funding of c£11k per annum.
- d) A 1.2% tax base increase generates additional funding of c£13k per annum. Whilst 1.2% is a reasonable long term forecast increase per annum, there can be significant year-on-year deviations to this average.

Capital Expenditure

11.16 Capital expenditure is either funded directly from the Town Account Earmarked Reserve, external funding such as CIL, or through the General Fund and repaid over the life of the asset (along with interest).

11.17 In January 2017 (WTF250) the Town Forum approved a strategy to fund the long term requirements of the play area refurbishment up until the end of 2024/25, from the Town Account Earmarked Reserve. Play area refurbishments in the town make up the largest proportion of town capital expenditure as shown below.

11.18 The following budgets are currently included within the capital programme:

- i. Changing Pavilion North Walls - £800k total budget (£727k remaining 2022/23 budget) funded by CIL of £295k, S106 Open Space funding of £256k, £205k external funding and Winchester Town Reserve of £44k.
- ii. King George V Pavilions - £228k of S106 Open Space funding has been earmarked towards this project as well as £250k of Town CIL.

- iii. Play Area Refurbishments - £834k from 2022/23 to 2025/26. A baseline projection of £150k per annum has been included in Appendix A from 2026/27 onwards.
- iv. North Walls floodlight and fencing upgrade - £99k funded by Town CIL (of which £72k remaining to spend in 22/23).
- v. North Walls tennis courts surface upgrade - £150k funded by annual capital financing costs.

Reserves

- 11.19 The Winchester Town Account earmarked reserve is available to support planned one-off expenditure over the medium term as well as a contingency balance of 10% of the total annual net expenditure which is set aside to deal with any urgent / unexpected requirements.
- 11.20 The current forecasts in Appendix 1 show a large reserve deficit building up to over £494k by the end of 2026/27. This must be addressed through the budget process and specifically through the budget options identified above.
- 11.21 The increased risks identified in this report and caused mainly by contractual inflation have led the informal accounts group to consider whether a 10% balance remains sufficient. An increase to 15% would give a greater buffer from any risks and uncertainties but would also further increase the already challenging budget process. One option could be to target an increase to 15% over the medium term in order to give time to put the strategy into action.
- 11.22 Currently the capital budget forecasts listed above, particularly the significant programme of play area refurbishments are planned to be funded from the Town reserve. It is therefore important that long term planning ensures funding is in place to support these projects.
- 11.23 It should be noted that the forecast reserve balance shown in Appendix 1 does fluctuate on a year-by-year basis and individual end of year balances are impacted by 'lumpy' one-off expenditure such as the play area refurbishments.

12 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 12.1 None, this paper sets out the current financial position

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:-

Previous Committee Reports:-

Winchester Town Account Financial Planning – WTF310 – September 2022

Town Account Budget for 2022/23 – WTF306 – January 2022

Other Background Documents:-

None

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1: Medium Term Financial Projections

WINCHESTER TOWN ACCOUNT - Financial Projections

	2021/22 Outturn	2022/2023 Original Estimate	2022/2023 Forecast	2023/2024 Forecast	2024/2025 Forecast	2025/2026 Forecast	2026/2027 Forecast
Assumptions:							
Contract inflation			7.0%	10.0%	5.0%	4.0%	2.0%
Utilities			100%	5%	5%	5%	5%
Percentage increase in tax			4.5%	3%	3%	3%	3%
Tax Base			14,387	14,560	14,734	14,911	15,090
Cost of Services							
Recurring Budgets:							
Allotments	(3,879)	(1,864)	(4,000)	(4,000)	(4,000)	(4,000)	(4,000)
Bus Shelter Cleaning / Maintenance / New Provision	7,516	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Cemeteries	81,252	41,520	86,163	98,028	102,039	106,180	110,455
Christmas Lights	7,500	9,463	7,500	7,500	7,500	7,500	7,500
Neighbourhood Service Officers (Contribution)	45,000	45,000	45,000	45,000	45,000	45,000	45,000
Footway Lighting	19,078	21,540	30,357	31,127	31,936	32,786	33,678
Citizen's Advice Grant	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
Other Grants	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000
Grants Bidding Process and Vision Delivery	0	33,000	33,000	33,000	33,000	33,000	33,000
- Theatre Royal (Contribution)	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
Support Costs for Grant Scheme	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Maintenance Work to Council Owned Bridges	4,637	5,500	5,500	5,500	5,500	5,500	5,500
Night Bus Contribution	5,360	10,629	10,935	12,029	12,630	13,136	13,398
Public Conveniences (Contribution)	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
Recreation Grounds & Open Spaces	663,120	675,684	719,274	749,216	795,800	823,505	851,317
Recreation Grounds & Open Spaces - Additional Tree Maintenance			20,000				
Recreation Grounds & Open Spaces - Tennis Courts		0	0	9,000	9,000	9,000	9,000
Recreation Grounds & Open Spaces - Additional Budget		50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
Town Forum Support	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Budget Options 2023/24							
Recreation Grounds & Open Spaces - Additional Tree Maintenance			21,864	11,864	11,864	11,864	11,864
Bus Shelter Maintenance and Renewals				10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Total Recurring Budgets	933,584	1,004,472	1,139,593	1,172,264	1,224,270	1,257,470	1,290,712

	2021/22 Outturn	2022/2023 Original Estimate	2022/2023 Forecast	2023/2024 Forecast	2024/2025 Forecast	2025/2026 Forecast	2026/2027 Forecast
One-off Budgets:							
St Maurice's Covert	5,787						
Community Infrastructure Local Plan		100,000	100,000				
	25,000						
Total One-off Budgets	30,787	100,000	100,000				
Total Cost of Services*	964,371	1,104,472	1,239,593	1,172,264	1,224,270	1,257,470	1,290,712
<i>*To note that Cost of Services includes staff costs of approximately £390k in total in 2022/23</i>							
Taxation and Non-specific grant income							
Council Tax Income	(1,006,776)	(1,103,623)	(1,103,623)	(1,150,353)	(1,199,078)	(1,249,850)	(1,302,724)
Interest on Balances	(3,272)	(1,816)	(1,539)	(556)	(50)	1,076	1,720
Total Taxation and Non-specific grant income	(1,010,048)	(1,105,439)	(1,105,162)	(1,150,910)	(1,199,128)	(1,248,774)	(1,301,005)
Transfers to/(from) Earmarked reserves							
(Surplus added to Reserves) / Deficit taken from Reserves	(45,677)	(967)	134,431	21,355	25,142	8,696	(10,293)
Capital Expenditure funded by Town Reserve	84,000	310,000	310,000	80,000	200,000	120,000	150,000
Release from Town Community Infrastructure Levy Reserve		(100,000)	(100,000)				
Opening Reserve Balance (at 1st April)	(386,526)	(363,274)	(455,699)	(111,268)	(9,914)	215,228	343,925
Closing Reserve Balance (carried forward)	(348,203)	(154,241)	(111,268)	(9,914)	215,228	343,925	483,632
Closing Reserves forecast as % of net expenditure (Target = 10%)	36%	15%	10%	1%	-18%	-27%	-37%
TAX							
Tax at Band D			£76.71	£79.01	£81.38	£83.82	£86.33
Increase over previous year (£)			£3.30	£2.30	£2.37	£2.44	£2.51
Sensitivity							
Council tax % increase required to fund £10,000 expenditure				0.90%			
Council tax £ increase required to fund £10,000 expenditure				£0.69			
+/- 1% increase in Council Tax (£'s)				£11,169			
Band D equivalent (£) per +/- 1% increase in Council Tax				£0.77			

REPORT TITLE: TOWN BUS SHELTERS

9 NOVEMBER 2022

REPORT OF CABINET MEMBER: COUNCILLOR LEARNEY, CABINET MEMBER
FOR CLIMATE EMERGENCY

Contact Officer: Sara Davies Tel No: 01962 848241 Email
sdavies@winchester.gov.uk

WARD(S): TOWN

PURPOSE

This report provides an update on bus shelters following an assessment of all bus shelters in the town area and seeks approval for additional budget to refurbish and replace ageing bus shelters.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That Members consider the requirement for an additional revenue budget of £10,000 pa to refurbish and replace bus shelters as set out in this report. This will go forward as a budget option for final approval at Council in February 2023.

IMPLICATIONS:**1 COUNCIL PLAN OUTCOME**

- 1.1 Tackling the Climate Emergency and Creating a Greener District
- 1.2 To encourage more people to leave their cars at home and use public transport, the infrastructure has to be of good quality. Increasing numbers to walk, cycle or use public transport will help targets for clean air and to become carbon neutral.
- 1.3 Vibrant Local Economy
- 1.4 Good quality public transport infrastructure contributes to the local economy, encouraging more visitors and residents to use public transport into the Town.
- 1.5 Living Well
- 1.6 Better quality public transport infrastructure may encourage residents to walk to their local bus stop rather than driving into the Town. Residents are living longer and improved bus infrastructure may help them live independently for longer.
- 1.7 Your Services, Your Voice
- 1.8 These measures will help to improve the attractiveness of public transport.

2 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1 This report seeks approval for an annual £10,000 revenue fund (which would be an additional requirement on the Town Account) to refurbish and replace the shelters.
- 2.2 The current budget from the town forum for the cleaning, maintenance and new provision of bus shelters is £10,000 per annum. The Council's Special Maintenance team spend around £7,000 of this budget on cleaning the Town Forum bus shelters. The rest of the annual £10,000 budget is spent on maintenance and repairs to these bus shelters. As such no effective provision is currently made for new and replacement shelters.
- 2.3 The following table sets out the funding requirements in order to repair, maintain and replace shelters as required.

Funding Year	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29 and beyond
Existing Annual	£10k	£10k	£10k	£10k	£10k	£10k

cleaning & maintenance budget (subject to inflationary increases)						
Additional funding needed for repairing and replacing shelters	£10k	£10k	£10k	£10k	£10k	£10k

3 LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 All associated procurement will be carried out in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and the Public Contract Regulations 2015 (PCR2015) as appropriate.

4 WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Delivery of the programme will be managed by existing staff.

5 PROPERTY AND ASSET IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 No new sites are recommended as part of this report. All bus shelters being replaced on the same site. All sites are part of the public highway.

6 CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

- 6.1 Consultation with Hampshire County Council (HCC) has been carried out and will continue throughout the work. HCC hold a master copy of all public transport infrastructure in the county, which will be updated as refurbishment and replacement work is undertaken.

7 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 Improvements to public transport infrastructure could increase passenger numbers on public transport and a decrease in the number of short journeys in the Town taken by private vehicle. Opportunities to consider green roofs will be considered as part of the works depending upon the type and location of the shelter.

8 PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

8.1 All replacement bus shelters and improvements will be carried out in on existing sites. No changes in locations.

9 DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

9.1 None required

10 RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk	Mitigation	Opportunities
Financial Exposure Lack of fund to improve public transport infrastructure	Refurbishment of shelters reduces the costs to the Council of maintenance associated with the older bus shelters, rather than replacement.	Identify ongoing maintenance/ budget to be rolled over annually.
Exposure to challenge	The Council's procurement processes will be followed.	
Innovation Refurbish shelters with newer bus shelter materials	Since the shelters were installed, lighter and stronger materials are now used. Consideration will be given to sustainable measures such as green roofs and their suitability depending upon the type of shelter and the locations.	Use newer bus shelter materials that maybe more durable.
Reputation Failure to improve public transport infrastructure undermines Council's commitment to sustainable transport options.	Look to improve bus shelters as soon as possible to give community a better experience of public transport.	
Achievement of outcome Failure to improve bus shelters may lead to faster deterioration and more shelters needing	Gather costs for repairing and replacement shelters in advance. When the funding is realised, a purchase order can be ordered.	Encourage more people to use public transport with the improved infrastructure.

replacement rather than refurbishment		
Property Bus shelters that need to be improved are on highway land	Engagement with HCC Public Transport infrastructure team is on-going.	
Community Support Lack of refurbishment may lead to criticism.	Look to improve bus shelters as soon as possible to give community a better experience of public transport.	
Timescales The improvements are dependent on then funding.	Gather costs for repairing and replacement shelters in advance. When the funding is realised, a purchase order can be ordered.	
Project capacity Insufficient staff resources to implement improvements	Resources will be found in existing team.	
Other		

11 SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

11.1 Introduction

11.2 The Town Forum is responsible for 62 bus shelters across the 5 Town wards. Details of the shelters and those in need of refurbishment and/ or replacement is set out in Appendix 1.

11.3 The shelters are cleaned twice a year and maintained as and when a problem occurs. However, some of these shelters are now over 30 years old and some are now in need of significant repair or complete replacement.

11.4 Bus shelters have only been replaced when they have been damaged by vehicles or by vandalism. The most recent replacement bus shelter cost £5k in 2020.

11.5 The ongoing budget from the town forum for cleaning, maintenance and replacement is £10k per annum.

11.6 Special Maintenance charge £7,200 per annum to clean the Town Forum bus shelters twice a year. The £2,800 left is for general bus shelter maintenance.

11.7 Therefore the budget is depleted and any shelter in need of replacement would not have funding. A supplementary budget is therefore proposed for a refurbishment and replacement shelter fund.

11.8 Details of Proposal

11.9 A detailed survey and assessment has been carried as set out in Appendix 1 of this report. Out of the 62 shelters, 13 are in a poor state and 4 of these need replacing and the other 9 can be repaired.

11.10 The costs of repairing the 9 shelters is approximately £15k. The cost of a new cantilever shelter is approximately £5k each with additional costs incurred for traffic management during the installation of the shelter.

11.11 Replacement Locations:

- Cromwell Road opposite Sports Club
- Andover Road adjacent to North Hill Close
- Andover Road adjacent to Jolly Farmer pub
- Hillside Road, Teg Down

11.12 Locations in need of repair:

- St Cross Road
- North Walls
- Upper High Street
- Wavell Way x 2
- Cromwell Road
- Teg Down Meads
- Stockbridge Road

11.13 The installation of the new shelters and repairing of the older shelters will be phased over 5 years.

12 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

12.1 Continued degradation of the shelters may lead them to become a safety issue for the public. The shelters could be removed but in order to encourage

public transport use and help tackle the climate emergency, the shelters should be refurbished or replaced rather than removed completely.

- 12.2 Some initial consideration has been given to entering into a commercial contract whereby shelters could be provided in lieu of advertisements. This may have limited potential due to the location of the shelters.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:-

Previous Committee Reports:-

None.

Other Background Documents:-

None.

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1: Town Forum Bus Shelter Inventory

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Appendix 1

NAPTAN_ID	Location	Eastings	Northings	Responsibility	Type (Enclosed, Cantilever)	Roof (pitched, Barrel, Flat)	Manufacturer (Queensbury, Glasdon, Astolat)	RTI	Seats (Flip, Perch, bench)	End panel Type (Full, Half, Quarter, None)	Shelter Size W*H*D	Colour	Electrical Supply	Bus Stop Flag	Installation Date	Structural condition in 2022
	Park & Ride 9 Shelters															
1900HAA19763	Barfield Close opp ATS	448697	128646	Town Forum (WCC)	3 Bay C/Lever P&R Barrel Roof	Barrel	Externiture	Yes	Bench no arms	None	3060mm*1300mm	Green	Yes	Yes	2020	Good
1900HA110070	Barfield Close o/s Chesil Lodge	448734	129089	Town Forum (WCC)	C/Lever Arun	Barrel	GW Shelters	No	4 seats	None	2060mm	Black	No	No	2018	Good
1900HA110103	City Road, o/s Job centre	447992	129886	Town Forum (WCC)	P&R Enclosed	Barrel	Queensbury		4 green seats	2 full end panels		Green	No	Yes	1994	Good
1900HA110066	Silver Hill	448288	129463	Town Forum (WCC)	P&R C\Lever	Barrel	Queensbury	Yes	6 seats no arms	2 Half Panels	3930mm*1515mm	Black	Yes	Yes	2017	Good
1900HA110102	North Walls	448315	129783	Town Forum (WCC)	P&R Enclosed	Barrel	Queensbury	No	6 green seats	2 full end panels		Green	Maybe	Yes	1994	Structurally sound but all clamps and retainers need replacing.
1900HA110108	Railway Station, South Side	447804	129969	Town Forum (WCC)	P&R C\Lever	Reverse Pitch	Trueform	No	8 seats with arms	1 half and 1 3/4 panel	5175mm*1700mm approx	Grey	No	Yes		Good, vandalised by graffiti
1900HA110111	Railway Station, North Side	447825	129983	Town Forum (WCC)	P&R C\Lever	Reverse Pitch	Trueform	No	8 seats with arms	2 half and 1 3/4 panel	5175mm*1700mm approx	Grey	No	Yes		Good, vandalised by graffiti
1900HA110015	Romsey Road Pitt Park & Ride	445643	128312	Town Forum (WCC)	4 Bay Enclosed	Barrel	Queensbury	Yes	8 seats no arms	2 Full end Panels	4060mm*1350mm	Green	Yes	Yes Post	2015	Good
1900HA110100	Upper High street.	447734	129666	Town Forum (WCC)	P&R Enclosed	Barrel	Queensbury	Yes	4 seats no arms	2 full end panels	3070mm*1560mm	Green	Yes	Yes	1994	Replacement needed of: of 1 roof end, 1 polycarboate side, all clamps and vertical ratiners.
	Andover Road 3 Shelters															
1900HA110238	Andover Road, opp Mountbatten Court	447344	131293	Town Forum (WCC)	Enclosed	Pitched	?	No	Bench	Full	3800 x 2600 x 1400	Black	Yes	Yes	1983	All polycarbonate sides need replacing. Top rail in need of replacement.
1900HA110186	Andover Road, adjacent to North hill close	447750	130484	Town Forum (WCC)	C\Lever	Flat	?	No	Flip	None	3000 x 2250 x 1300	Brown	No	Yes	1992	Replacement shelter needed.
1900HA110185	Andover Road, o/s Jolly Farmer	447748	130469	Town Forum (WCC)	C\Lever	Flat	?	No	Flip	None	3000 x 2250 x 1300	Brown	No	Yes	1992	Replacement shelter needed.
	Stanmore 12 Shelters															
1900HA110015	Cromwell road op Stuarts Crescent	447316	128702	Town Forum (WCC)	2 Bay Arun Enclosed	Pitched	GW Shelters	No		Full End Panels	2000mm*1380mm	Black	No	Yes Post	2020	Good
1900HA110017	Minden Way nr Walpole Road	446166	128488	Town Forum (WCC)	Enclosed	Barrel	Queensbury	No	6 seats	Full End Panels	6060mm*1560mm	Green	No	Yes		Good
1900HA110005	Stanmore Lane o/s 64	446890	128342	Town Forum (WCC)	Enclosed	Flat	Glasdon	No	2 Bay perch seats	Half End Panels	2180*610mm	Green	No	None	2019	Good
1900HA110097	Stanmore Lane, opp School, adj Kings Ave	447218	128260	Town Forum (WCC)	C\Lever	Flat	Painted metal	No	2 fold down seats	None	2540mm*1540mm	Metal Grey	No	Yes	1981	Scruffy looking, graffiti but no corrosion. Consider replacing seats.
1900HA110033	Cromwell rd junction with The Valley, o/s club	446920	128546	Town Forum (WCC)	Arun C\Lever	Pitched	Queensbury	No	Perch	None	2640*1380	Black	No	Yes	2015	Good
1900HA110034	Cromwell road jun Stanmore Lane	446869	128370	Town Forum (WCC)	Durham C\Lever	Flat	Queensbury	No	None	None	2265mm	Brown	No	None	1977	Replace bottom rail and top rail clamps.
1900HA110032	Cromwell road, opp Sports Club	446924	128536	Town Forum (WCC)	Warwick C\Lever	Flat	Queensbury	No	4 flip seat	None	3335mm	Brown	No	Yes		Replacement shelter needed.
1900HA110029	The Valley, Bailey Close, Stanmore	446482	128731	Town Forum (WCC)	Enclosed	Barrel	Queensbury	No	6 perch (2 missing)	Full	4060mm*1340mm	Brown	No	None		Good
1900HA110031	The Valley, junc Octava Hill, Stanmore	446882	128595	Town Forum (WCC)	C\Lever	Flat	Queensbury	No	2 seats no arms	None	2270mm	Brown	No	None		Good
1900HA110028	The Valley	446639	128666	Town Forum (WCC)	C\Lever	Flat	Queensbury	No	2 seats no arms	None	2270mm	Brown	No	Flag		Good
1900HA110021	Wavel Way, junc Cobbett Close	446434	128205	Town Forum (WCC)	Durham C\Lever	Flat	Queensbury	No	2 Fold Down Seats	None	2.265	Brown	None	None	1994	Replace entire top rail with brackets. Replace seat.
1900HA110020	Wavell Way, Jun Minden way	446173	128104	Town Forum (WCC)	Warwick Enclosed	Flat	Queensbury	No	3 Fold Down Seats	Full end panels	3.3m*1.16m	Brown	None	Yes		Replacement needed of entire front bottom rail, brackers and top clamps.
	Weeke 10 Shelters															
1900HA110223	Bereweek Ave nr Westman Road	447125	131029	Town Forum (WCC)	Enclosed	Barrel	Queensbury	No	6 Seats no arms	Full	3060mm*1340mm	Green	No	Yes		Good
1900HA110230	Bereweek Ave opp Vernham Road	447175	130847	Town Forum (WCC)	Enclosed	Barrel	Queensbury	No	Seats no arms	Full	3060mm*1340mm	Green	No	Yes		Good
1900HA110229	Bereweek Ave, junc Bereweek Rd.	447294	130471	Town Forum (WCC)	Enclosed	Barrel	Queensbury	No	Perch	Full	2500 x 3050 x 1200	Green	No	Yes	2017	Good
1900HA110219	Fromond Road, nr Westman Road Weeke	446646	130858	Town Forum (WCC)	C\Lever	Flat	?	No	Flip	None	3000 x 2250 x 1300	Brown	No	Yes		Good

1900HA110222	Stoney Lane op St Mathews Road	446774	130869	Town Forum (WCC)	Enclosed	Pitched	?	No	Perch	Full	3000 x 2600 x 1200	Black	No	No	1993	Good. Awaiting relocation too Andover Road.
1900HA110209	Taplings Road o/s no 51	446674	131156	Town Forum (WCC)	Enclosed	Barrel	?	No	Seats no arms	Full	3000 x 2450 x 1600	Green	No	Yes		Good
1900HA110208	Taplings Road, o/s no 20	446890	131215	Town Forum (WCC)	Enclosed	Flat	Queensbury	No	2 seats no arms	Full	3300 x 2450 x 1200	Brown	No	Yes		Good
1900HA110168	Worthy Road, op Park Close	448315	130807	Town Forum (WCC)	C\Lever	Flat	?	No	Flip	Half	2700 x 2300 x 1350	Green	No	Yes	1990	Good
1900HAA91044	Worthy Road Near Hyde St	448049	130290	Town Forum (WCC)	C\Lever	Pitched	Queensbury	No	Perch	None	2460mm	Black	No	Yes		Good
	Worthy Road, o/s Winchester Hotel	448014	130236	Town Forum (WCC)	C\Lever	Pitched	Queensbury	No	Perch	None	2460mm	Black	No	Yes		Good
Stockbridge 8 Shelters																
1900HA110148	Stockbridge Road nr Bereweek Road	447051	130256	Town Forum (WCC)	Warwick C\Lever	Flat	Queensbury	No	2 Seats no arms	None	3340mm	Brown	No	Yes		Replace all clamps, rubber and roof dropper.
1900HAA09130	Stockbridge Road opp Cranworth Road	447662	130017	Town Forum (WCC)	C\Lever	Pitched	?	No	perch	None	2640mm	Black	No	Yes		Good
1900HA110152	Dean Lane	446443	130537	Town Forum (WCC)	C\Lever	Pitched	?	No	Perch	None	2650 x 2600 x 1400	Black	No	Yes		Good
1900HA110145	Stockbridge road, op Western Road	447431	130014	Town Forum (WCC)	Durham C\Lever	Flat	?	No	Flip	None	2600 x 2350 x 1400	Brown	No	Yes	1993	Replace top rail brackets and rubber. Replace bottom rail clamps and rubber.
1900HA110154	Teg Down Meads o/s no 66	446430	130529	Town Forum (WCC)	C\Lever	Flat	Queensbury	No	Perch	None	2600 x 2350 x 1400	Brown	No	Yes		Replacement of clamps and rubber.
1900HA110160	Hillside Road	446121	130404	Town Forum (WCC)	C\Lever	Flat	?	No	Flip	Quarter	4100 x 2300 x 1300	Brown	No	No		Replacement shelter needed. Awaiting confirmation of Stagecoach's commitment to service no.4 before replacing.
1900HA110157	Grovelands Road	445860	130316	Town Forum (WCC)	Enclosed	Barrel	?	No	Bench	Full	4050 x 2540 x 1350	Brown	Yes	Yes		Good
1900HA110149	Sermon Road	446121	130404	Town Forum (WCC)	C\Lever	Barrel	?	No	Seats no arms	Half	3100 x 2540 x 1450	Brown	Yes	No		Good
Highcliffe 3 Shelters																
1900HA110180	Milland Road	448754	128730	Town Forum (WCC)	C\Lever	Barrel	?	No	Seat no arms	Half	3100 x 2400 x 1500	Brown	Yes	No		Good
1900HA110079	Milland Road, o/s Meon House	448940	128760	Town Forum (WCC)	C\Lever	Barrel	?	No	Perch	None	3100 x 2400 x 1400	Green	No	No	1987	Good
1900HA110174	Fivefields Road nr Nelson Rd	449214	129073	Town Forum (WCC)	Enclosed	Barrel	?	No	perch	Half	2606mm*640mm	Green	No	No		Good
Winnall 3 Shelters																
1900HA110089	Frimstone Road op Baigent Close	449159	129579	Town Forum (WCC)	C\Lever	Barrel	?	Yes	Bench	Half	3100 x 2500 x 1500	Brown	Yes	Yes		Good
1900HA110090	Frimstone Road, junction Garbett Road	449023	129743	Town Forum (WCC)	C\Lever	Flat	Queensbury	No	Bench	Half	2600 x 2300 x 1400	Brown	No	Yes	1993	Good
1900HA110092	Winnall Manor Road, junc Garbett Road	449308	129752	Town Forum (WCC)	C\Lever	Flat	Queensbury	No	Flip	None	2600 x 2300 x 1400	Brown	No	Yes	1993	Good. Consider replacing seats
St Cross 8 Shelters																
1900HA110044	St Cross Road, junc Barnes Close	447600	128203	Town Forum (WCC)	C\Lever	Pitched	?	No	Perch	None	3100 x 2700 x 1400	Green	No	Yes	1992	Good
1900HA110045	St Cross Road, nr Kigsgate Rd	447655	128339	Town Forum (WCC)	C\Lever	Pitched	?	No	Perch	Half	3100 x 2700 x 1400	Green	No	Yes	1992	Good
1900HA110047	St Cross Road, op no 40	447739	128683	Town Forum (WCC)	C\Lever	Flat	Queensbury	No	Bench	None	4100 x 2300 x 1350	Brown	No	Yes	1992	Poor Frame condition. Replacement of top and bottom rails needed.
1900HA110046	St Cross road, op Norman Road	447710	128605	Town Forum (WCC)	C\Lever	Pitched	?	No	Perch	Half	3100 x 2700 x 1400	Green	No	Yes		Good
1900HA110043	St Cross Road, Junc Mead Road, op Alldays	447536	127948	Town Forum (WCC)	Enclosed	Pitched	?	No	Bench	Full	3400 x 2200 x 2100	Wooden	No	Yes		Good
1900HA110041	St Cross Road, junc Grange Road	447429	127524	Town Forum (WCC)	Enclosed	Pitched	?	No	Bench	Full	3400 x 2200 x 2100	Wooden	No	Yes	1973	Good
1900HA110042	St Cross Road, Opposite Mead Road	447534	127891	Town Forum (WCC)	Enclosed	Pitched	?	No	Bench	Full	3400 x 2200 x 2100	Wooden	No	Yes	1973	Good
1900HA110048	St Cross Road, nr Romans Road	447791	128880	Town Forum (WCC)	C\Lever	Pitched		No	Perch	None		Green	No	Yes		Good
Alresford Road 1 Shelter																
1900HA110414	Alresford Road opp Hospital	450358	129419	Town Forum (WCC)	C\Lever	Pitched	?	No	Perch	None	2700 x 2600 x 1400	Black	No	Yes	2011	Good
Romsey Road 1 Shelter																
1900HA110129	Romsey road, op Sleepers Hill	446358	128998	Town Forum (WCC)	Enclosed	Pitched	?	No	Perch	Full	3100 x 2600 x 1200	Black	No	Yes	1993	Good

Rail Station North Side 1 shelter															
1900HAA09127	North Side Station	447813	129987	Town Forum (WCC)	C\Lever	Reverse pitch	Trueform	No	8 Seats with arms	Half and 1.5 panels	5175mm*1700mm approx	Grey	No	Yes	Good light vandalism
Town Centre (non P&R) 3 Shelters															
	St Georges St o/s Jojo	448258	129473	Town Forum (WCC)	C\Lever	Pitched	Queensbury	No	Perch	None	2640mm	Black	No	No	2011 Good
1900HA110112	Jewry Street	448002	129528	Town Forum (WCC)	Enclosed	Barrel		Yes	6 Seats no arms	Half	3040mm*630mm	Green	Yes	Yes	Good
1900HA110122	Sparkford Road near Erskine Road	447327	129113	Town Forum (WCC)	Enclosed	Barrel		No	6 seats no arms	Half end panels	4060mm*1260mm	Brown	Maybe	No	Good

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CAB3351
WINCHESTER TOWN FORUM
CABINET

REPORT TITLE: TREE STRATEGY

WINCHESTER TOWN FORUM – 9 NOVEMBER 2022

CABINET – 14 DECEMBER 2022

REPORT OF CABINET MEMBER: Cllr Kelsie Learney, Cabinet Member for Climate
Emergency

Contact Officer: Ivan Gurdler Tel No: 01962 848 403 Email
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WARD(S): ALL

PURPOSE

This paper presents the Winchester City Council Tree Strategy to Cabinet for approval.

The Tree Strategy sets out how the council can address both its legislative and managerial duties in relation to trees, in order to protect and enhance the district's tree stock in a sustainable and appropriate manner, whilst recognising its value to people and places.

The paper sets out the budget implication associated with the Strategy and with the sound management of the council's tree stock. It also reflects on the risk associated with deviating from the approach set out in the Strategy.

It is the first time the council has produced a tree strategy and its main purpose is to establish a set of policies by which the council will manage its tree stock and its statutory function in relation to trees.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That Winchester Town Forum:

1. Agrees that the budget overspend estimate of £21,864 for tree works in 2022/23 be funded from the Town Account.

2. Agrees that the additional budget requirement of £11,864 for tree works from 2023/24 onwards be funded from the Town Account.

That Cabinet:

3. Approves the Winchester City Council Tree Strategy (Draft) in Appendix 1.
4. Notes the budget overspend estimate of £34,347 for tree works in 2022/23 to be funded from the General Fund.
5. Notes the additional budget requirement of £66,784 for tree works from 2023/24 onwards to be funded from the General Fund.
6. Notes the additional budget requirement of £33,729 plus inflation for the Tree Surveyor post from 2024/25.

IMPLICATIONS:1 COUNCIL PLAN OUTCOME

- 1.1 Tackling the Climate Emergency and Creating a Greener District
- 1.2 The Tree Strategy sets out how Winchester City Council will address both its legal and management duties in relation to trees, in order to protect and enhance the district's tree stock in a sustainable and appropriate manner, whilst recognising their value to people and places.
- 1.3 This tree strategy is part of a suite of plans developed in response to the climate emergency declared by Winchester City Council in June 2019, including the Carbon Neutrality Action Plan (CNAP) 2019. Increasing tree coverage is an effective way to sequester carbon from the atmosphere. Trees absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and it is estimated that one hectare of woodland can sequester between 300 and 500 tonnes of CO₂ over a 100-year lifespan. The magnitude of carbon sequestration, however, is influenced by factors such as tree species and age, growth rate, spacing of trees, soil type, and woodland management practices.
- 1.4 The principles and policies set out in this strategy also support the council's Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) 2021. Woodland and trees are one of the priority habitats identified in the BAP and many of the key species within the BAP rely on woods and trees to survive. Therefore, by supporting and delivering the tree strategy, the council will be helping to deliver the aims and objectives identified in the Biodiversity Action Plan.
- 1.5 Living Well
- 1.6 The Tree Strategy helps maintain and enhance open spaces and parks which, in turn, support good mental and physical health for residents of all ages.

2 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1 The General Fund revenue budget for essential tree works in 2022/23 is almost £70,000, with £33,136 for works in Winchester town and £36,460 for works across the wider district. This represents a reduction of £20,000 from last year's base budget, as part of ongoing efforts to reduce overall council expenditure.
- 2.2 The tree works budgets were underspent in 2021/22 due to the delay in recruiting a Tree Surveyor to start the programme of tree surveys. The underspend totalled £49,193, which has been brought forward to supplement the base budget in 2022/23. The delay in starting means that the initial two-year survey programme will now run from August 2021 until August 2023.
- 2.3 However, even this enhanced budget is proving to be insufficient to manage even the most essential of works required this year to ensure the council's tree stock is safe and to safeguard against claims in the event of failure of

council-owned trees. The tree survey programme is identifying more essential work than was initially expected, but the situation has been exacerbated by the emergence of Ash dieback and associated risk assessment and actions required. The budget situation can be summarised as follows:

	2022/23					2023/24	
	Base budget	Brought fwd.	Total budget available	Forecast	Estimated overspend	Budget estimate	Additional budget required
Town	£33,136	£20,000	£53,136	£75,000	£21,864	£45,000	£11,864
District	£38,460	£29,193	£67,653	£102,000	£34,347	£105,244	£66,784
	£71,596	£49,193	£120,789	£177,000	£56,211	£150,244	£78,648

2.4 An additional budget sum is required in-year as detailed below to add to the available budgets to undertake essential works for the remainder of the year:

- a) An additional £21,864 from the Town Account.
- b) An additional £34,347 from the General Fund.

2.5 An additional budget sum is required as detailed below to add to the base budget for 2023/24 to continue essential works:

- a) An additional £11,864 from the Town Account.
- b) An additional £66,784 from the General Fund.

The estimates for 2023/24 include a 10% uplift to account for inflationary increases, as the tree works framework has a CPI increase from 1 January 2023. This excludes the essential works to trees funded by the housing revenue account (HRA) as this is controlled and managed by the housing team.

2.6 It is recommended that the tree survey programme should continue beyond the initial two-year period that runs until 2023/24. This would require the Tree Surveyor post to be made permanent (at 0.7 FTE), which would require the addition of £33,729 to the revenue budget for 2024/25. These are 2023/24 rates so will need to have pay inflation added for 2024/25. As per current arrangements 35% (£11,805) would be recharged to the HRA. It would also require the budgets for tree works (as per section 2.5) to be maintained at 2023/24 levels for 2024/25 and beyond and become business as usual.

2.7 The budget requirements detailed above have been built into the Medium Term Financial Strategy that was considered by Cabinet in November (CAB3374).

3 LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The policies within the Tree Strategy support the council's legal requirements in terms of the management of its own tree stock and obligations as a Regulatory Authority. This includes the council's legal responsibilities in relation to health and safety requirements; occupier's liability, planning related legislation and wildlife and protected species legislation.
- 3.2 The council has procured a tree maintenance framework, through which a number of tree work practitioners have been appointed. This enables work to be commissioned effectively and at speed from trusted practitioners. The current framework commenced in January 2021 and will expire in December 2024.

4 WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The delivery of the Tree Strategy is undertaken by the Tree Team, part of the Natural Environment and Recreation Team. The team comprises 3.5 FTE permanent staff, plus 1 FTE on a two year fixed-term contract that ends in 2023. This resource is deployed at capacity as follows

Principal Tree Officer	1FTE	Team manager, strategy, prosecutions, planning enforcement, development management, management of Tree Preservation Orders.
Tree Officer	1FTE	Development management planning applications, and tree works applications.
Tree Officer	0.5 FTE	Housing -Tree inspections and survey, commissioning of tree works – 100% HRA funded
Administration Officer	1FTE	Support, enquiry handling, invoicing & orders etc.
Tree Surveyor (Fixed term)	1 FTE – TFTC filled 0.7FTE	Town and district tree inspections and survey, commissioning of tree works – 35% HRA and 65% General Fund

- 4.2 The fixed-term post was created in 2021 to tackle a backlog in the tree-surveying programme and associated works, but it has become apparent that there will be a need to continue with a tree-surveying programme beyond the initial two-year period.
- 4.3 The post is currently filled to 0.7 FTE and this would be sufficient to deliver the necessary programme of tree surveys going forward. The fixed-term contract

currently runs until October 2023, but at 0.7 FTE the budget allows for this to be extended to the end of March 2024.

- 4.4 It is proposed that the 2-year tree survey programme continues beyond the scheduled end of programme and becomes business as usual. This would require the post to be made permanent at 0.7 FTE and additional budget provision made available from 2024/25 onwards.

5 PROPERTY AND ASSET IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Tree Strategy would ensure the effective management of trees on Winchester City Council property, thereby helping to support sound property and asset management.

6 CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

- 6.1 The information and policies contained within the Tree Strategy are based on experience, technical knowledge, legislation and engagement with residents and others. This Strategy brings together in a single document all existing operational practices and procedures relating to trees.
- 6.2 There has been regular engagement with Cabinet Members throughout the writing of the Strategy and it was considered by the Health and Environment Policy Committee at its 2 March 2022 meeting. The Committee “emphasised that the strategy would assist the council with enforcement and preventative measures in order to protect trees and maintain the canopy now and for the future generations.” The comments and feedback from that Committee have been taken into account in the drafting of this revised version of the Strategy.
- 6.3 In addition, the draft document has been peer checked by partner organisations and industry experts and their comments and feedback have also been considered.
- 6.4 The Strategy will be used to communicate the council's policies and procedures in relation to trees to a range of individuals and groups including residents, tree contractors, members, landowners and interested parties. Following Cabinet approval of the Tree Strategy, consideration will be given to how best to present the information to these various audiences. It should be noted, however, that the Strategy is purposely detailed to allow members, officers, contractors, landowners and the public access to all relevant information when considering work on trees and to better understand how the council undertakes its responsibilities in relation to tree ownership and management. To aid understanding, the Strategy is divided into sections with corresponding policies attached and there are a number of appendices that will be updated as and when required.

7 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 The benefits provided by trees are significant, not only as a valuable timber resource but also due to the social, environmental and economic benefits they

provide within the built and natural environment. Their role in helping to regulate the climate is well documented. The value of trees is recognised within the England Trees Action Plan 2021-2024, national and regional Biodiversity Action Plans and the Winchester City Council Biodiversity Action Plan 2021. Key benefits provided by trees include:

- a) Mitigating climate change by acting as carbon storage and sequestration.
- b) Cooling the urban heat island effect.
- c) Improving air quality by reducing airborne and particulate pollution.
- d) Mitigating flood alleviation, storm water management and wind turbulence.
- e) Masking noise pollution and improving water quality
- f) Aiding the restoration of contaminated land and soil protection.
- g) Enhancing landscape character and providing cultural and historical interest.
- h) Providing health and wellbeing benefits.
- i) Providing amenity, shelter and aesthetic value.
- j) Providing ecological and biodiversity benefits.

7.2 Whilst tree planting is often seen as a key delivery mechanism for responding to the climate emergency, the management of our existing tree stock is the council's first priority. It takes many years for a tree to begin to remove carbon from the atmosphere (anecdotal evidence suggests around 20 years) and therefore focusing on our existing tree stock is paramount if we are to help address the climate emergency now.

8 PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

8.1 None.

9 DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

9.1 None required

10 RISK MANAGEMENT

10.1 The primary purpose of the Tree Strategy is to formalise an approach that protects the council's interests and safeguards against risk resulting from accident or injury caused by trees.

Risk	Mitigation	Opportunities
<u>Financial/Legal Exposure</u> Legal risk and/or unexpected costs arising from injury or accident	The approach set out in the strategy safeguards against risk of costs or claims resulting from accident or injury caused by trees.	Provide a clearer understanding of future work priorities and therefore budgetary needs.

<u>Exposure to challenge</u> Challenge to the essential nature of the work	Clarity on the council's priority in relation to trees will help manage our exposure to challenge.	Adapt how to communicate these messages to various audiences.
<u>Innovation</u>		
<u>Reputation</u> Criticism of the council's actions	The strategy demonstrates the council's commitment to managing its assets and legislative duties.	
<u>Achievement of outcome</u>		
<u>Property</u> Poorly maintained tree stock	Clear statement of how the council is meeting its liability under the Occupiers Liability Act and minimising exposure to legal challenge.	Management of tree stock in an effective and risk appropriate manner supports the climate emergency work.
<u>Community Support</u> Opposition to the strategy aims	Engagement process with key partners, industry people and others.	
<u>Timescales</u> Inability to survey trees within prescribed time	Regular monitoring of survey programme delivery.	
<u>Project capacity</u> Inability to deliver strategy aims	Strategy sets out approach that ensures priority for essential works only. Review cost of tree works and budget accordingly.	

11 SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

- 11.1 The aim of the Tree Strategy is to ensure a healthy and thriving tree cover across the Winchester district, with a diverse age and species range, thereby helping to maintain and enhance the district's valuable landscape character for the benefit of all. The Strategy will be the main point of reference for all works in relation to trees that come under the remit of the council, including trees owned and managed by the council and those in private ownership where the council has a role in their safeguarding or management.
- 11.2 The Tree Strategy sets out how the council will address both its legislative and managerial duties in relation to trees, in order to protect and enhance the district's tree stock in a sustainable and appropriate manner, whilst recognising its value to people and places.
- 11.3 The council's legislative duties include making and enforcing Tree Preservation Orders (TPO), determining TPO applications; assessing applications relating to trees in conservation areas, commenting on development management applications for tree works and supporting strategic planning processes.
- 11.4 The council's managerial responsibilities relate to approximately 32,000 trees that are on council owned land. Issues such as Ash Dieback are placing an increasing pressure on the tree management programme across the council's estate and will require additional works to make the trees safe and encourage replacement trees to establish. Any increase in frequency of severe weather occurrences such as storms and heavy rains will also affect the tree stock across the district. This would place pressure on the capacity of the Tree Team to carry out all its functions and duties and would require reprioritisation or deferral of work, especially any which is not a statutory or contractual obligation.
- 11.5 In 2020, approval was given to establish a 2-year programme of tree surveying to audit the council's tree stock and its condition. No structured surveying programme had been carried out for a number of years before this. The costs of this programme included a 2-year fixed-term post and additional budget to deliver works in response to the findings, but the work to date has identified the need for a greater amount of remedial work than was anticipated and has resulted in an overspend against budget. Only essential works are carried out, to ensure the council complies with its health and safety responsibilities and avoid risk of injury.
- 11.6 It has also become apparent that there needs to be an ongoing programme of surveying to ensure the council remains on top of its tree maintenance responsibilities. The Tree Strategy sets out the necessary frequency of survey inspection in section 7.2.3 (policy 3). This would require additional budget provision in future years as detailed in this report, to include making permanent the role of Tree Surveyor.

- 11.7 The council has many practices and processes for managing and responding to tree issues. This Tree Strategy consolidates these into a single document, clearly setting out the council's position and policies. How this information is accessed will be considered as part of the work to promote the Strategy once approval has been given by Cabinet. However, it is likely to take two forms:
- a) The Tree Strategy in a document form, following a similar presentation style to the Biodiversity Action Plan and Open Space Audit;
 - b) A more interactive, online version aimed at less technical audiences.
- 11.8 Whilst there is no national guidance in relation to writing tree strategies, the Winchester City Council Tree Strategy reflects industry best practice and legislation. In addition, tree strategies produced by other authorities have been reviewed and used to inform the development of this tree strategy.
- 11.9 This strategy complements other work areas which are in response to the climate emergency declared by Winchester City Council in June 2019 and forms part of a suite of plans and documents including the Carbon Neutrality Action Plan and the Biodiversity Action Plan.

12 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 12.1 The option of not producing a Tree Strategy was rejected. Whilst the council has a number of operational practices and procedures relating to trees, these have evolved over the years. Our existing working practices are based on experience, technical knowledge, legislation and engagement with residents and others. There is a need to bring these together in a single document which can be accessed by others and which states the council's position on a range of work areas.
- 12.2 If the tree survey programme was not continued beyond the initial 2-year period, the council would have no understanding of the condition of its trees other than in response to complaints or reports. This was the situation for a number of years prior to the start of the 2-year survey programme and led to a high level of works to address the poor condition of many trees that had deteriorated over time. This approach leaves the council exposed to risk of legal claims in the event that a tree fails and causes injury to person or property, so has been discounted.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:-

Previous Committee Reports:-

HEP017 – Management of Open Spaces – Scoping Report: 19 January 2022

HEP022 – Draft Tree Strategy: 2 March 2022

Other Background Documents:-

None

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 – Winchester City Council draft Tree Strategy

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Winchester City Council

Tree Strategy

July 2022

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	However, in periods of high demand or where there are unexpected impacts on trees or the work of the tree team, these timescales may be extended. The urgent and high priority cases will be dealt with at the earliest opportunity before moving to the medium priority cases.	17
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1. Introduction

This strategy sets out how Winchester City Council will address both its legal and management duties in relation to trees, in order to protect and enhance the district's tree stock in a sustainable and appropriate manner, whilst recognising their value to people and places.

Whilst the council has many procedures and processes for managing and responding to tree issues, there is a need for a single document which clearly sets out the council's position and policies. This tree strategy will be the main point of reference for all works in relation to trees which come under the remit of the City Council, including trees owned and managed by the council and those in private ownership where the council has a role in their safeguarding or management.

This tree strategy is part of suite of plans developed in response to the climate emergency declared by Winchester City Council in June 2019. Increasing tree coverage is an effective way to sequester carbon from the atmosphere. Trees absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and it is estimated that one hectare of woodland can sequester between 300 and 500 tonnes of CO₂ over a 100-year lifespan. The magnitude of carbon sequestration, however, will be influenced by factors such as tree species and age, growth rate, spacing of trees, soil type, and woodland management practices.

The council's Carbon Neutrality Action Plan includes ambitions to:

- a. Collaborate with partners and landowners to identify up to 100 hectares of land to support additional tree planting and/or creation of grassland and wetland habitats; and
- b. Develop a programme of habitat creation starting with planting at least 100 trees annually on council land.

The principles and policies set out in this document also support the council's Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) 2021. Woodland and trees are one of the priority habitats identified in the BAP and many of the key species within the BAP rely on woods and trees to survive. Therefore by supporting and delivering the tree strategy, the council will be helping to deliver the aims and objectives identified in the Biodiversity Action Plan.

A glossary of words included in this strategy can be found in the Appendix.

2. The need for a tree strategy

The benefits provided by trees are significant, not only as a valuable timber resource but also due to the social, environmental and economic benefits they provide within the built and natural environment. Their role in helping to regulate the climate is well documented. The value of trees is recognised within the England Trees Action Plan 2021-2024, national and regional Biodiversity Action Plans and the Winchester City Council Biodiversity Action Plan 2021. Key benefits provided by trees includes:

- Mitigating climate change by acting as carbon storage and sequestration.
- Cooling the urban heat island effect.
- Improving air quality by reducing airborne and particulate pollution.
- Mitigating flood alleviation, storm water management and wind turbulence.
- Masking noise pollution and improving water quality
- Aiding the restoration of contaminated land and soil protection.
- Enhancing landscape character and providing cultural and historical interest.
- Providing health and wellbeing benefits.
- Providing amenity, shelter and aesthetic value.
- Providing ecological and biodiversity benefits.

For a further understanding of the value of trees please see appendix i.

Winchester City Council is required from both a legal and management perspective to protect and enhance the districts tree stock. This includes health and safety requirements; occupiers liabilities, planning related legislation and wildlife and protected species legislation. For a detailed list of relevant legislation and guidance please see appendix ii.

Whilst the council has a number of operational policies and procedures relating to trees, these are not easily accessible to the public or others. This tree strategy brings together all existing policies and procedures for the first time, across both the council's management and legislative roles.

3. The aim of the tree strategy

The aim of this tree strategy is to ensure a healthy and thriving tree cover across the Winchester district, with a diverse age and species range, thereby helping to maintain and enhance the district's valuable landscape character for the benefit of all.

This strategy was approved in July 2022 and demonstrates that Winchester City Council is committed to managing its own tree stock in a sustainable and appropriate manner. This includes maintaining the existing canopy cover across the district and where possible increasing this, with a particular emphasis on trees which provide high amenity and/or biodiversity benefits in the long term.

The document is purposely detailed to allow members, officers, contractors, land owners and the public access to information when considering work on trees and to better understand how the council undertakes its responsibilities in relation to tree ownership and management. Consequently the document is divided into sections with corresponding policies attached and there are a number of appendices which will be updated as and when required.

4. Guiding principles

4.1 The appropriate management of the existing tree stock

Whilst tree planting is often seen as a key delivery mechanism for responding to the climate emergency, the management of our existing tree stock is the council's first priority. It takes many years for a tree to begin to remove carbon from the atmosphere (anecdotal evidence suggests around 20 years) and therefore focusing on our existing tree stock is paramount if we are to help address the climate emergency now.

In order to appropriately manage the existing tree stock Winchester City Council will strive to:

- Achieve a diverse age range from young to ancient or veteran trees;
- Achieve a diverse range of species – both native and non-native;
- Manage the existing tree stock using a long-term programme of works and ensure that decisions are made for future benefit as well as immediate need;
- Plant and encourage the right tree in the right place for the right reason, in line with emerging Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS);
- Achieve biodiversity and carbon gain through tree planting ie tree planting will be undertaken on sites where there is little existing biodiversity and/or carbon sequestration such as amenity grassland.
- Increase the net tree canopy cover across the district;
- Base decisions on the needs of both existing residents and visitors as well as future generations.
- Only undertake works on trees owned and managed by the council which are deemed essential i.e. works where there is a clear arboricultural reason and it is in the interests of the health and survival of the tree to undertake the works or where there is a high risk of injury to persons or damage to property caused by a structural failure or defect. Works which have no arboricultural justification, but rather aim to mitigate an inconvenience such as restricting light, or overhanging branches on neighbouring property will not be undertaken.
- Employ qualified and professional tree officers to oversee the work on behalf of the council;
- Use qualified and professional contractors to undertake practical tree works;
- Ensure the council operates a cost effective works programme, including the use of a tree framework agreement, investing in appropriate IT systems and budgeting for tree works to ensure the work can be delivered within existing resources;
- Operate in a sustainable fashion, including the sourcing of tree stock locally where possible and taking in to account the potential risks associated with biosecurity;
- Take account of risk to both people and property.

4.2 The appropriate management of the existing tree stock not owned and managed by the city council.

Whilst the council has no direct responsibility for the management of trees under private ownership, it does have a responsibility through its regulatory function. This includes:

- Protecting important trees and woodlands which are potentially under threat through the use of Tree Preservation Orders and responding to applications for works to trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders and those in Conservation Areas;
- Responding to planning applications submitted to the council which potentially have an impact on existing trees and ensuring that works are undertaken in accordance with industry standards such as BS3998 (2010) and BS5837 (2012); and
- Enforcing planning conditions and obligations where appropriate, and issuing tree planting notices as required.

Details of how the council will deliver its responsibility in relation to its regulatory function are detailed later in the report.

5. Delivery

Responsibility for the delivery of this plan sits primarily within the Natural Environment and Recreation team at Winchester City Council. However, officers will work closely with other teams including Housing, Legal, Development Management, Planning Enforcement, Strategic Planning, Estates and Parking and external bodies such as Hampshire County Council and the Forestry Commission. For a list of contacts both within and external to the council please see Appendix iii.

6. Scope

6.1 Geographical area covered

This strategy covers the whole of the Winchester district including the South Downs National Park (SDNP), as the City Council currently helps manage the South Downs tree stock through a Service Level Agreement with the National Park. This strategy therefore has regard to the purposes of the National Park ie *“To conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the area. To promote sustainable use of the natural resources of the area. To promote understanding and enjoyment (including enjoyment in the form of recreation) of the special qualities of the area by the public”*.

6.2 Types of vegetation covered.

This strategy only covers trees, groups of trees, areas of trees, woodlands and high hedges. It does not cover shrubs, other hedges or other vegetation. The definition of a tree is:

“A woody perennial plant, typically having a single stem or trunk growing to a considerable height and bearing lateral branches at some distance from the ground”. Ref: Marriam-Webster online dictionary.

7. The council's own tree stock

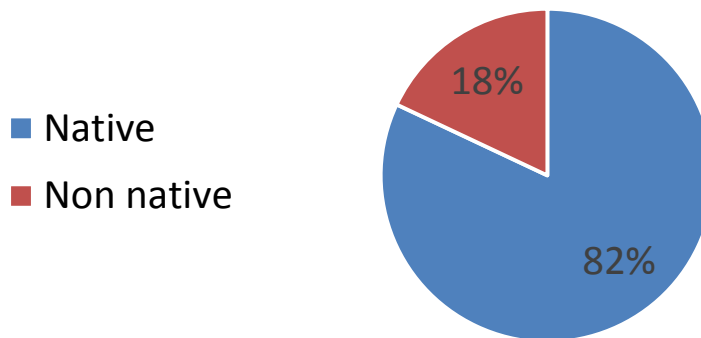
7.1 Introduction

The council currently owns and manages circa 32,000 trees throughout the Winchester district. The tree stock comprises:

- At least 13,000 individual trees; and
- 232 groups of trees and woodlands.

The most common species of trees on council land are maple, ash, beech and lime (see Appendix iv), with the majority of species classed as 'native' (see Graph 1)

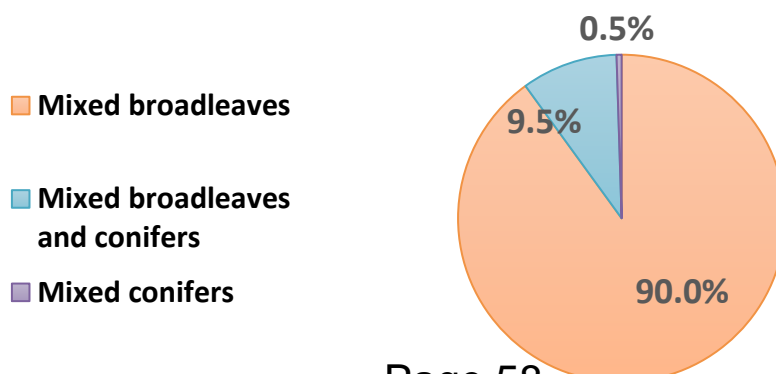
Graph 1: Breakdown of native vrs non native trees on WCC holdings



There are some more unusual species on council land including locust, sweet gum and the Indian bean tree. We also have over 80 elm trees, many of which have been planted in recent years and are resistant to Dutch elm disease, which killed many of the elms in the 1960's and 70's.

Our two largest woodlands are located at Whiteley and Otterbourne and both have public access. Most of the woodlands are mixed broadleaves with only one woodland being mixed conifer (see Graph 2 for a breakdown of woodland type).

Graph 2 - breakdown of woodland types on WCC land holdings.



The majority of individual trees are found in public parks and open spaces, woodlands, in the grounds of council-owned properties, council tenant's gardens, car parks, sports and recreation grounds, play areas, cemeteries and sewage treatment works.

7.2 Council tree inspection procedures

7.2.1 Introduction

Winchester City Council has a duty of care to manage the risks that council trees may pose to anyone who passes or comes within close proximity to a council-owned tree.

The Health and Safety Executive advises that this duty of care should be "*reasonable, proportionate, and reasonably practicable*" when managing the risk posed by council trees. Therefore the council must consider the many benefits trees provide, the risk they pose (i.e. aim to achieve a level of risk which is acceptable and/or tolerable) and the costs of managing the risk, when exercising its duty of care. It is important to note the council cannot, and should not, seek to remove all risk posed by trees, as this would not be reasonable, proportionate nor reasonably practicable.

Policy 1 – Duty of care

The council will consider the many benefits trees provide, the risk they pose and the costs of managing the risk, when exercising its duty of care.

7.2.2 Risk

Trees are natural living structures. Consequently they occasionally shed branches or fall. This is usually because the tree has died, has an obvious structural defect or has been unduly impacted by severe inclement weather conditions.

When considering risk, the council will assess two key elements:

1. The likely risk of a tree, or parts of a tree, actually failing; and
2. The likelihood that the tree (if it were to fail) would cause injury to person or damage to property.

It is important to note that the risk posed to life and property in the United Kingdom by a failing tree is extremely small. See https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/documents/7086/Commonsense_management_of_trees.pdf

Policy 2 – Assessing risk

When considering risk, the council will assess two key elements:

1. The likely risk of a tree, or parts of a tree, actually failing; and
2. The likelihood that the tree (if it were to fail) would cause injury to person or damage to property.

7.2.3 Tree Survey Programme

In order to meet its duty of care, the council has an on-going tree survey programme in which a suitably qualified and experienced officer regularly undertakes site visits to assess the existing tree stock.

The frequency of visit depends on an initial assessment of risk, taking account of the two key elements identified in Policy 2. The council uses a Tolerability of Risk Framework (ToR) which is an internationally recognised approach when making risk management decisions and works on the premise of ensuring that risks from trees are as low as reasonably practicable.

All trees owned and managed by the council have been allocated a usage category as follows:

- High usage – e.g. where trees could cause significant structural damage or risk to life i.e. users of busy highways/footways or static targets such as dwellings, parked cars, commercial premises, public parks and play areas. This can include large mature trees within striking distance of public highways or ancient or veteran trees/large trees with known defects.
- Medium usage – e.g. where members of the public are passing under trees or near trees at infrequent intervals. This category can include trees of any size or age. Examples include trees located on large open spaces or sports grounds, sewage treatment works or permissible rights of way through woodland.
- Low usage - e.g. areas where there are members of the public passing under or near to trees at very low intervals. This includes trees located in woodlands, in fields away from the highway or property or where members of the public are prevented from entering.

The level of usage will then determine the frequency in which the trees will be surveyed, as part of an on-going survey programme (see Policy 3 for the frequency of inspections depending on usage categories). This is the standard timeframe of inspection. However, if a defect is found, monitoring may occur more frequently.

Policy 3 – Frequency of council tree inspections

The council will undertake walk over tree inspections at the following maximum intervals:

- Trees in high usage areas – once every three years
- Trees in medium usage areas – once every five years
- Trees in low usage areas – once every ten years

However, in periods of high demand or where there are unexpected impacts on trees or the work of the tree team, these timescales may be extended. The urgent and high priority cases will be dealt with at the earliest opportunity before moving to the medium priority cases.

Work to trees outside the programmed maintenance plan will only be undertaken when a hazard is clearly identified or on the balance of probability, the tree will present a hazard in the near future. In addition to the rolling programme of planned works, some works will arise from unplanned events such as severe weather conditions. Trees that threaten public safety and property will always be given the highest priority. This may lead to plans for essential works being postponed.

7.2.4 Inspection methodology and recording

The procedure for undertaking initial tree inspections will comprise a ‘walk over’ inspection at ground level, checking each tree’s structural condition and vitality and identifying any obvious defects or fungal pathogens. Officers will assess whether any arboricultural works are necessary to reduce or minimise risk posed by the tree to people or property in the context of risk posed, their amenity value and environmental benefit.

In the event that defects are identified which cause concern over the structural integrity of the tree or its declining health, a more detailed inspection of the tree will be carried out to ascertain the structural condition of the tree.

In addition, the council will undertake ad hoc inspections where necessary, particularly in relation to tree enquiries or post storm damage.

7.2.5 Recording tree inspections

All tree inspections will be recorded on specialist software, along with any arboricultural works considered necessary to reduce the risk. The council will record all trees surveyed whether work is required or not.

Policy 4 – Tree inspection protocols

The council will undertake a 'walk over' inspection at the first stage and if defects are identified a more detailed inspection of the tree will be carried out.

All tree inspections will be recorded on specialist software, along with any arboricultural works considered necessary, using a 'negative reporting' procedure.

8. Undertaking works on council owned trees

8.1 Introduction

To ensure best value, the council has a tree framework agreement with six contractors (commenced 2021 for 2 years with a possible extension for a further 2 years). These contractors undertake the majority of the tree works on council owned trees, on behalf of Winchester City Council.

Tree works are given one of four priorities.

8.1.1. Priority 1 – Urgent.

Urgent tree works are those which are required to mitigate a problem which is causing or likely to cause a high risk of injury to persons or damage to property in the immediate timeframe. Where a tree has been reported to pose an immediate danger to life or property, the council aims to respond within 90 minutes of notification and assess the tree. Urgent works include (but not limited to):

- The tree is snapped or blown over;
- The tree is rocking and the roots are damaged;
- The tree is uprooted and leaning against another tree or building;
- A large branch is hanging off the tree or a dead branch is extending over private property or car parking areas;
- A fallen tree or branch is blocking a road, foot way or access to a property;
- The tree has landed on a car;
- Flood prevention; and
- Where a tree poses an immediate threat to life or property because of storm damage or unforeseen circumstances.

8.1.2. Priority 2 – High priority.

These are works which remove a hazard but are not urgent (or an emergency) as defined above. In these cases it may be appropriate for the council to reduce or prune the tree to decrease the level of risk posed by the tree. The response time for Priority 2 is up to one week and includes (but not limited to):

- A dead or dying tree;
- Tree with poor extension growths or sparse crown;
- Soft or flaking bark on the main stem or primary stems of the tree;
- Fungal fruiting brackets on the tree;
- Splits and cracks;
- Included bark union with a high risk of separation;
- Tree with an over-extended heavy limb with high risk of failure and high target area;

- Crown lifting or removal of epicormic growth over a highway or footway or growth obscuring the highway;
- Watering and mulching drought affected trees; and
- Removal of major deadwood over pedestrian areas or highways.

8.1.3. Priority 3 – Medium priority

These are works which either manage an issue or which help extend the lifespan of the tree. The response time for Priority 3 is within three months and includes (but not limited to):

- Removal of epicormic growth over open space;
- Crown reduction or localised reduction due to structural defects;
- Crown lifting over open space;
- Mulching; and
- Adjustment of tree ties and stakes to ensure the tree is not restricted as it grows.

8.1.4. Priority 4 - Low priority

These are works which will not be undertaken unless under exceptional circumstances. This includes (but not limited to):

- Only where work is deemed essential will any major crown reduction, localised reductions or toppings be undertaken. Any other requests for major works such as these will be considered low priority;
- Only where felling is deemed essential will it be undertaken. Any other requests for felling will be considered low priority;
- Removal of minor deadwood;
- Crown thinning; and
- Cutting back from overhanging private property or car parking, particularly if the work aims to alleviate issues such as fruit fall, leaves, bird droppings, satellite reception, light, restricted views, pollen and honey dew.

Policy 5 – Priority of tree works

The council will undertake all priority 1 and 2 works. Priority 3 works will only be undertaken if there is sufficient need and resource and at the discretion of the Tree Officer. Priority 4 works are unlikely to take place.

Priority 1 – Urgent tree works which are required to mitigate a problem which is causing or likely to cause a high risk of injury to persons or damage to property in the immediate timeframe.

Priority 2 – works which remove a hazard but are not an emergency as defined above.

Priority 3 – works which either manage an issue or which help extend the lifespan of the tree

Priority 4 – works which will not be undertaken unless under exceptional circumstances and include major works, felling, removal of minor deadwood, crown thinning and cutting back from overhanging private property or car parking.

However, in periods of high demand or where there are unexpected impacts on trees or the work of the tree team, these timescales may be extended. The urgent and high priority cases will be dealt with at the earliest opportunity before moving to the medium priority cases.

8.2 Felling of trees owned and managed by the council and replacement tree planting

Due to the high number of trees that Winchester City Council owns and manages there will be occasions when the felling of a tree cannot be avoided. The decision to remove a tree is never taken lightly and tree officers often monitor the tree's health before ordering its removal.

The majority of trees are felled as they have become unsafe due to storm damage, vandalism, are causing structural damage to an adjacent built structure, have significant decay pathogens or have died and there is no other viable or cost effective options but to remove the tree. However, trees will also be felled where it is arboriculturally appropriate to do so such as selectively thinning a group of trees or where it provides long term benefit to a retained tree.

Where a tree is felled, the council seeks to plant a replacement tree either on the same location or an alternative location, as part of its on-going tree planting programme.

In addition, the council will continue to seek opportunities for natural regeneration, as this can potentially be more effective in delivering biodiversity, carbon and landscape benefits. However, as always with trees, the location of any new trees must be carefully considered and the trees must be managed in the first few years to maximise their chances of surviving. Therefore any tree planting or natural regeneration will be carefully planned, communicated and managed and the council will prioritise effective replacement over high numbers of new trees.

Policy 6 – Tree felling and replacement planting

The council will only fell trees where absolutely necessary or where there is a clear arboricultural reason to do so.

Where a tree has been removed, the council will seek to plant replacement trees at a minimum of 1:1 ratio either on the same location or an alternative location.

Any tree planting or natural regeneration will be carefully planned, communicated and managed and the council will prioritise effective replacement over high

numbers of new trees.

8.3 Works to trees owned and managed by the council

The maintenance of trees is an important management operation. This includes pruning, crown lifting; crown reduction; crown lifting, crown thinning or tree felling.

However, the council receives a high volume of requests for tree works annually from residents and others within the district. It is not possible or appropriate to agree to the majority of these requests as they are non-essential, and it is only where the works requested are deemed essential that they will be undertaken.

If anyone is concerned about a tree and wish to contact the city council, they should complete an online enquiry form at <https://www.winchester.gov.uk/planning/trees> which will be passed to a tree officer for assessment.

8.3.1 Essential works

Where there is a clear arboricultural reason or where there is a high risk of injury to persons or damage to property caused by a structural failure or which cannot be mitigated in any other way, the council will remove the nuisance under its duty of care where it is deemed appropriate by the Tree Officer.

Policy 7 – Essential works to council owned trees (Priorities 1-3)

The council will remove tree material where:

- a) It is causing structural damage to a dwelling, garage or boundary wall;
- b) There is a high risk of injury to persons;
- c) There is potential damage to property caused by a structural failure, which cannot be mitigated in any other way;
- d) A tree is causing an obstruction to the highway, an established private drive or where essential maintenance works are required.
- e) There is a benefit to the tree ie through formative pruning, general pruning and selective thinning of a group of trees for the betterment of the retained trees.

8.3.2 Non-essential works

Whilst the council recognises that people can be impacted by trees, it is not appropriate nor possible to undertake many of the works requested.

Due to the need to help reduce the impacts of climate change and to support the climate emergency declared by the council, the council will only undertake works which are essential. Whilst non-essential work can be beneficial for individuals, any works to trees can put the tree at risk as it:

- Creates wounds which are potentially damaging to the health of the tree and may allow the ingress of disease or decay in to the tree thereby harming the long term health and wellbeing of the tree;
- Reduces photosynthetic material from the tree's canopy, which has a detrimental effect on the trees ability to carry out its biological functions such as compartmentalising pruning wounds;
- Leads to the development of new dense leaf, bud and twig regrowth exacerbating issues such as blocked light, sap and leaf fall;
- Leads to new buds being formed which do not form a strong union with attached branches which requires ongoing future management to reduce the risk of branch and stem failure;

In addition, non-essential work can:

- Damage the pleasant appearance of trees and reduce the trees public visual amenity value and wildlife provision.
- Be costly and reduce the amount of budget available for the council to spend on essential maintenance.
- Remove material which can be of high ecological value such as ivy and dead wood. However this will only be retained where it does not pose an unacceptable level of risk to life or property.

When the council receives a request for works to its trees which is not essential, it will consider the request. However, as the council has no legal obligation to undertake non-essential tree works and due to the issues identified above, the majority of these works will not be undertaken. This includes cutting back from overhanging private property or car parking, particularly if the work aims to alleviate issues such as fruit fall, leaves, bird droppings, satellite reception, light, restricted views, pollen and honey dew. See Appendix v for further information.

8.4 Common Law Right to undertake works on Winchester City Council trees.

For works which are non-essential, those who live adjacent to council trees do have a common law right to remove material from a tree that is up to or over the boundary of their property, as long as they do not commit a trespass or enter the land of the neighbour (*Earl of Lonsdale v Nelson 1823 and Lemmon v Webb 1894*).

The person who undertakes the work takes responsibility for ensuring that the tree does not become unsafe at any point in the future, due to their actions. If the tree does become unsafe, the person who undertook the work could be liable for damage should the tree fail or die as a result of the works undertaken to it. The council monitors all its trees and works undertaken by a third party.

In addition, the person undertaking the work has a duty to dispose of the wood in an appropriate manner such as through a waste recycling centre and to not dump the cut wood on the tree owner's land, as this could be seen as fly tipping, which is liable to prosecution. The council advises that any works are undertaken by a competent arborist.

Therefore if a neighbour wishes to undertake pruning works and is legally entitled to do so in accordance with their Common Law right, they are able to do this as long as they:

1. Do not trespass on council property to undertake the works;
2. Only remove material up to the boundary of the property from inside their own property.
3. Take responsibility for ensuring that the tree does not become unsafe at any point in the future, due to their actions;
4. Dispose of the cut material in an appropriate manner and not fly tip the cut material on council owned land;
5. Apply to the Local Planning Authority if the tree is located within a Conservation Area or is protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO);
6. Will not carry out the proposed works until the Local Planning Authority has granted consent; and
7. Do not remove, damage or wilfully destroy any council owned trees.

However it is important to note that the owner of a property neighbouring the council tree has no legal right to cut off or remove any part of the tree that does not overhang their property and are not permitted to enter council land to carry out the works. In addition, if tree is in a Conservation Area or protected by a Tree Preservation Order, this common law right does not apply. See section 11 for further information on protected trees.

Policy 8 – Common Law Right to undertake works on Winchester City Council trees.

If a neighbour wishes to undertake pruning works and is legally entitled to do so in accordance with their Common Law right, they are able to undertake the works as long as they:

- a) Do not trespass on council property to undertake the works;
- b) Only remove material up to the boundary of the property from inside their own property;
- c) Take responsibility for ensuring that the tree does not become unsafe at any point in the future, due to their actions;
- d) Dispose of the cut material in an appropriate manner and not fly tip the cut material on council owned land;
- e) Apply to the Local Planning Authority if the tree is located within a Conservation Area or is protected by a Tree Preservation Order and will not carry out the proposed works until the Local Planning Authority has granted consent; and
- f) Do not remove, damage or wilfully destroy any council owned tree.

All works must be undertaken in accordance with British Standard 3998 (2010).

8.5 Tree roots and structural damage to built structures including drains

The roots of trees grow and move through the soil in various ways depending on tree species, soil type and local conditions. Shallow or surface roots can cause damage to footpath surfaces or other light structures by radial root growth or soil desiccation.

Where a hazard from tree roots occurs and the council has been notified, a tree officer will respond and if necessary, the information will be passed to the council's insurers, who will undertake an assessment of the impact and make any recommendations. Tree felling will only be considered when all other options including engineering solutions have been considered and/or rejected. A replacement tree will be planted where possible.

Where roots of a council tree have entered a council owned property, the tenant should contact the council's Housing team in the first instance. If the property is privately owned, the owner is recommended to contact their property insurers who should contact the council on their behalf once they have undertaken their own assessment of the alleged structural damage.

Although the homeowner has a Common Law right to cut the roots back to their boundary (*McCombe v Read [1955] 2QB 429*), it is essential that consideration is given to the stability of the tree and how this might be affected. Anyone undertaking tree root reduction works may be liable for damage if the tree fails in the future. If the tree is protected by its location within a Conservation Area or is protected by a Tree Preservation Order, the home owner must apply to the Local Planning Authority at Winchester City Council before undertaking the proposed root reduction works, as the Common Law right is not applicable. Home owners are advised to speak to their home insurers before carrying out any tree root reductions. Additionally, the homeowner's Common Law right to cut roots back to their boundary is subject to the following limitations:

- The cutting back of roots must not cause the tree to become unstable.
- Except for minor works, a qualified professional arboriculturist should be used.
- Do not trespass on Council property to undertake the works.
- Only remove roots up to the boundary of the property from inside the homeowner's own property .
- Dispose of the root cuttings in an appropriate manner and not fly tip the cut material on Council-owned land.
- Apply to the Local Planning Authority if the tree is located within a Conservation Area or is protected by a Tree Preservation Order and not carry out the proposed works until the Local Planning Authority has granted consent.
- Do not remove, damage or wilfully destroy any council owned tree.
- All works must be undertaken in accordance with British Standard 3998 (2010).

Damage to drains is often unpredictable and therefore tree roots should not automatically be assumed to be the cause. Underground services are often damaged by other means such as heavy lorries or previous site construction. The damage cannot be fully diagnosed until the drains have been surveyed by an appropriate person who is experienced and qualified to do so.

Policy 9 – Tree roots and damage to built structures including drains

The council will inspect footways within its ownership where reported tree roots are causing a trip hazard and carry out necessary repairs. A tree will only be removed and a replacement tree planted when all other options including engineering solutions have been explored.

If it is alleged that council tree roots have entered a property or a properties' drains, the council will expect written technical reports from an appropriate expert who is suitably qualified and experienced within their field of expertise before engaging the services of the council insurers.

8.6 Council trees and poisonous berries

There may be trees located within council open spaces which produce poisonous berries, such as the yew tree. As this is a natural occurring process there is no reasonable solution to reduce the exposure of the general public to the berries. In addition, yew trees are very striking trees and can make a significant contribution to the historic setting of the character of the built environment. Therefore yew trees will be retained on city council land. However, if homeowners, tenants and farmers have concerns about unsupervised young children or livestock being exposed to poisonous foliage or berries they are advised to contact the council. See appendix iii for contact details. If the poisonous berries and foliage are within a council tenant's garden, the council will inspect the site and make an informed decision on the risk associated with the presence of the vegetation.

Policy 10 – Poisonous berries and foliage

Winchester City Council will only fell or prune trees within its parks and open spaces which have poisonous berries or foliage, if after investigation, there is an unacceptable risk to young children, vulnerable adults or livestock. Parents or guardians are advised to supervise their children and vulnerable adults at all times whilst accessing any open space/parks.

If the poisonous berries and foliage are within a council tenant's garden, the council will inspect the site and make an informed decision on the risk associated with the presence of the vegetation.

8.7 Tree safety

The council is aware some residents may feel apprehensive about the size of a tree and/or worried that a tree might fail. However it is important to note that trees are not dangerous just because they are large, tall or move in the wind. Tree movement in high winds is natural and one of the ways they are able to withstand strong winds. However if someone is concerned about the health of a council owned tree they should contact the council. Things to look out for are:

- The presence of fungal fruiting bodies (brackets or mushrooms) on near the tree;
- Large cavities or decay in the main stems or branches;
- Large dead limbs'
- Loose bark;
- Lifting of the ground at the base of the tree; and
- The tree changes dramatically in how it looks.

The council will inspect a tree and take appropriate action if concerns are raised. In addition, the council undertakes a frequent and regular survey programme of all its trees (see section 6.2.3 for further details).

Policy 11 – Tree safety

The council will only prune or fell trees that it owns or manages if there is a clear arboricultural or safety need.

The council will investigate and inspect any tree that is suspected of being dangerous due to defects and take appropriate action.

8.8 Ivy on trees

Ivy (*Hedera helix*) is a native species which provides important habitat to a wide range of wildlife, acts as a food source for a range of species and provides cover for birds, bats, mammals and insects. Ivy often grows on tree stems and branches and should not necessarily be of concern. However, it can restrict the full structural assessment of a tree and increase the sail area of the trees canopy, adding weight and stress to the upper parts of the tree.

Therefore ivy will only be severed at the base of the trees where necessary and will be left in situ to die back as this will reduce the impact of any loss of cover/habitat for biodiversity and help prevent sun damage to newly exposed parts of the tree.

Policy 12 – Ivy on trees

Ivy will only be severed at the base of a tree where there is a clear need ie:

- Where it restricts the full assessment of parts where a significant defect is suspected;
- Where ivy growth is so prolific it increases the sail area; or
- Where it affects the growth of the inner crown of a tree to an unacceptable level.

Once severed, ivy will be left in situ to die back.

8.9 Communicating when tree works are due.

The council recognises that the majority of residents of Winchester value trees and that people are concerned when work is undertaken to trees without any communication from the council. Therefore when significant works are needed the council will publicise these through a variety of means including direct contact with neighbours impacted by the works, site notices, keeping councillors informed and updates via the council website.

However, it is not always possible nor appropriate to communicate all works, due to the volume of works undertaken and the need to focus resource on managing the tree stock directly.

Policy 13 – Communicating when tree works are due

Where works are minor, i.e. works to trees under 30cm at diameter at breast height; cyclical pollarding of trees; removal of epicormic growth or crown lifting; there will be no public/member communication.

Where works are urgent such as the removal of fallen trees or trees deemed likely to immediately fail, the works will be carried out without public engagement, although local ward members and relevant Cabinet members will be informed.

Where tree works are non-urgent but have a significant impact on the local landscape or street scene, the council will aim to inform local residents and ward members and erect site notices prior to undertaking the works.

8.10 Unauthorised works to council trees

Due to the importance of trees, the council can, and do, take appropriate legal action under the Criminal Damage Act against third parties who damage or fell its trees without the council's consent.

To report vandalism or unauthorised tree works to the council please contact the tree team. Telephone 01962 848301 or email naturalenvironment@winchester.gov.uk

Policy 14 – Unauthorised works to council trees

The council will investigate all known acts of unauthorised trees works to council trees and seek prosecution where appropriate.

8.11 Tree works and wildlife protection

Trees are significantly important for wildlife and many species will breed, feed or shelter in trees. Birds and bats in particular can be impacted by works to trees and it is essential the council takes appropriate account of all wildlife legislation when undertaking works to trees.

Council tree works will meet criteria and best practice under relevant legislation and guidance including the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), Countryside Rights of Way Act 2000, Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended) (Habitat Regulations). For details on the procedures the council will undertake to ensure biodiversity is protected and enhanced, please see Appendix vi.

Policy 15 – Tree works and wildlife protection

Prior to the commencement of works to council owned and managed trees, the wildlife/habitat potential of the trees will be considered and appropriate checks made. Further advice, surveys, measures and/or relevant licences will be sought when appropriate. In some cases work may need to be postponed to minimise impacts on protected species.

Wherever possible habitat features such as cavities, dead wood, water pockets, log piles and standing dead trees (among others) will be retained in situ as valuable niche habitats for wildlife. The presence of protected and other species will be a material consideration during the tree inspection process.

In addition, tree owners should be aware of the provisions of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and in particular to Sections 1 and 9. These make it an offence to:

- Kill or injure any wild bird or any wild animal listed on Schedule 5;
- Damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird (when the nest is being built or is in use);
- Damage or destroy any place which certain wild animals use for shelter (including all bats, dormice and certain moths);
- Disturb certain wild animals occupying a place for shelter (including all bats, dormice and certain moths); or
- Pick, uproot or destroy any wild plant listed in Schedule 8.

Tree owners are advised prior to commencement of any works to consider whether such birds, animals or insects may be nesting or using the tree(s), and to ensure appropriate checks are made to ensure they do not contravene the legislation.

8.12 Green waste from council tree works

The council will seek to ensure all waste arising from tree works is reused or recycled by the tree contractors. They will also seek to re-use on-site wood products

including bark chip for mulching around newly planted and young trees and shrub beds.

Where situations allow, such as areas in woodland or large groups of trees located away from the public highway or footpaths, logs from works will be left on site as habitat piles. Secondary and primary branches will be chipped to create wood chip mulch which will be composted and used for mulching around the bases of newly planted and established trees or on footpaths. Larger logs will be sent to paper manufactures or the national grid for the energy production.

Policy 16 – Green waste from council tree works

The council will seek to ensure all waste arising from tree works is reused or recycled.

9. Other tree management issues

9.1 Pests, disease and biosecurity measures

Due to warmer winter conditions currently being experienced and the increase in the movement of plants and soil across borders, the risks of importing pest and diseases is increasing. Many British native tree species are under threat from pests and diseases imported on trees, shrub, plants, soils, wood packaging, vehicle tyres or soil on foot ware. Current key threats include Chalara Dieback of ash (*Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*) which is throughout the district and the oak processionary moth which severely affects oaks.

It is important that all tree owners are vigilant and the council will continue to prevent or minimise the introduction, establishment, spread and impacts of tree pests and diseases, including:

- Learning to recognise and report pests and diseases of concern to the Forestry commission using the Tree Alert online portal;
- Adopting good biosecurity practice to avoid the spread of organisms from place to place e.g. sterilising tools, footwear etc; or
- Not bringing soil or plants back from abroad.
- Only purchasing locally grown trees and shrubs;
- Reporting any notifiable pest and disease by means of the appropriate mechanisms and follow industry standard biosecurity measures as required;
- Asking contractors working on land owned or managed by Winchester City Council to sterilise equipment before and after use.

The forestry commission has published a link to aid tree owners to identify tree pest and disease at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/identify-a-tree-pest-or-disease-overview>.

Policy 17 – Pests, disease and biosecurity

Winchester City Council will be vigilant and continue to prevent or minimise the introduction, establishment, spread and impact of tree pests and disease.

This includes

- Learning to recognise and report pests and diseases;
- Adopting good biosecurity practice;
- Not bringing soil or plants back from abroad.
- Only purchasing locally grown trees and shrubs;
- Reporting any notifiable pest and disease by means of the appropriate mechanisms and follow industry standard biosecurity measures as required.

- Contractors working on land owned or managed by Winchester City Council to minimise the potential for contamination by sterilising equipment before and after use.

9.2 Ash Dieback (ADB).

Ash trees are a common tree located throughout the Winchester district. The council owns circa 1,200 individual ash trees across the district. However there are huge numbers of ash trees located within council and private woodlands and estates across the district.

Many of the ash trees across the district have been colonised with ADB which is caused by the fungus *Hymenoscyphus fraxineus* (formerly known as Chalara). The disease can infect ash trees of all ages and once an ash tree is infected, the disease restricts the flow of water and nutrients, leading to the trees rapid decline and potential death. ADB is now widespread across the UK and current estimates suggest that it could lead to the loss of 95% of all ash trees by 2030. This disease will have a dramatic effect on the landscape within the Winchester District as it is predicted that the effects of ADB on the local landscape will be greater than Dutch elm disease. However, it is not possible to predict the landscape or ecological impacts of the loss of ash trees at this time.

ADB is spread through the movement of diseased ash plants and logs/unsawn wood from infected trees. A ban was applied on all movement of ash trees and seeds in October 2012, however prior to that there were high volumes of ash (*F. excelsior*) imported to the UK every year.

If your ash tree becomes infected with the disease you must notify the Forestry Commission at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/find-a-specific-tree-pest-or-disease#tree-pests-in-alphabetical-order>,

The City Council is identifying and managing the risk associated with ADB via the production of an Ash Dieback Recovery Plan which will be available in the winter of 2022. Where trees with ash dieback have been identified, the council will consider removing the infected trees where appropriate and to restock using suitable replacement trees. However, the council will not automatically remove infected ash unless there is a strong arboricultural or risk need.

If you are concerned about an ash tree on land owned by Winchester City Council please report the issue by contacting the Winchester City council at naturalenvironment@winchester.gov.uk or telephone 01962 848301.

Policy 18 – Ash dieback.

Winchester City Council will not automatically remove infected ash trees. However, the council will undertake a more frequent inspection routine to monitor the trees health by means of cyclic tree inspection and risk zoning

Where infected dying or dead ash trees pose a high risk to life or property they will be removed.

Where the council receives a tree works application to fell **protected** ash trees that are potentially infected by ADB, a full arboricultural justification will be required by means of a professional arboricultural report or confirmation from the Forest Research Tree Health Diagnostic and Advisory Service that the trees are infected. Application and documentation for felling will be in accordance with the requirements of policy 20. (Determination of tree work applications for trees subject to protection from a Tree Preservation Order).

Winchester City Council will not support the removal of healthy ash trees without full arboricultural justification. The potential for an ash tree to become infected will not be a material consideration.

Winchester City Council will use planning conditions to ensure replacement trees of suitable species and size are planted where protected ash trees are removed.

Winchester City Council will plant replacement trees on land it owns or manages where infected ash trees are removed.

9.3 Tree planting, natural regeneration and establishment

The council is committed to delivering a regular and effective tree planting programme across its whole land holding which includes parks and open spaces, cemeteries, historic formal gardens, recreation grounds and housing land including tenants/communal gardens and open spaces. However, it is also important to note that whilst trees have biodiversity and carbon sequestration benefits, so do other habitats such as wetlands and permanent species rich grassland. Therefore trees will only be established where they add benefit in terms of biodiversity and carbon sequestration.

As part of the ongoing maintenance of the existing tree stock, some trees will need to be felled and the council will look to replace every tree lost with at least one new tree. In addition to planting, the council will continue to seek opportunities for natural regeneration, as this can potentially be more effective in delivering biodiversity, carbon and landscape benefits.

However, as always the location of any new trees must be carefully considered prior to establishment. In particular planting should only be undertaken on sites where it achieves carbon sequestration and biodiversity enhancements such as amenity grassland.

In addition all new trees should be managed in the first few years, with some form of management throughout their lifetime. The council will look to maximise the survival of all newly established trees. However, it is important to note this can be costly and resource intensive as newly established trees will often require watering in the first few years of their life, regular checks, protection for pests and weeds, formative pruning etc. In fact, the greatest cost of tree planting is the work needed to maximise their chances of survival once they have been placed in the ground.

Therefore any tree planting or natural regeneration will be carefully planned, communicated, funded and managed. Therefore when undertaking planting, the council will undertake the work in accordance with best practice and consider a range of factors including location, soil type, proximity to buildings and structures.

With regard to species selection, this will be determined by the site constraints and conditions and potential future issues such as global warming, pests and diseases. Therefore planting will not be limited to native tree species which are becoming increasingly vulnerable to pest and diseases and climate change. Instead, the council will plant a greater range of species including non-native trees, to ensure the trees in the district are more resilient to change.

Furthermore, due to the need to limit nitrates leaching from the soil and entering the water system, to provide biodiversity net gain and to support the climate emergency, the council will seek opportunities where appropriate to undertake larger planting schemes.

Prior to undertaking tree planting the council will inform ward members and relevant local residents of tree planting where necessary.

Policy 19 – Tree planting, natural regeneration and establishment

The council will undertake a regular tree planting/natural regeneration programme in accordance with best practice. In addition, it will seek opportunities for larger scale planting programmes where appropriate.

When considering new planting the council will consider:

- Location.
- Existing tree cover, habitat type and land use.
- Species type.
- Soil type and condition.
- Presence of services including underground and overground wires.
- Proximity to buildings and structures.
- Funding, cost of planting and maintenance requirements.

9.4 Tree related subsidence and heave

Subsidence and heave is a complex interaction between the soil, built structure, climate and vegetation that occurs on highly shrinkable soils such as the clay soils found in the south of the district. Damage occurs to the built structure when the soil supporting all or part of the structure dries out and/or re-hydrates, resulting in the built structure moving, causing structural cracking or differing floor levels.

Trees have a large root system and can contribute to soil drying out, particularly in heavy clay soils, although it does depend on the species and size of tree and

surrounding area. However, other factors can cause or exacerbate subsidence such as:

- Natural seasonal soil moisture changes;
- Localised geological variations;
- Lack of flank wall restraint;
- Over-loading of internal walls;
- Internal alterations reducing the load bearing capacity of the original building;
- Installation of replacement windows without proper support;
- Loft conversions;
- Settlement;
- Land slippage.
- Leaking drains or water supply.

Therefore if a council owned tree is cited as causing subsidence and/or heave, the council will need to see clear evidence that the tree is a causal factor in the damage to a built structure. This is expected to include:

- Root Identification report
- Geotechnical report
- Soil Analysis report
- Arboricultural report
- Engineer's Report
- Level monitoring report for a period of 1 year.
- Drain and water supply survey

Any claims made against the council for tree related damage or subsidence will need to be supported by strong expert evidence that demonstrates on the balance of strong probabilities, that the tree(s) is a causal factor in the property subsidence. Where necessary the council will obtain expert advice to verify the submitted evidence.

The legal onus is on the complainant to prove the tree(s) is the cause of the damage to the built structure. Property owners are advised to contact their property insurer if they believe their property is suffering from tree related damage or subsidence.

The policy below relates to council owned trees only. For trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order or located within a Conservation Area, please see sections 10 and 11.

Policy 20 – Tree related subsidence and heave

Where a tree is owned or managed by the council, the council will only agree to the removal of the tree(s) once it has been established (on the balance of probability and through the provision of sufficient expert evidence) that the tree(s) is an influencing cause of the alleged damage to the adjacent built structure.

10. Existing policy regarding tree protection and development management

Trees are protected through a range of mechanisms which are detailed below.

10.1 Winchester City Council Local Plan

The Winchester Local Plan contains numerous policies some of which directly relate to the trees and their protection. It is therefore essential that anyone wishing to undertake development which may impact on trees and their location, woodlands and important hedgerows should consult this document as early as possible. For a link to the current Local Plan please see Appendix vii

10.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and corresponding guidance

This provides information for anyone wishing to undertake development which may impact on trees and their locality, woodlands and important hedgerows. Again it is essential that anyone wishing to undertake development which may impact on trees and their location, woodlands and/or important hedgerows should consult this document as early as possible. For a link to the NPPF please see Appendix vii.

Policy 21 – Existing policy regarding tree protection and development management.

Any development works which impact on trees, woodlands and important hedgerows must have regard to the Winchester City Council Local Plan and all national guidance such as the National Planning Policy Framework.

11. Statutory Tree Projection - Trees and Development Management

11.1 Introduction

Under the UK planning system, Local Planning Authorities have a statutory duty to consider the protection and planting of trees and their setting, when assessing applications for proposed development. Winchester City Council tree officers act as consultees to the planning case officers, thereby providing expert advice and recommendations in line with all relevant legislation and guidance.

Trees that have taken many decades to mature can be easily damaged within minutes by construction activities. Soil compaction, soil disturbance; trenching and contamination can damage and kill tree roots which in turn impacts negatively on the tree, often leading to its early demise. Soil structure surrounding the roots is also at risk from compaction (such as from vehicle access) and contamination (i.e. spillage of substances toxic to tree roots) which can have further long term impacts on tree health. Damage to stems and branches from construction plant creates wounds to the tree which create opportunities for decay pathogens to colonise trees, thereby reducing their safe useful life.

Trees often do not recover from damage caused by construction activities and even if the development does not directly remove a tree, it can often die subsequently, following development, therefore the early provision of physical protection from construction activities is vital for the preservation of trees.

11.2 Trees in relation to development management

The potential affect on trees, whether statutorily protected by a Tree Preservation order/Conservation Area or not, is a material consideration that is taken into account in dealing with planning applications. Where trees are statutorily protected, it is important to contact the Local Planning Authority at Winchester City Council and follow the appropriate procedures before undertaking any works that may affect trees or their roots.

Therefore it is essential that from an early planning stage of the proposal, an applicant or land owner must take into account any trees which are directly or indirectly impacted by a proposed development. This includes trees/woodlands/ groups of trees within the redline boundary and trees which fall just outside the red line boundary but are on a neighbouring property. Consideration must be given to the tree itself and its root protection area. This can be achieved by a adhering to BS5837 (2012) and undertaking an Arboricultural impact assessment carried out by a suitably qualified and experienced Arboricultural consultant. .

The types of tree protection works which need to be considered if a tree is impacted by development includes (but not exclusively):-

- Tree protection fencing to create construction exclusion zones;

- Ground protection;
- Installation of special surfacing to prevent soil compaction;
- Arboricultural works to access site and facilitate proposal;
- Pre-start site meeting;
- Inspection of fencing and ground protection measures specified and agreed by the Local Planning Authority; and
- Tree planting programmes including tree canopy net gain.
- These works will need to be supervised by an arboricultural specialist appointed by the developer, at all times.

Therefore where an application is potentially impacting on trees, an applicant or landowner is required to submit the following documents to the council, to allow for a full and proper assessment of the proposed works.

- An arboricultural impact assessment
- An arboricultural work method statement
- A tree protection plan including details of ground protection, low impact foundations low impact surfacing, drains and utility service runs.

Failure to provide the necessary documents at application is likely to result in a delay to your application, a request for additional information to be supplied by the applicant/landowner and even refusal of a planning application.

Any documents submitted in relation to trees and development are expected to reflect the guidance confirmed within *BS5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations* (or any subsequent revisions).

In addition all planning applications for development must be in accordance with the 1APP local requirements list which can be found at

<https://www.winchester.gov.uk/planning/planning-applications/1app-local-list-documents/>

Please note: The removal of protected or unprotected trees, groups of trees and woodlands will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances and in accordance with the relevant legislation, policy and good practice recommendations. Where consent to remove trees for development is given, it is likely the council will request a ratio of one replacement tree to one felled for trees where the felled tree has a diameter at breast height (DBH) smaller than 30cm. and three replacement trees for every one felled where the DBH is greater than 30cm.

11.3 Key areas for applicants to consider

When submitting a planning application which has the potential to impact directly or indirectly on trees, an applicant should ensure:

- *Development proposals demonstrate that ground protection measures are in place prior to any work starting on site.* This is key to protect the soil within areas where new tree planting is to be undertaken;

- *That all suitable opportunities to maximise opportunities for trees and woodlands are identified and incorporated into the development.*
- *The development design makes allowances for future growth of root systems, stem and canopies for retained trees.* This is to reduce the number of issues and conflicts arising post construction in relation to existing trees.
- *New tree planting must follow the premise of “right tree in the right place”.* Any new tree planting must allow for sufficient soil volumes and space to allow trees to establish and grow to maturity including the root systems, stem and canopies.

Policy 22 – Trees in relation to development management

The Local Planning Authority at Winchester City Council requires any planning applications submitted for development which may affect trees directly/indirectly be completed in accordance with the 1 APP local requirements, the Winchester City Council Local Plan and the NPPF and all other relevant guidance and legislation.

In addition the following supporting documentation must be submitted in accordance with the recommendations confirmed within BS5837 (2012).

- Full tree survey to assess all trees on off the site that may be affected by the proposal.
- An Arboricultural impact assessment
- An Arboricultural work method statement
- A tree protection plan including details of ground protection, low impact foundations low impact surfacing, drains and utility service runs.

The Local Planning Authority at Winchester City Council will assess submitted development proposals that may affect trees health against the prevailing planning policies, supplementary planning documents and neighbourhood design statements.

The Local Planning Authority will use Tree Preservation Orders to protect trees which are under threat from development, but will not use Tree Preservation Orders solely to prevent development.

The removal of protected trees, groups of trees or woodland will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances and in accordance with the relevant legislation. Where protected trees are subject to felling, new suitable replacement trees of an appropriate number, species and size will be planted in an appropriate location to mitigate their loss.

With regard to tree planting, opportunities at the planning stage of the development for new planting will be considered and incorporated into the schedule of works where feasible, including achieving a net gain in tree canopy cover.

The chosen tree species for all new tree planting must be site appropriate and there must be adequate soil volume and sufficient space for the trees to potentially reach full maturity.

The Local Planning Authority at Winchester City Council will take into account the ultimate mature size and canopy spread of the retained trees that are on and near the proposed development site. Consideration will be given to the needs of the tree(s) in regard to the available space and the relationship to the proposed built structure, when assessing applications. This is to avoid future pressures on the tree(s) for reduction or removal due to leaf debris, nuts and seeds, bird fouling or light and shading issues.

11.4 Utility operations near trees and planning applications.

Utilities operations near trees will be managed in line with the guidance set out by the National Joint Utilities Group (Volume 4: Guidelines for the Planning, Installation and Maintenance of Utility Apparatus in Proximity to Trees (Issue 2, 2007)). If utility companies and their contractors fail to carry out works in accordance with this guidance, the council will issue planning enforcement stop notices to cease work immediately and may consider prosecution if protected trees have been damaged.

Policy 23 – Utility operations near trees and planning applications

If utility companies and/or their contractors fail to carry out works in accordance with all relevant guidance, Winchester city Council will issue planning enforcement stop notices to cease work immediately and may consider prosecution if appropriate.

It is essential that all utility companies gain permission from Winchester City Council for any works to a council owned/managed tree prior to undertaking the work.

11.5 Ancient woodland and ancient trees in relation to development management.

There is Standing Advice produced by Natural England and the Forestry Commission on planning decisions in relation to ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees.

Any applicant should take account of this Standing Advice when looking to undertake any works which may impact on ancient woodland or ancient trees themselves or on the tree roots, soil, seed bank, historical value, environmental and/or ecological benefits that the tree provides.

Ancient or veteran trees take many years to develop and are irreplaceable once damaged. Ancient woodlands, ancient trees and veteran trees provide irreplaceable habitats for fungi, and soil microorganisms plus ground flora, bats, birds and other wildlife. Development and construction activities can have a highly detrimental impact on the health of an ancient woodland or trees, and the wildlife they support. See appendix ii for a link to the Standing Advice.

12. Statutory Tree Protection– Tree Preservation Orders (TPO’s)

12.1 TPO’s – Introduction

Under the provisions of Section 198 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the council has a duty to protect individual trees, groups of trees, woodlands or areas by means of a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). However it can only be applied to trees which are deemed to have sufficient amenity value.

A Tree Preservation Order may be placed on a tree because of:

- A request to undertake work on trees in a Conservation Area which are deemed to have a detrimental impact on the tree’s health and amenity value.
- Potential threats from development.
- Information provided by members of the public, neighbours and others
- Information provided by City Council Members and officers.

Once a potential need for a tree(s) to be protected has been raised with the council, officers will assess whether it is expedient in the interests of amenity to make a provisional Tree Protection Order. Whilst it is legally acceptable to TPO any tree, the council does not consider this to be appropriate and will only protect trees which are considered to be under threat either now or in the future from felling or unsuitable management and which are of sufficient amenity value.

All new TPO’s will be confirmed within 6 months of issue.

The Secretary of State has produced Planning Practice Guidance which explains the legislation governing Tree Preservation Orders and tree protection in Conservation Areas, and this can be viewed at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/tree-preservation-orders-and-trees-in-conservation-areas>

A Tree Preservation Order is a legal document that prohibits:

Cutting down; topping; lopping; uprooting; wilful damage and/or wilful destruction of trees without consent from the Local Planning Authority at Winchester City Council.

Policy 24 – The placing of TPO’s on trees

Winchester City Council will protect individual trees, groups of trees, woodlands or areas by means of a TPO where trees are deemed to have sufficient amenity value and where there is a perceived threat to the tree either now or in the future, where possible.

There are 4 types of TPOs:-

- *Individual TPO* - This relates to individual trees and there is no limit on the number of individual trees that can be included within a TPO.
- *Group TPO* - This relates to trees in a group which can be of any number of trees. There is also no limit as to the number of groups that be included in the TPO.
- *Woodland TPO* - This safeguards the woodland as a whole and includes all present and future trees within the area. It can be of any size or number of trees and there is no limit to the number of woodlands that can be included within the TPO.
- *Area Orders* - area orders are used to protect individual trees dispersed over an area. Authorities may either protect all the trees within an area defined on the orders map or only those species which are expedient in the interests of amenity. The area category is intended for short term protection in an emergency.

12.2 How to find out if your tree is protected by a TPO

Before carrying out work on a tree the owner/contractor must check to see if it is protected. It is a criminal offence to cut down, uproot, wilfully destroy a tree, top, lop or wilfully damage a tree in a way that is likely to destroy it or causes or permits such activities. The penalty for undertaking unauthorised work to a protected tree can be unlimited fines and custodial sentence if the offence is deemed significant.

To find out if a tree is protected by a TPO please go to the Winchester City Council website - www.winchester.gov.uk/planning/trees and follow the links.

It is important to note that a TPO does not prevent works to a tree. Assuming the works are reasonable and the person undertaking the works has the appropriate permission in advance from the local planning authority at Winchester city council, the works can be undertaken.

12.3 Applying to undertake works to trees protected by a TPO

All works to trees protected by a TPO must have the approval of the Local Planning Authority at Winchester City Council. To apply for approval applicants can:-

1. Download an application form at <https://www.winchester.gov.uk/planning/planning-applications/winchester-1app-forms>. Please use Form No 26.

2. Submitting an application through the planning portal at <https://www.winchester.gov.uk/planning/trees>
3. Request a hard copy of the application form by contacting the tree team at Winchester City Council on 01962 848301 and naturalenvironment@winchester.gov.uk.

It is essential an applicant provides all the necessary information when submitting an application for works to a tree protected by a TPO. In particular, the applicant MUST provide the following:

- Completed and dated application form, with all mandatory questions answered.
- Sketch plan showing the location of all tree(s);
- A full and clear specification of the works to be carried out;
- A statement of reasons for the proposed work; and
- A tree report by a tree professional (arboriculturist) or other to provide evidence in support of statement of reasons where required by the standard application form.

Failure to supply sufficiently precise and detailed information may result in an application being rejected or delayed. In addition the council is not obliged to accept incomplete, vague or ambiguous applications and if the information is not acceptable the application will be returned to the applicant.

If an applicant is unsure of the works required, we recommend they contact a reputable tree consultant before applying to the Council. A list of consultants approved by the Arboricultural Association can be found at www.trees.org.uk/find-a-professional.

Unfortunately due to legal and resourcing constraints it is not appropriate nor possible for a council tree officer to provide advice.

12.4 Process for applications received by Winchester City Council

Assuming that all the necessary information is provided, the application will be validated within 5 days of receipt (where possible) and the applicant will receive notification that the application has been validated. If the tree owner has appointed an agent to act on their behalf, the confirmation letter will be sent to the agent along with an orange notice that must be displayed for 21 days at the site where the proposed tree works are to be carried out. In addition all relevant neighbours and the Local Parish Council will be notified of the application and will be given the chance to comment on the proposal.

In addition the council publishes a weekly planning list of all planning applications including TPO applications in the local newspaper.

The City Council also keeps a register of all applications for consent under each Tree Preservation Order. This register is available to the public at <https://planningapps.winchester.gov.uk/online-applications/search.do?action=simple>

The council will normally determine a tree works application within 8 weeks of it being validated, unless an extension of time has been agreed with the applicant for more complex cases. In addition, there may be times when the determination takes longer than 8 weeks, but in this situations the council will be in communication with the applicant or their agent advising them of the current status of the application.

The Local Planning Authority may determine tree works applications as follows:

- *Refusal:* If the Local Planning authority is minded to refuse a tree works application the Council will make contact with the application prior to the decision being issued.
- *Grant consent unconditionally*
- *Grant consent, but with conditions such as to regulate the standard of work, or planting of a replacement tree.*

Where the Local Planning Authority refuses a tree works application the tree owner has a right of appeal to the Planning Inspectorate. Details of how to appeal a decision are in the decision letter.

Consent for tree works approved by the Local Planning Authority is valid for 2 years from the date the decision notice was issued.

Please note, the council has the power to take legal action against anyone contravening a Tree Preservation Order under Section 210(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, which provides that anyone found guilty of these offences is liable, if convicted to unlimited fines and/or a custodial sentence.

12.5 Process if a tree protected by a TPO is dead or dangerous

If your tree (which is protected by a TPO) is dead or you consider it dangerous, consent is not required but the council should be given five days' notice before any works are carried out, unless it is an emergency. In these situations we still advise that you notify the council as soon as possible to minimise any negative repercussions. However, we strongly recommend that photographs of the dead or dangerous tree are taken prior to its remove and forwarded to Winchester City Council as soon as possible.

It should be noted that the five day notice is an exemption to trees protected by the Town Country Planning Act 1990 – (Tree Preservation) (England) Regulations (2012), and it is only permitted under this notice to carry out tree works on a protected tree where it is urgently needed to remove an immediate risk of serious harm. Where a breach is suspected the onus will be on the tree owner to prove that the tree(s) was exempt from protection due to the risk of serious harm it posed before removal.

If there are dead branches within the canopy of a protected tree, Local Planning Authority consent is not required to remove these. However, when considering dead wood, tree owners, their agents and authorities should consider whether the deadwood is providing habitat for protected wildlife species and therefore protected

under other legislation. Once again, it is advisable to photograph dead branches before they are removed to evidence that there has not been a breach of a TPO.

The council has the power to take legal action against anyone contravening a Tree Preservation Order under Section 210(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, which provides that anyone found guilty of these offences is liable, if convicted to an unlimited fine and/or a custodial sentence.

Please see section 8.3 for details of subsidence related applications for works to trees that are protected by a Tree Preservation Order.

Policy 25 – Tree works applications for trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order

Tree works applications for trees protected by a TPO which contain all necessary information will be validated within five days of receipt by the City Council.

Winchester City Council will not accept incomplete, vague or ambiguous tree works applications for trees protected by a TPO.

The council will carefully assess each tree works application in regard to the submitted proposals including the potential impact on the local landscape, the setting and character of the area, the public visual amenity value and health of the trees. The application will be assessed against local planning policy and a decision made as to whether the proposed tree works are justified.

Winchester City Council will not consent to tree works that will have a detrimental effect on the tree(s) health and visual public amenity value without full arboricultural justification.

The council where necessary will use conditions when granting consent for tree works to ensure that:

- All consented works are in accordance to good arboricultural and forestry standards;
- New replacement trees are planting where consent is given to fell trees.

Decisions for TPO tree works applications will be issued within 8 weeks.

13. Statutory Tree Projection –trees located in Conservation Areas

13.1 Introduction

There are 37 Conservation Areas in the Winchester District. All trees which have a stem diameter of 75mm or above at 1.5m above ground level are automatically protected in a Conservation Area, and cannot be pruned or removed without first giving Winchester City Council 6 week's written notice

Conservation areas are designated for their 'special architectural and historic interest'. They vary in character, form and size from a small group of buildings to a large part of a town, but their designation means that they are all worthy of protection as areas of special merit.

13.2 How to find out if a tree/s are protected by a Conservation Area

Before carrying out work on a tree in a Conservation Area, the owner/contractor must check to see if it is protected. It is a criminal offence to cut down, uproot, wilfully destroy a tree, top, lop or wilfully damage a tree in a way that is likely to destroy it or causes or permits such activities. The penalty for undertaking unauthorised work to a protected tree within a Conservation area can be up to an unlimited fine and/or a custodial sentence if the offence is deemed serious.

To find out if a tree is protected by a Conservation Area notice, please go to the Winchester City Council website - www.winchester.gov.uk/planning/trees and follow the links.

13.3 Applying to undertake works to trees protected by a Conservation Area

All works to trees protected by a Conservation Area must have the approval of Winchester City Council. To apply for approval applicants can:-

1. Download an application form at <https://www.winchester.gov.uk/planning/planning-applications/winchester-1app-forms>. Please use Form No 26.
2. Submitting an application through the planning portal at <https://www.winchester.gov.uk/planning/trees>
3. Request a hard copy of the application form by contacting the tree team at Winchester City Council on 01962 848301 or naturalenvironment@winchester.gov.uk. Tree works application forms can be

downloaded at <https://www.winchester.gov.uk/planning/planning-applications/winchester-1app-forms>

4. Email Winchester City Council providing the following information
 - a. A sketch plan showing the precise location of the tree(s);
 - b. A full and clear specification of the works to be carried out.
 - c. A statement of reasons for the proposed work

If you are unsure as to what work you would like to carry out and would like to seek help, we recommend you contact a Tree Consultant before applying to the council. A list of consultants approved by the Arboricultural Association can be found at www.trees.org.uk/find-a-professional

Applications or notifications that are complete will be validated within five days of receipt. The applicant or agent will be notified that the council has received the notification. As there is no requirement for the council to consult on works to be undertaken to trees in the Conservation Area, the council will not notify neighbours and the Local Parish Council of the proposed works. In addition, there is no requirement to display an orange notice.

However, the council will publish a weekly list of all planning applications received and this will include proposed tree works in Conservation Areas. This can be located at <https://www.winchester.gov.uk/planning/planning-applications/weekly-lists/weekly-lists-2021>

The Local Planning Authority keeps a register of all applications for consent under each Conservation Area Notification. This register is publicly available and a copy of the register may be viewed at <https://planningapps.winchester.gov.uk/online-applications/search.do?action=simple>

If your tree is dead or you consider it dangerous, consent is not required but the council should be given five days' notice before any works are carried out, unless it is an emergency. In these situations we still advise that you notify the council as soon as possible to minimise any negative repercussions. However, we strongly recommend that photographs of the dead or dangerous tree are taken prior to its removal and forwarded to the council as soon as possible.

It should be noted that whilst the five notice is an exemption to trees protected within a Conservation Area, it is only permitted under this notice to carry out tree works on a protected tree where it is urgently needed, to remove an immediate risk of serious harm, as soon as practicable after works become necessary.

If you have dead branches in your protected tree, local Planning Authority consent is not required to remove these. However, where safe to do so, it is advisable to retain dead wood, as it provides a valuable biodiversity habitat. Landowners, their agents and other authorities are advised to photograph dead branches or whole trees which are dead or dangerous, before they are removed, to record they have not breached tree protection within the Conservation area. Landowners, their agents and other authorities are encouraged to contact the tree team at Winchester City Council prior to removing the deadwood on 01962 848301 or by email: naturalenvironment@winchester.gov.uk.

The council has the power to take legal action against anyone contravening Tree protection within a Conservation Area under Section 211 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, which provides that anyone found guilty of these offences may be liable to an unlimited fine and/or a custodial sentence.

13.4 Determination of Conservation Area notifications.

Winchester City Council as the Local Planning Authority will determine Conservation Area notifications within six weeks of receipt, using one of three options:

- Raise no objection and allow the proposed tree works to go ahead.
- Raise an objection and make a Tree Preservation Order to stop the proposed works from going ahead. Where the Local planning Authority decides to raise an objection and is considering serving a TPO the councils Tree Officer will liaise with the tree owner or agent before proceeding.
- Not respond. Once the six week period following receipt has elapsed, the applicant is able to undertake the works.

Policy 26 – Trees in Conservation areas.

Tree work applications for trees protected by a Conservation Area which contain all necessary information will be validated within five days of receipt by the City Council.

The Local Planning Authority will not accept incomplete, vague or ambiguous tree works applications for trees protected by a Conservation Area Notification. (For clarification complete application or notification means all of the requirements detailed in section 17.1).

The Local Planning Authority will carefully assess the submitted proposals for each tree works application, focusing on the potential impact on the local landscape, the setting and character of the Conservation Area, the public visual amenity value and health of the trees. These will be assessed against local planning policy and consideration will be given to whether the proposed tree works are justified.

Where the Local Planning Authority raises an objection to the proposed works, the Local Planning Authority will inform the applicant and give the applicant the chance to withdraw the application before serving a Tree Preservation Order to stop the proposed tree works from going ahead.

The Secretary of State has produced Planning Practice Guidance which explains the legislation governing Tree Preservation Orders and tree protection in Conservation Areas, and this can be viewed at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/tree-preservation-orders-and-trees-in-conservation-areas>

14. Statutory Tree Protection - Enforcement

14.1 Introduction

Under the planning legislation, the council has powers to take action against people who carry out unauthorised works to protected trees without consent from the Local Planning Authority under Section 210(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (see section 10 and 11 above).

With regard to enforcement in relation to development management, the council may respond to any complaint or an alleged breach to protection or a potential non-compliance of tree protection conditions.

14.2 Enforcement Tree Planting Notices

Winchester City Council shall place conditions on each development management application and/or TPO application requiring the planting of a suitable replacement tree, if a tree has been felled legitimately as part of the application. If this condition is breached, the council can enforce the replanting of a tree through a Tree Replacement Notice, as advised by the Secretary of State in accordance with section 207 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990.

The landowner has the right of appeal to the Secretary of State via the Planning inspectorate to the Tree replacement notice as per the procedure laid out in the Planning Practice Guidance publication which can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/tree-preservation-orders-and-trees-in-conservation-areas>

If the landowner fails to plant the replacement trees as instructed by Winchester City Council, the council shall plant the replacement tree(s) and recover the cost of the planting from the landowner.

Policy 27 – Enforcement where there has been a breach to tree protection

The council will consider any complaint or alleged breach to the protection of a tree or a potential non-compliance of tree protection conditions.

Where there is sufficient evidence of a breach, provided that it is in the public interest to do so, the council may initiate criminal prosecution proceedings.

Where replacement trees have not been planted, the Local Planning Authority will issue Tree Replacement Notices to enforce replacement tree planting.

As well as the enforcement powers under the planning legislation, Winchester City Council as a landowner is able to take action under the Criminal Damage Act 1971 Chapter 48 against third parties that fell or cause wilful damage or destruction to a council tree.

15. Areas of dispute

15.1 Neighbour disputes relating to tree works applications and Conservation Area notifications.

The council has no authority or delegated powers to intervene in a dispute between neighbours over trees.

It is possible to apply for works to trees not under your ownership. However, if consent is given by the Planning Authority for the works, the applicant must still gain permission from the landowner/owner of the tree in order to enter the neighbouring property and undertake the consented works.

15.2 High hedges

The Local Planning Authority has powers under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 to consider unresolved complaints relating to third party evergreen high hedges. The Local Planning Authority Enforcement team at Winchester City Council undertake this service. The powers only apply:

- To evergreen or semi-evergreen hedges more than two metres high.
- Where the height has an adverse effect on the reasonable enjoyment of your domestic property.
- Where the complainant has taken reasonable steps to settle the dispute themselves. Making a formal complaint should be a last resort.
- Where the complainant has paid a fee to the council to have a formal complaint considered. The fee is non-refundable even if the complaint is upheld.

For more information please contact the Planning Enforcement team on 01962 848 480 or email enf@winchester.gov.uk.

To submit formal complaints in regard to a high hedge go to <https://www.winchester.gov.uk/planning/planning-enforcement/high-hedges>

15.3 Mediation

Before contacting the Local Planning Authorities Enforcement team, neighbours are encouraged to amicably resolve the problem between themselves. However if an amicable solution cannot be achieved mediation may be an option. A mediation service may be found at <http://www.winchestermediation.org/>

Policy 28 - Disputes

Winchester City Council will not intervene if there is a dispute between neighbours over high hedges or trees unless they submit an appropriate application to the Planning Enforcement team. Prior to this the council encourages neighbours to seek mediation to resolve issues directly.

15.4 Dangerous trees in private ownership.

The council has discretionary powers under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 to undertake works to trees in private ownership if they are imminently dangerous i.e. pose an imminent threat to life or property such as

- A tree developing a pronounced lean and there is imminent risk of whole tree failure.
- A tree which has snapped and is leaning on another tree or structure.
- A tree rocking under wind loading from the effects of root severance or decay.
- A large hanging branch which is liable to fall and cause harm to life and property.
- A large split which is likely to lead to a risk of failure.
- A tree which has failed and requires removal.
- A tree with extensive decay within its main stem.

Where the tree owner can be identified, under the provisions set out in Sections 23(2) and 23(3) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous provisions) Act 1976, the council can serve notice on the tree owner to carry out specified safety works within a period of not less than 21 days. If the specified safety works are not carried out, the council has the power to enter the land, carry out the works and reclaim any reasonable costs incurred from the landowner. Where the owner cannot be identified or is unwilling to carry out the specified tree works, the council has the power to enter the land and carry out works to alleviate the risk and to then place a charge against the property for the costs of the tree works.

The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 does not provide for the council to become involved with private trees causing a nuisance to a neighbouring property by causing shade, blocking views or dropping leaves, flowers or fruit etc. unless the trees are imminently dangerous.

Please note: The council will undertake work to alleviate the hazard arising from privately owned trees only as a last resort as set out in the Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1976.

Policy 29 – Dangerous trees in private ownership

Winchester City Council may use its discretionary powers in relation to dangerous trees in private ownership if the tree poses an imminent threat to life or property and will look to claim any costs incurred.

16. Forestry Commission Felling Licences

16.1 Introduction

Felling licences are required for large scale tree felling and replanting and are issued by the Forestry Commission. The need for a felling license is separate to the need to apply for works protected by a TPO or Conservation Area Notification.

When applying for a felling licence, the guidance states:

“In any calendar quarter you may fell up to 5 cubic metres (m³) of growing trees on your property without a felling licence (providing that the trees are not protected), as long as no more than 2m³ are sold”.

If you wish to fell more than the above allowance you will need to apply to the Forestry Commission for a felling licence. The Forestry Commission can be contacted at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tree-felling-getting-permission>

To fell trees without the Forestry Commissions permission is a criminal offence, and offenders may be prosecuted for breaches of a felling licence.

17. Ancient and Veteran Trees

17.1 Introduction

Ancient trees are exceptionally valuable from a biodiversity, cultural and historical point of view and are almost irreplaceable habitats. Very few trees of any species become ancient.

Veteran trees may not be particularly old but have decay pockets, deadwood, bark and splits that are habitats for a wide range of wildlife and fungi. Veteran trees vary in size - a tree does not have to be large to be classed as a veteran.

All ancient trees are veteran trees, but not all veteran trees are ancient. The age at which a tree becomes ancient or veteran will vary by species because each species ages at a different rate

When left to age, trees reach their full canopy extent and then naturally die back to smaller trees. As they do so they drop branches, which break down and are reabsorbed back into the soil, allowing the tree to take up the nutrients again. It is this process which allows a tree to live for many years.

It is said that an oak spends 300 years growing, 300 years living and 300 years dying

Both ancient and veteran trees are particularly important from a biodiversity cultural and historical interest due to their age, size and condition. Typically they are trees which have been coppiced or pollarded over the years and are usually found in woodland, parkland (particularly Historic Parks and Gardens), cemeteries, hedgerows and along riverbanks. Therefore their correct management is essential.

17.2 Management of Ancient and Veteran Trees

Veteran trees require specialist management to ensure that they are correctly maintained for their ecological and environmental benefits. It is important the management on any ancient or veteran tree should only be carried out if it is absolutely necessary.

Not only should the tree itself be carefully managed, but also the surrounding environment where the ancient or veteran tree is located.

It may be necessary to carry out the following:

- Restrict access beneath the crown spread of the tree by the use of fencing
- Remove competing vegetation such as grass.

- Remove hard surfacing
- De-compact the rooting area of the tree using air injection
- Apply appropriate nutrient to promote healthy tree growth
- Irrigate on a regular basis especially during prolonged dry spells.
- Mulch with a well-rotted woodchip mulch under the tree to beyond its canopy spread to a minimum area equal to its root protection area
- Dead wood management for ecological/ biodiversity reasons
- Create decaying wood habitats;
- Propping of low long branches to stop branch failure.
- Carry out appropriate tree surgery in accordance with good arboricultural practices for the management of ancient or veteran trees
- Write a management plan

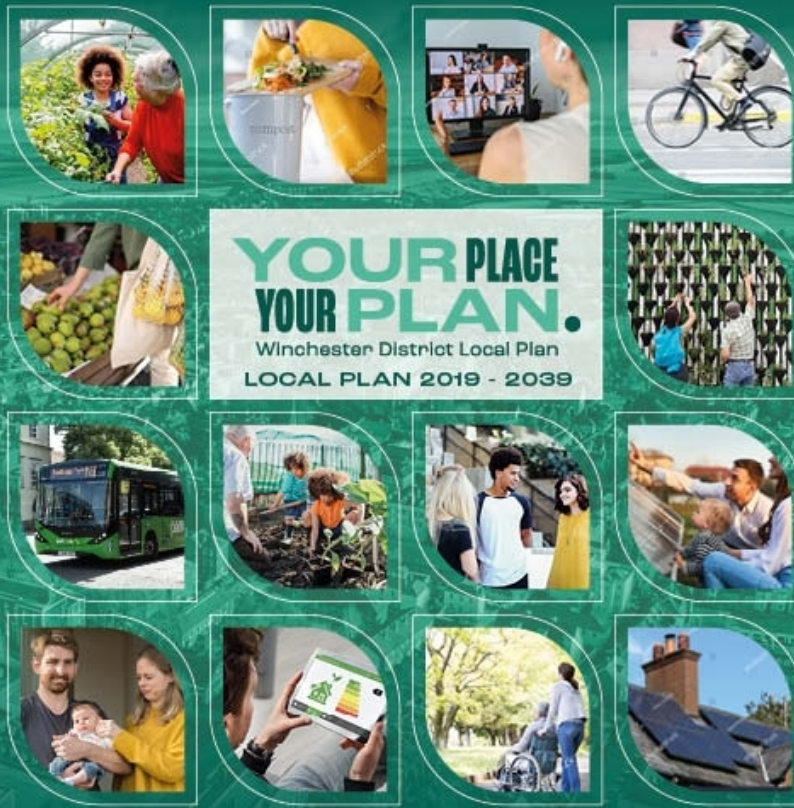
Veteran trees should be checked at regular intervals and works carried out to trees only if deemed necessary and following consultation with the Natural Environment Team/council Arboriculture Officers. Further information for the management of ancient or veteran trees can be found at

<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/75035>

Policy 30 – Veteran and Ancient trees.

Although Winchester City Council does not own or manage many veteran and/or ancient trees, where they exist, the council will undertake their management in line with best practice and national guidance.





**YOUR PLACE
YOUR PLAN.**
Winchester District Local Plan
LOCAL PLAN 2019 - 2039

REGULATION 18 CONSULTATION PLAN

NOVEMBER 2022





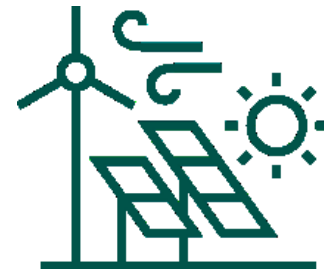




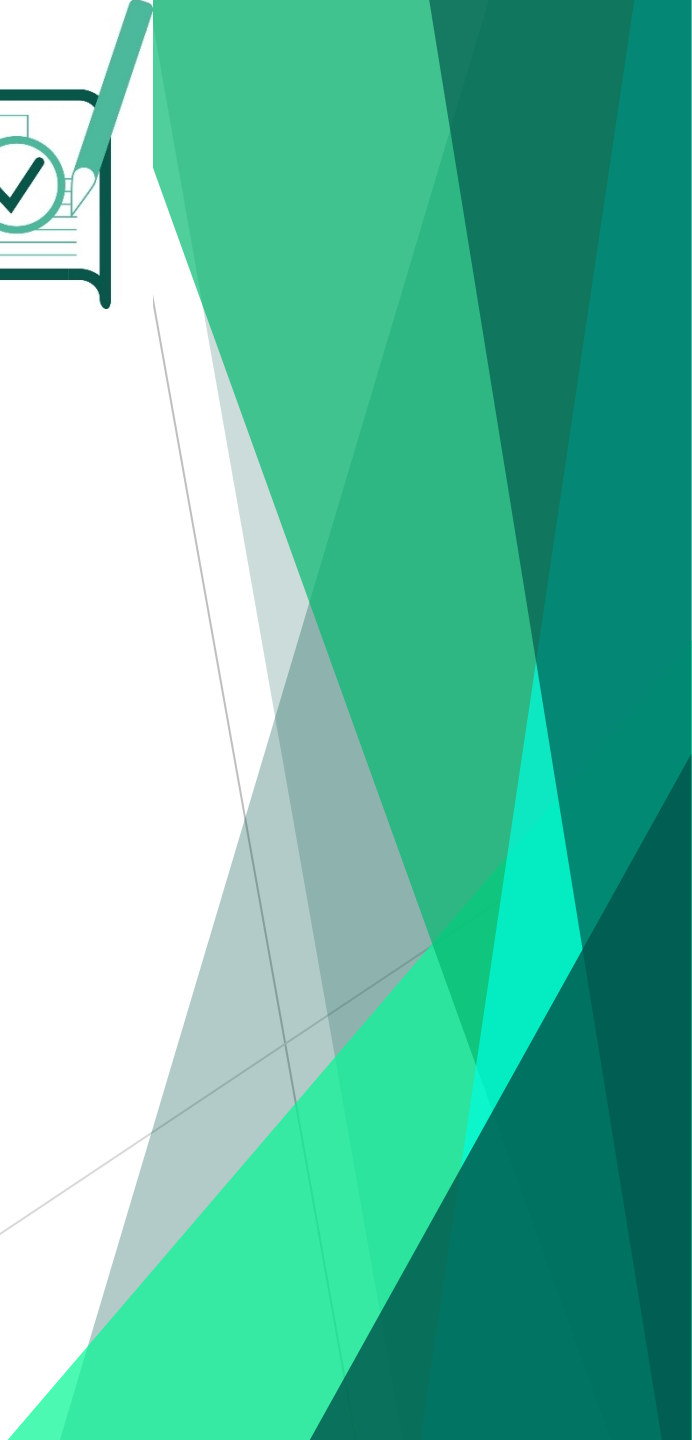








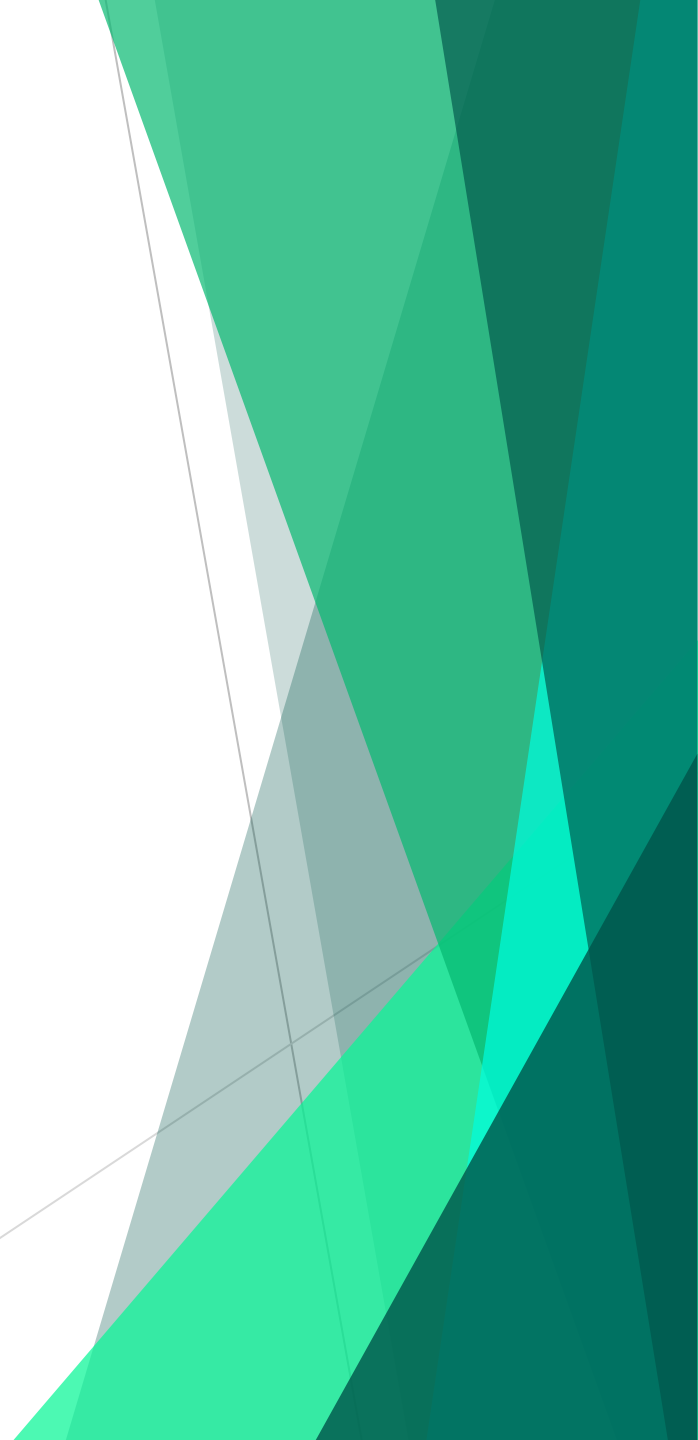


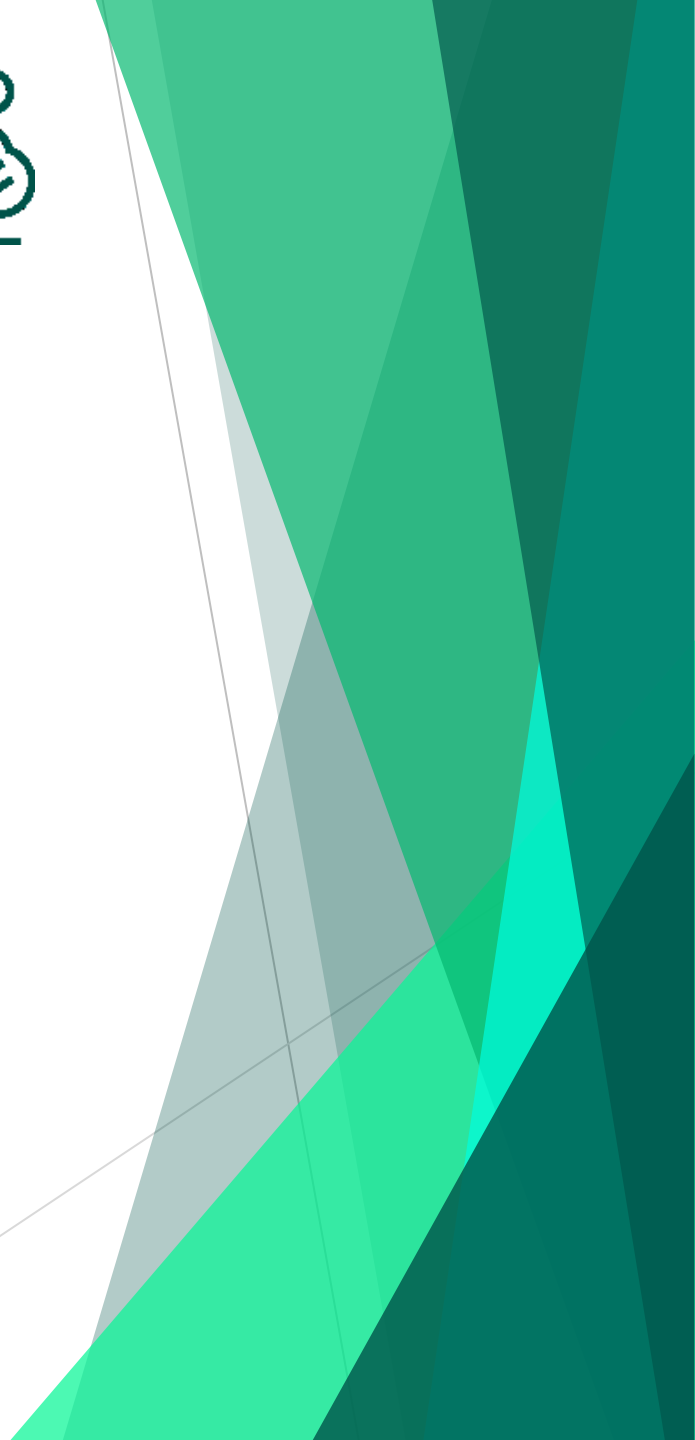




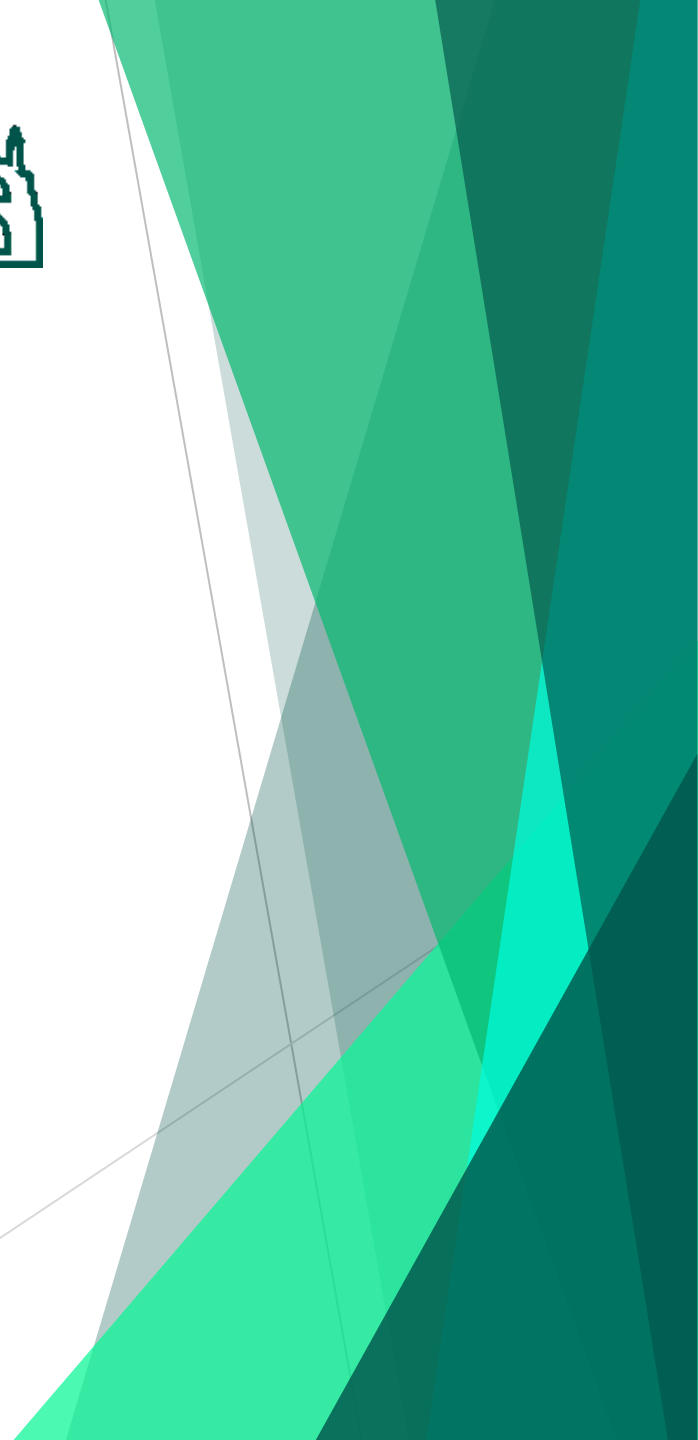






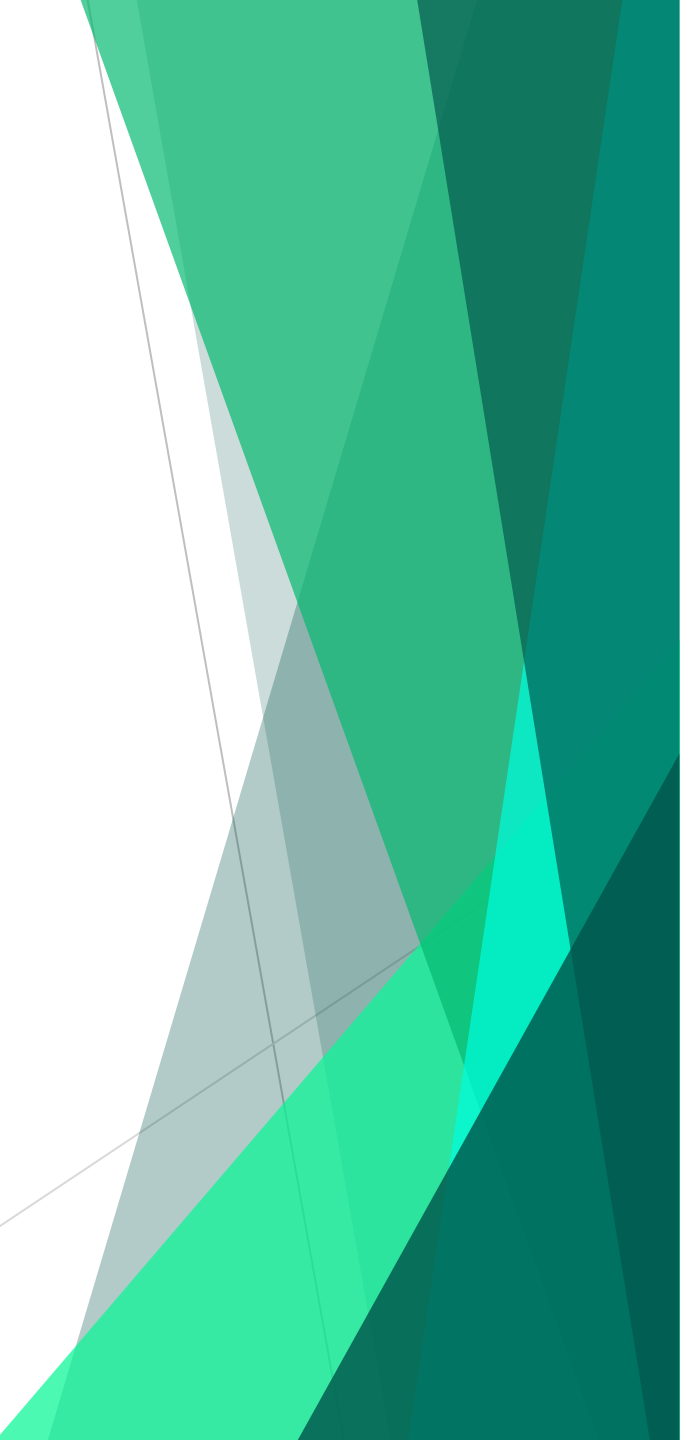






























Citizen Space Manage Activities Site - Bethany Stokes - Help



Home Find Activities We Asked, You Said, We Did

Welcome to WCC's Consultation Pages.

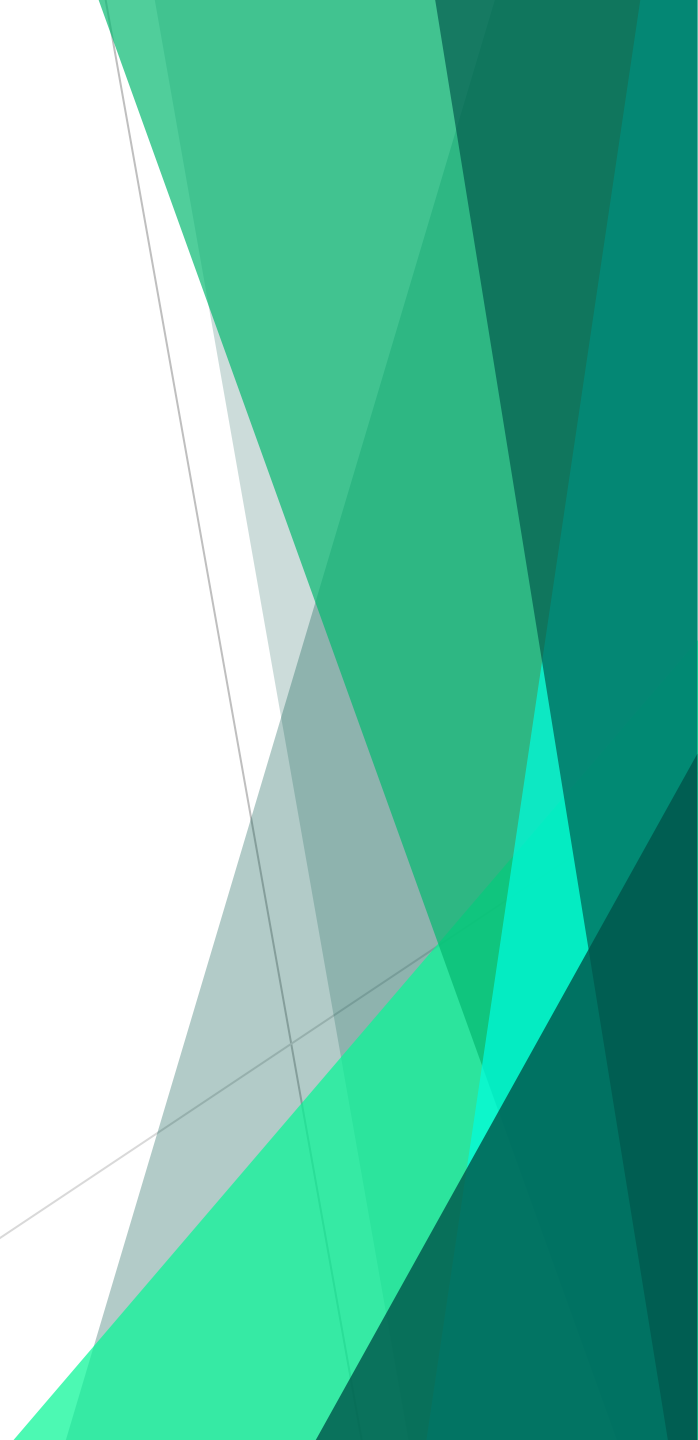
We're committed to involving people in decisions that affect them, and value their input in planning, delivering and evaluating services. The Council is keen to make it easier for you to have your say on the decisions that affect you.

Consultations provide you with an opportunity to have your say. They also help us to find out what you think and to understand your priorities and concerns.

Your participation makes a difference.

Open Consultations

<p>Community Governance Review - North Whiteley (Phase 1)</p> <p>Winchester City Council is consulting local people on options to change the current parish and town council arrangements in Whiteley and Cudridge. This will aim to better serve the new housing in the North Whiteley Major Development Area (MDA). More</p>	<p>Closes 30 September 2022</p>
<p>Station Approach</p> <p>This is an opportunity to enhance a much-loved area of our city and reimagine its cultural, business and retail offer in a way that keeps the area relevant, enhances our recovering economy and complements the existing and developing offers across other quarters of our</p>	<p>Closes 21 October 2022</p>





Winchester Town Forum 9 November 2022

Report by City Centre informal group

Mural

Molly Hawkins' new mural in St Maurice's Covert was opened on 28 July. Molly is renowned for her large-scale public artworks, featuring bright, vivid colours, patterns, and bold, energetic designs. Her design for the covert has fused together her contemporary style with different aspects of Winchester's local heritage. It also serves as a signpost for visitors, reflecting that the covert is a useful shortcut between the High Street and the cathedral.

The mural comes towards the end of a long-term City Council project to improve the St Maurice's covert, with new paving, lighting and seating. The final piece will be the installation of a memorial plaque naming the 51 men of St Maurice's parish who died in 1914-19.

Street markets

The Council and BID commissioned an external review by The Retail Group to assess the economic value of street markets in the district, and identify opportunities for development. The consultants' report (March 2022) confirms that the markets in Winchester expand the choice of goods available and attract more customers to the city. They find clear evidence that the markets bring extra business to local shops, rather than providing unfair competition (as has been claimed). They also note that the market employs about 150 people, and provides opportunities for young people to enter employment and even start their own business.

Suggested improvements include stronger promotion and signage; filling some gaps in the range of goods available; encouraging more local/regional producers; and increasing trading space or days. The City Centre group notes that there is limited opportunity to expand the market space - some of the High Street is too narrow - and an attractive long term option might be to develop the lower High Street at the Guildhall as a market square.

Night time economy

The Council and Town Forum support the development of Winchester's important night time economy, but the city centre is also many people's home, and we need to get the balance right. Nearby residents were concerned when Vodka Club's application for extended opening hours was approved by the Licensing Committee recently. We hope that the conditions applied by the Committee will help to ensure the right balance. They include closing the club to new entrants at 02:00 and security patrols in the neighbourhood after closing time. Ward councillors recognise that there have been real problems, and will continue to work with the community. Serious incidents must of course always be reported to the police.

Anti-social behaviour

We reported back in July that, working with BID, the Council had allocated additional resources and priority to removing graffiti. The teams have done a great job, but the problem has not gone away, and recently there have been several more serious acts of vandalism and related crime, often at car parks around (and beyond) the city centre. This is frustrating and unacceptable. Beyond keeping on top of graffiti, the Council is liaising very closely with the Police, building on the joined-up work that has significantly improved

the environment around Kings Walk. The Police are using Criminal Behaviour Orders ‘to restrict the activities of persistent offenders by excluding them from the city centre’ and also issued a Dispersal Order in the last week of October. They report that ‘there have been some significant arrests ... of persistent offenders that have led to short-term custodial sentences’, and are seeking additional resources for more cameras and ASB patrols. Adults can be prosecuted, but the Police believe a small number of children (14-16) are responsible for much of the problem. We suspect this spike is partly a social consequence of Covid, as lockdown restricted some teenager’s social development. So as well as cracking down, the Council (and Police) are working to support the organisations and facilities which support Winchester’s youngsters (and their families), and the most marginalised in our community.

Virtual Anglo-Saxons

Opening on 12 November, *878AD* is a new interactive attraction at the Brooks Centre, with video projection, Saxon artefacts and live performance, plus an augmented reality adventure around the city. *878AD* is a partnership between Ubisoft (*Assassin’s Creed Valhalla*), Hampshire Cultural Trust, the City and County Councils and Arts Council England. It will attract younger visitors to Winchester, raise awareness of our rich history, and wave a flag for our modern creative skills. A ticket allows unlimited repeat visits for a year. 878AD.co.uk.

Playground renewal

As part of the Town Forum’s ongoing playground refurbishment programme, the popular playground in Abbey Gardens is currently closed pending the installation of new equipment. Users (and their grown-ups) were consulted last summer, and the most popular requests were for a slide and multiplay equipment (plus bins, benches and picnic tables). The new playground should be open in April next year.

WINCHESTER TOWN FORUM – SCHEDULED ITEMS OF BUSINESS ETC

9 NOVEMBER 2022					
	BUSINESS	LEAD OFFICER	COMMITTEE DATE		STATUS/COMMENT
	Winchester Town Account Medium Term Financial Position	Darren Kennedy	9 November 2022		WTF313
	Upgrades/Replacements to Bus Shelters	Andy Hickman	9 November 2022		WTF312
	Tree Strategy	Ivan Gurdler/Steve Lincoln	9 November 2022		CAB3351
	Local Plan update – Regulation 18 public consultation	Adrian Fox	9 November 2022		Presentation
26 JANUARY 2023					
	BUSINESS	LEAD OFFICER	COMMITTEE DATE		STATUS/COMMENT
	Winchester Town Account Budget for 2023/24 (to be recommended to Cabinet)	Darren Kennedy	26 January 2023		

13 MARCH 2023

	BUSINESS	LEAD OFFICER	COMMITTEE DATE		STATUS/COMMENT
	St Giles Hill Park Management Plan	Richard Smith	13 March 2023		

Any other items provisionally listed to come forward to Winchester Town Forum during 2022/23 as follows:
