

## **CABINET**

**Wednesday, 20 November 2024**

Attendance:

Councillors  
Tod (Chairperson)

Cutler  
Becker  
Learney

Porter  
Thompson  
Westwood

Members in attendance who spoke at the meeting

Councillors Bolton, Godfrey, Horrill, Lee and Wallace

Other members in attendance:

Councillor Cramoysan

[Video recording of this meeting](#)

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### 1. **APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies received.

### 2. **MEMBERSHIP OF CABINET BODIES ETC.**

There were no changes to membership to be made.

### 3. **DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

Councillors Porter and Tod declared personal (but not prejudicial) interests in respect of various items on the agenda due to their roles as County Councillors.

Councillor Becker declared a pecuniary interest in respect of the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan and budget options (report CAB3478 refers) as a property owner with a connection to a council sewage treatment works. She left the room during consideration of this report and took no part in the discussion or decision.

### 4. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Ian Tait spoke regarding report CAB3485 (Acquisition of affordable homes at Kings Barton) and his comments are summarised under the relevant minute below.

### 5. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING, LESS EXEMPT MINUTE.**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 15 October 2024, less exempt minute, be agreed as a correct record.

## 6. **LEADER AND CABINET MEMBERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Councillor Learney stated that at the Carbon Neutrality Open Forum the previous evening it had been announced that the Council expects to have cut the carbon emissions it directly controls by 96% by the end of the 2024 financial year. She congratulated all those involved in this significant achievement.

Councillor Thompson had four announcements to make:

- The council had now received the required permission from Historic England to enable renovation work on the Buttercross monument in Winchester High Street to go ahead – scheduled to commence in spring/summer 2025.
- New programmes were being offered to businesses to improve retrofit skills, funded from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.
- New training courses would be held for residents, businesses and house-builders on upgrading homes or premises to make them more energy efficient and climate change friendly.
- The ongoing digital skills programme for residents had been well-received and would be continuing until the end of January 2025.

Councillor Porter announced that the Council had submitted its Local Plan to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government on 15 November. A summary had been prepared for the Inspector which was also available for the public on the council's dedicated [local plan website](#).

On behalf of Cabinet, Councillor Tod asked that thanks be passed on to all the staff involved in preparation of the Local Plan and also in the carbon reduction achievement.

## 7. **GENERAL FUND BUDGET OPTIONS & MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY** (CAB3483)

Councillor Cutler introduced the report which set out the financial challenges facing the council, including those relating to the national situation regarding local government financing and the assumptions being made regarding future funding and pressures.

At the invitation of the Leader, Councillors Lee and Godfrey addressed Cabinet as summarised briefly below.

### Councillor Lee

He acknowledged the significant financial pressures being faced. He queried whether the medium term financial strategy (MTFS) had full regard to the draft Council Plan and requested that recommendation 1 of the report be amended to address this. He believed that specific references to the

nature emergency declaration were missing at a number of points within the report. Proactive investment in nature recovery should be included in addition to investment in carbon reduction measures to generate future savings. He expressed concerns regarding the increasing costs involved in collecting food waste.

Councillor Godfrey

He also acknowledged concerns regarding the uncertainty of future local government finances and that the main challenge would be faced in two years' time when savings of £3 million per annum must be achieved. The council's TC25 initiative was vital but he expressed concern that at the current time this appeared to lack any real plans about how this level of savings could be achieved and instead extra annual expenditure was being proposed. He also queried the council's future intentions if the government removed the Council Tax referendum limit.

Councillors Cutler and Tod responded to the comments made including emphasising that it was a government requirement to introduce food waste collection.

Councillor Cutler referred to the discussion of the report at Scrutiny Committee on 12 November and the draft minutes had been circulated to Cabinet and other members present prior to the Cabinet meeting.

The Director (Legal) drew members' attention to a correction required to recommendation 5 of the report to change the date referred to from March 2024 to March 2025. This was agreed.

Cabinet agreed to the following for the reasons set out in the report and outlined above.

RESOLVED:

1. That the assumptions set out in respect of Government funding, council tax, inflation rates and fees and charges (set out in full in section 13 of report CAB3483) and the projections set out in Appendix 1 be noted.
2. That the Medium-Term Financial Strategy be approved as set out in sections 13 to 17 of the report.
3. That a detailed budget be prepared for consideration by Council in February 2025 based on the assumptions set out in this MTF; final spending review announcements; and including the following options shown in Appendix 2 and Section 14 of the report:
  - a. That, in relation to Greener Faster and carbon reduction priorities:
    - i. An additional £135,000 per annum be included for the ongoing costs of providing the food waste collection service.

- ii. An additional one-off budget of £460,000 be included to fund the phased roll out of the food waste service from October 2025, without government funding.
  - b. That, in relation to the Homes for All priority:
    - i. Additional estimates, shown in Appendix 2, of c£300,000 per annum be included to fund increased demand for temporary accommodation to prevent homelessness.
  - c. That, in relation to services:
    - i. A reduction of £300,000 per annum to the energy benchmarking budget in relation to the operation of the leisure centres.
    - ii. An additional £50,000 per annum be included to fund additional pressures on council contracts.
  - d. That, in relation to service income annual budgets, amendments be made as follows, in response to revised estimates:
    - i. An increase of £30,000 per annum to Garden Waste income to reflect increased subscriptions (although partly off-set by increased contract costs of delivering the service to more households, already assumed in the MTFs).
    - ii. A reduction of £200,000 per annum of planning fee income to reflect the current reduced levels of applications received.
  - e. In relation to management of the council's property assets:
    - i. An additional £250,000 per annum be set aside into the Property Reserve for the maintenance of and investment in operational assets.
    - ii. A reduction of £500,000 per annum to reflect estimates of future rental income on investment properties.

4. That a risk reserve of £1m for homelessness prevention be established by transferring existing risk reserve funds from the Exceptional Inflation Risk Reserve.

5. That maintaining the concessionary price of the Garden Waste collection service at £29 and increasing the prices for small and large bin collections by the waste collection contract inflationary increase with effect from March 2025 be approved, resulting in charges of £46 for small bins and £70 for large bins.

6. That a capital budget of up to £190,000 be approved to enable a grant of developer contributions, under 'Section 106' agreements monies to be made to Wickham Parish Council for a replacement pavilion at Wickham Recreation Ground.

7. That the council's application to participate in the Hampshire Business Rates Pool for 2025/26 be noted.

8. **HRA BUSINESS PLAN & BUDGET OPTIONS**  
(CAB3478)

As noted above, Councillor Becker declared a pecuniary interest in respect of this item and left the room during its consideration and took no part in the discussion or decision.

Councillor Westwood introduced the report which included proposals to support the council's commitment to increase retrofit investment in homes and to deliver the 1000 new homes programme by 2032/33. The budget options had been reviewed by the TACT Board, who were broadly supportive, and their feedback would be considered as part of the ongoing budget process.

At the invitation of the Leader, Councillors Lee and Horrill addressed Cabinet as summarised briefly below.

Councillor Lee

He raised a number of points reiterating statements he had made at Scrutiny Committee. These included querying the TC25 efficiency proposals related to the housing programme to provide sustainable homes for the future and proposals to address future risks in terms of borrowing costs or reducing grant levels. He emphasised the importance of invest to save and digitalisation of decarbonisation measures. He was concerned that the proposal to purchase new homes (rather than the council build them) could result in an energy performance gap between what was predicted by the EPC and what was delivered by developers.

Councillor Horrill

She supported the majority of proposals in the report. She referred to comments and requests for additional data made at Scrutiny Committee which had not yet been received. She raised the following queries: further clarity on service charges in relation to sewage treatment works; the risk of not having an up-to-date housing stock condition survey; whether the TACT Board had been given the opportunity to properly consider the report's proposals.

Councillor Westwood responded to the comments made including confirming that the budget proposals would be considered by the TACT Board prior to Cabinet in February 2025 and that further consultation would be undertaken with all the council's housing tenants.

Councillor Tod referred to the discussion of the report at Scrutiny Committee on 12 November and the draft minutes which had been circulated to Cabinet and other members present prior to the Cabinet meeting. The Strategic Director confirmed that the request for tenant service charge information and data would be made available to all members, as requested, as part of the February 2025 consideration of the budget.

Cabinet agreed to the following for the reasons set out in the report and outlined above.

RESOLVED:

1. That the draft HRA Business 30-year Plan for 2024-25 to 2053-54 metrics shown in Appendix 3 of the report and current 5 year projection at Appendix 1 be noted.
2. That the business plan pressures identified in the 2024/25 business planning exercise as outlined in paragraphs 11.26 and 11.36 of the report, totalling £1.986m be noted.
3. That the budget options outlined within the report and detailed at Appendix 2 be approved as a basis for consultation to inform the February budget setting.
4. That the reallocation of £0.25m from the one off investment budget set in the previous business plan be approved to meet actions arising from our self assessment of our consumer standards compliance and service improvements identified.
5. That the continuing strategy for New homes based upon a mixture of actively acquiring s106 affordable housing directly from developers alongside future development with grant funding and using Right to Buy resources be noted.
6. That the current financial viability assessment for new build from para 11.15 to 11.25 of the report be noted.
7. That it be noted that a revenue savings target of £2m has been set to assist with bridging the forecast gap in financing future capital expenditure.
8. That the proposed timescale for asset disposals be noted, and that Barnes House disposal has been reconsidered for proposed use as Temporary Accommodation.
9. That it be noted that based on the September 2024 CPI figure of 1.7% that the average formula rent increase for 2025-26 for all affordable and social housing will be 2.7%.
10. That it be noted that the budget in October announced a consultation for future rent settlement between now and December, which indicates preference for CPI+1 for 5 years into the future, and approve the application of this principle in the business plan model to mitigate the cost of new build developments and reduce long term debt burden to the HRA once the outcome of the consultation is known.
11. That continuing full cost recovery in tenant service charges in 2025/26 be approved and it be noted that charges will generally reduce following a softening of energy prices.

12. That it be noted that there is an ongoing workstream on the re-procurement of the repairs and maintenance contract. The Business plan provides for this to happen over the following two years at a provisional one-off cost of £0.4m in 2024/25, and estimated £0.3m in 2025/26.

9. **HOUSING PROCUREMENT OF HRA REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE TERM CONTRACT**  
(CAB3463)

Councillor Westwood introduced the report which contained proposals for the procurement of the new contract acknowledging the level of tenant satisfaction with the existing contract and stated that it was intended to expand the service offered. It was proposed that the contract be offered on a 60:40 quality/price basis to recognise the importance of quality.

At the invitation of the Leader, Councillors Horrill and Lee addressed Cabinet as summarised briefly below.

Councillor Horrill

She emphasised the importance of the contract and queried how it was possible for a decision to be made without the details of the repair programme being available. She reiterated the request from Scrutiny Committee that a breakdown (by number and type) of repairs currently undertaken on the council's housing stock be provided.

Councillor Lee

He had concerns that the 10% minimum for environmental social criteria was too low. He welcomed the emphasis on quality in the contract procurement. He reiterated requests made at previous meetings that nature based products be used wherever possible.

Councillor Westwood responded to the comments made including emphasising that the contract would deliver the requirements of the new Council Plan in terms of the commitment to tackle the nature and climate emergency.

Councillor Tod referred to the discussion of the report at Scrutiny Committee on 12 November and the draft minutes had been circulated to Cabinet and other members present prior to the Cabinet meeting. The Strategic Director confirmed that the data requested on the breakdown of repairs would be made available to all councillors within the next week. The Chief Executive emphasised that the report's recommendations related to the process of procurement and consequently the data was not essential for a decision to be made by Cabinet.

Cabinet agreed to the following for the reasons set out in the report and outlined above.

RESOLVED:

That the following be agreed:

1. To procure, award and enter into a contract / contract(s) to undertake retrofit, cyclical, planned, voids and reactive works to Winchester City Council owned housing properties within the parameters set out in this report and to delegate authority to the Strategic Director to conduct the procurement exercise and to finalise and agree the terms of the contract(s).

2. To incorporate and design a dialogue phase(s) within the procurement procedure as permitted under the Public Contract Regulations 2015 (PCR 2015).

3. To use the Competitive Dialogue Procedure under PCR 2015 to carry out the procurement.

4. To ensure best value, adopt a 60:40 (quality:price) evaluation model with a quality bias (60%).

5. To commission following the satisfactory completion of the procurement exercise a Term Alliance Contract to be awarded to a single provider for an initial term of up to 10 years with an option to extend for a further 5 years.

6. To agree to evaluate tendered prices using the Optimum Price model rather than a lowest price model.

7. To approve the use of the Term Alliance Contract TAC-1 (as amended) form of contract for the HRA repairs and maintenance contract.

10. **FUTURE OF WASTE AND RECYCLING; NEW FOOD WASTE COLLECTIONS & RECYCLING SERVICE**  
(CAB3475)

Councillor Learney introduced the report which set out proposals to confirm the introduction of weekly food waste collection on a phased basis from October 2025. She referred to the extensive resident consultation undertaken in 2023 which indicated strong support for the service and reiterated that it was a legal requirement that it be introduced by 31 March 2026.

At the invitation of the Leader, Councillors Lee and Bolton addressed Cabinet as summarised briefly below.

Councillor Lee

He referred to his comments made at Scrutiny Committee about the benefits of delaying food waste collection in order to prioritise bigger carbon reduction projects. He had concerns that the proposals relating to the electrification programme for waste collection vehicles were premature in advance of the local area energy plan.

Councillor Bolton

He expressed that consideration of the report at the previous Scrutiny Committee meeting was unsatisfactory due to the lack of time available.



He highlighted that the survey indicated that residents would like to recycle more but to have as few bins as possible. Noting that the County Council were the disposal authority, he asked what measures were being taken to work together with other Hampshire district councils (the collection authorities) to ensure a consistent approach was adopted.

Councillor Learney and the Service Lead – Environmental Services responded to the comments made including confirming that district councils were working together and had presented to the County Council their preference for a collection system.

Cabinet agreed to the following for the reasons set out in the report and outlined above.

RESOLVED:

1. That a new food waste collection and recycling service be implemented in line with the requirements of Simpler Recycling through the Council's contractor, Biffa, at a forecast cost of £1.611m per annum.
2. That additional baseline revenue budget of £0.211m per annum for the ongoing cost of the food waste service be approved, in addition to the £1.4m previously agreed in February 2024 (CAB3444 refers).
3. That it be agreed to start collecting food waste from October 2025 on a phased roll out basis at a total forecast cost in 25/26 of £457k. An additional one-off budget of £317k is required in 25/26 to be funded by the major investment reserve.
4. That the additional baseline budget of £105k per annum from 25/26 be agreed for the relocation of the grounds maintenance contractor to enable Biffa full use of the depot at Barfield Close from which to operate the new food waste service. A part year supplementary budget of £50k is required for 24/25 to enable the new lease to start in December 2024.
5. That the contract with the Council's contractor, Biffa, be varied to include the new food waste collection service.
6. That the capital budget for this project be increased by £159k, to be funded by borrowing, to allow for the additional costs, outlined in Appendix 1 of report CAB3475.
7. That the required bins and caddies with associated branding necessary to start food waste collections be procured, with authority delegated to the Strategic Director in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Climate Change to agree assessment criteria and conclude the process, including use of an approved framework, in line with the forecast cost of £429k as outlined in Appendix 1 of the report, from this project's approved capital allocation in 25/26.

8. That authority to incur expenditure of up to £853k for identified revenue costs and up to £604k for identified capital costs be agreed as set out in Appendix 1 of the report, (Stage 1 – Revenue and Stage 1 – Capital).

9. That authority to agree the detail of the new food waste service be delegated to the Strategic Director in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency.

11. **ACQUISITION OF AFFORDABLE HOMES AT KINGS BARTON, WINCHESTER (LESS EXEMPT APPENDIX)**  
(CAB3485)

Councillor Westwood introduced the report which sought approval for the purchase of 146 new affordable properties at Kings Barton, Winchester. The report had been considered by Scrutiny Committee on 12 November and the draft minutes had been circulated to Cabinet and other members present prior to the Cabinet meeting.

Ian Tait spoke during public participation as summarised briefly below. He welcomed the proposed provision of 146 affordable homes but highlighted this would not result in a net increase in affordable housing because if they were not purchased by the council, they would still be required to be transferred to a registered provider in accordance with the Kings Barton S106 agreement. He reiterated his statements made at previous meetings that the council should seek to purchase a substantial parcel of land on which to build new council homes.

At the invitation of the Leader, Councillors Lee and Horrill addressed Cabinet as summarised briefly below.

Councillor Lee

He welcomed the proposal to increase affordable housing in the district. He requested that the acquisition agreement include a post occupancy energy agreement to fix any energy gaps that might arise.

Councillor Horrill

She acknowledged the importance of the availability of affordable homes and asked that the homes to be purchased from CALA be of the same standard as those available for sale. It was important that the specification was to the highest possible standard and that the properties were “pepper-potted” across the site to ensure integration.

Councillor Westwood, the Strategic Director and the Service Lead – New Homes responded to the comments made including emphasising that the properties had been secured in a competition process with registered providers.

Cabinet moved into exempt session to consider the contents of the exempt appendix before returning to open session to consider the report’s recommendations as set out below.

Cabinet noted that, following discussions in the exempt session, it had been clarified by the Service Lead – New Homes that any reference to rent levels of “70%” in the report and appendix were incorrect and should be amended to “LHA rent levels”. Clarification was also sought as to whether the service charges would be payable by the tenants of the properties in addition to the rent and it was confirmed that these were already budgeted for within the rental figures.

Cabinet agreed to the following for the reasons set out in the report and outlined above.

RESOLVED:

1. That the allocation and expenditure of the New Build Unallocated Capital Budget be approved as set out in the confidential appendix to the report to purchase land and 146 new affordable properties at Kings Barton, Winchester.

2. That the Corporate Head of Asset Management be authorised in consultation with the Section 151 Officer to:

- a) negotiate and agree the terms and conditions of the transaction and enter into a land agreement and a build agreement to acquire land and the 146 homes to then be built on that land from Cala Management Ltd for the purchase price as set out in the confidential appendix.
- b) enter into any planning and/or legal agreements required to purchase the land and 146 homes.

12. **Q2 FINANCE & PERFORMANCE MONITORING**  
(CAB3476)

Councillor Cutler introduced the report which was the second quarterly report in the new format which related to the themes of the Council Plan and also reported on regeneration and growth.

At the invitation of the Leader, Councillors Wallace, Lee and Bolton addressed Cabinet as summarised briefly below.

Councillor Wallace

He expressed concern that the report had not been fully considered at Scrutiny Committee due to lack of time available at the meeting caused by the large agenda. He requested clarification regarding the change in the new homes target date. He was also concerned that the “Red/Amber/Green” (RAG) status appeared to be applied inconsistently.

Councillor Bolton

He concurred with concerns that the report had not been fully considered at Scrutiny Committee and requested that the report be referred back to Scrutiny for further consideration prior to Cabinet. He also suggested that further discussion of the scrutiny work agenda was required.

Councillor Lee

He asked a number of questions relating to a potential KPI improvement exercise, emergency planning, risk of the landline switch off, Natural Burial areas, and low carbon assessments referred to in the Economic Development Strategy Action Plan 2024-27.

Councillor Cutler and other Cabinet Members responded to the comments made in relation to their areas of responsibility.

In response to Councillor Bolton's request, Councillor Tod stated that Cabinet was being asked to note progress and endorse contents and there was no requirement for consideration by Scrutiny Committee prior to this decision. He also emphasised that the Scrutiny Committee was responsible for setting its own work programme and managing agendas.

Cabinet agreed to the following for the reasons set out in the report and outlined above.

RESOLVED:

That the progress achieved during Q2 of 2024/25 be noted and the contents of the report be endorsed.

13. **FUTURE ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION BY CABINET**

RESOLVED:

That the list of future items as set out in the Forward Plan for December 2024 be noted.

14. **EXEMPT BUSINESS:**

RESOLVED:

1. That in all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

2. That the public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business because it is likely that, if members of the public were present, there would be disclosure to them of 'exempt information' as defined by Section 100I and Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

<u>Minute Number</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Description of Exempt Information</u>
15	Exempt minutes of the previous meeting	) Information relating to the ) financial or business affairs of ) any particular person (including

- 16            Acquisition of affordable    )    the authority holding that  
                 homes at Kings Barton    )    information). (Para 3 Schedule  
                 (exempt appendix)            )    12A refers)

15.    **EXEMPT MINUTE OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

RESOLVED:

                 That the exempt minute of the previous meeting held 15 October  
                 2024 be agreed as a correct record.

16.    **ACQUISITION OF AFFORDABLE HOMES AT KINGS BARTON,  
                 WINCHESTER (EXEMPT APPENDIX)**  
                 (CAB3485)

In response to a question in exempt session regarding the proposed rent to be charged, the Service Lead – New Homes confirmed that the financial appraisals contained in the exempt appendices were run at LHA rent levels. Any reference to 70% rents in the open report or exempt appendices were incorrect and should be amended to refer to LHA rent levels.

RESOLVED:

                 That the contents of the exempt appendix be noted, with the  
                 correction to note it referred to LHA rent levels.

The meeting commenced at 9.30 am and concluded at 1.05 pm

Chairperson