

CABINET

Tuesday, 14 October 2025

Attendance:

Councillors
Tod (Chairperson)

Cutler
Cramoysan
Becker

Porter
Reach
Thompson

Apologies for Absence:

Councillors Learney

Members in attendance who spoke at the meeting

Councillors Godfrey, Horrill and Lee

[Video recording of this meeting](#)

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillor Learney as noted above.

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

There were no changes to be made.

3. **DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

Councillors Tod and Porter declared disclosable pecuniary interests in respect of various items on the agenda due to their role as Hampshire County Councillors. However, as there was no material conflict of interest, they remained in the room, spoke and voted under the dispensation granted on behalf of the Audit and Governance Committee to participate and vote in all matters which might have a County Council involvement.

4. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Ian Tait spoke regarding report CAB3451 and his comments are summarised under the relevant minute below.

5. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS HELD ON 10 AND 25
SEPTEMBER 2025**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meetings held on 10 and 25 September 2025 be agreed as a correct record.

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

Councillor Becker announced that the regular football sessions for £1 would be taking place during the October school half term.

Councillor Cramoysan reported on the successful launch of the new food waste collection service. In addition, he congratulated the Animal Welfare team for retaining the elite double platinum award from the RSPCA for their services.

7. **BAR END DEPOT
(CAB3526)**

Councillor Reach made a personal statement advising that he lived opposite the Bar End depot site but he had received advice from the Monitoring Officer that this did not constitute an interest requiring formal declaration and action. He remained in the room and took part in the debate and decision on this report.

Councillor Tod introduced the report, explaining that the preferred developer had withdrawn from the process as a consequence of changes in the retirement living and home care market both locally and nationally. Given the time pressures due to local government reorganisation (LGR) it was not proposed to restart the process, but instead to re-market the site with the same mix of uses as previously agreed.

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

Councillor Lee

Councillor Lee highlighted the current shortage of homes for older people and the need for urgent action due to LGR proposals. He considered that larger integrated retirement communities (IRCs) offered the most viable model and queried if the remarketing requirements could be adjusted to attract extra care developers capable of delivering a larger, more viable scheme. He also requested confirmation on monies previously spent and the anticipated future costs for remarketing the site. Finally, he asked for reassurance that nature enhancement opportunities would not be diluted during redevelopment and emphasised the wider need for older people's housing provision in rural market towns across the district.

Councillor Godfrey

Councillor Godfrey stated that the Bar End depot site was prioritised over 10 years ago as a major project to deliver and queried his perceived lack of action on this and other major development projects in more recent

years. He estimated that this delay has cost the council nearly £2 million. He also highlighted concerns regarding the impact of LGR. Finally, he suggested a number of other alternative uses for the site, including social housing or additional leisure facilities.

Councillor Horrill

Councillor Horrill queried whether the developer's citing of market conditions for withdrawing was an excuse, given the ongoing significant need for housing for older people. She believed that the scheme had not been prioritised sufficiently by the council, emphasising the local residents' long-standing request for a convenience store and pressed Cabinet to provide a more definite timetable, highlighting the urgency due to LGR proposals. She asked whether any of the previous bidders could offer a viable alternative.

Councillor Tod together with the Strategic Director and the Corporate Head of Asset Management responded to the comments made, including outlining the proposed timeline for the site to be re-marketed for a six-week period with responses to be analysed later in 2025 and a report back to Cabinet in January 2026.

The Strategic Director and Corporate Head also responded to questions from Cabinet Members.

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

RESOLVED:

That the re-marketing of the Bar End Depot site be approved to commence in late October 2025.

8. **WOODMAN CLOSE, SPARSHOLT - FINAL BUSINESS CASE (LESS EXEMPT APPENDIX)**
(CAB3451)

Councillor Reach introduced the report and outlined the background to the current proposals and emphasised the importance of the provision of housing in a sustainable rural location whilst acknowledging the high cost per unit.

Ian Tait spoke during public participation and his comments are summarised briefly below.

Ian Tait spoke in opposition to the proposed housing scheme due to the very high level of cost and highlighted the significant subsidy required (noting that this would not be available for other Registered Providers). He strongly recommended that the Cabinet "cut their losses" on the site and instead use the monies to deliver affordable housing more efficiently elsewhere in the district.

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

Councillor Lee

Councillor Lee supported the proposal as an important opportunity to deliver more environmental efficient homes, while reducing future costs for both tenants and the council. He questioned whether modern methods of construction (MMC) had been considered as he believed this could offset higher costs. He also queried if the older JCT 2016 design build model had been used (rather than the newer JCT 2024 version) and whether geothermal options could be integrated. Finally he asked for clarification on the proposed rent levels.

Councillor Horrill

Councillor Horrill welcomed the scheme as an important commitment to council housing in a rural part of the district, emphasising the strong support from both residents and the parish council. However, she expressed concern over the rising costs and the high level of specification, specifically querying the use of piled foundations and the detailed accessibility specifications. She asked if this higher specification (which she believed had not been discussed with local representatives), might unintentionally exclude local residents with housing needs from accessing the properties. She requested that the construction plan, contractor's compound, and traffic management plan be discussed and agreed with the parish council and ward councillors in advance.

Councillor Reach together with the Service Lead – New Homes responded to the comments made. Councillor Reach committed to discussing in advance with ward councillors any proposal to change from social rent levels. In addition, he confirmed that he would discuss the construction plan and other matters requested by Councillor Horrill, with parish and ward councillors.

Cabinet resolved to go into exempt session to discuss the contents of the exempt appendix and allow questions from invited councillors thereon.

On returning to open session, Councillor Tod explained that there had been some discussion regarding the level of contingency budget allocated for this project. In addition, it was noted that earlier in the meeting, Councillor Reach had given his assurances to consult ward and parish councillors on specific matters. Subsequently, it was proposed that recommendation 4 of the report be amended as detailed below (additional wording shown in italics). This was agreed.

That if Homes England funding is not available or lower than anticipated *or contingency spending is different than expected*, the Strategic Director, *in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Good Homes*, be authorised to deploy S106 affordable housing developer contribution funding of up to £1,687,500 (£337,500 per unit) and/or increase rents from Social Rent to Affordable Rent to ensure the scheme remains affordable to the Housing Revenue Account in terms of net present value of scheme, as set out in 2.15 of report CAB3451 and the exempt appendix.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the Corporate Head of Asset Management be authorised to:
 - a. award and enter into a JCT Design & Build Contract to construct 5 homes at Woodman Close, Sparsholt.
 - b. negotiate and agree terms for easements, wayleaves and related agreements with utility suppliers, telecom/media providers and neighbours and relevant legal agreements to facilitate the development.
2. That an increase of £101,000 in the project budget be approved to meet the total scheme cost of £2,057,000, and expenditure of £2,057,000 against that budget be authorised, applying Homes England funding (subject to successful award) and the council's S106 affordable housing developer contribution funding to the total scheme budget to enable viability.
3. That it be noted that the proposed scheme is only viable if substantial S106 affordable housing developer contribution funding is used, and that the deployment of S106 affordable housing developer contribution funding to develop the proposed scheme be agreed.
4. That if Homes England funding is not available or lower than anticipated or contingency spending is different than expected, the Strategic Director, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Good Homes, be authorised to deploy S106 affordable housing developer contribution funding of up to £1,687,500 (£337,500 per unit) and/or increase rents from Social Rent to Affordable Rent to ensure the scheme remains affordable to the Housing Revenue Account in terms of net present value of scheme, as set out in 2.15 of report CAB3451 and the exempt appendix.

9. **DRIVING AGRITECH INNOVATION: WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL'S GRANT-FUNDED PARTNERSHIP WITH SPARSHOLT**
(CAB3524)

Councillor Thompson introduced the report which outlined a proposed partnership project with Sparsholt College and advised that it was anticipated that the council would find out if its grant bid had been successful by the end of October 2025.

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

Councillor Lee

Councillor Lee supported the grant application which would promote sustainable farming by bridging skills, sustainability, and innovation in the

rural economy. He raised a number of detailed questions including seeking clarification on the project's scope and oversight, the scale of the need in the district and whether the subsequent opportunity for participants to apply for low carbon assessments and green audits would be charged for. He requested robust monitoring and KPI reporting, including on carbon and biodiversity outcomes.

Councillor Godfrey

Councillor Godfrey welcomed the proposal to support Sparsholt College, highlighting the college as a national centre for excellence in agriculture and a key component of the region's economic vitality. He requested further details regarding the council's direct financial commitment to the scheme and specifically asked about the role of council staff in supporting the college.

Councillor Thompson together with the Service Lead – Economy and Tourism and Economic Development Officer (Green Growth) responded to the comments made.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the summary detail of the Digital Inclusion Innovation fund grant bid outlined below be noted.
2. That subject to a successful grant application, the following budgets and expenditure totalling £223,850 be approved:
 - a) A capital grant to Sparsholt college of up to £144,542
 - b) A revenue grant to Sparsholt college of up to £42,000
 - c) A one-off administration budget of £37,308 to be funded by the grant received
3. That authority be delegated to the Corporate Head of Economy and Community to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the government Department of Science, Innovation & Technology.
4. That authority be delegated to the Corporate Head of Economy and Community to enter into a grant agreement with Sparsholt College to deliver the programme.

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

RESOLVED:

That the list of future items as set out in the Forward Plan for November 2025 be noted.

11. **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>
12	Woodman Close, Sparsholt (exempt appendix)) Information relating to the) financial or business affairs of) any particular person (including) the authority holding that) information). (Para 3 Schedule) 12A refers)

12. **WOODMAN CLOSE, SPARSHOLT - FINAL BUSINESS CASE (EXEMPT APPENDIX)**

Cabinet considered the exempt appendix which set out the financial appraisal for the project.

At the invitation of the Leader, Councillor Horrill addressed Cabinet as summarised briefly below.

Councillor Horrill asked why costs relating to nutrient mitigation had been included in the financial appraisal but had not been referenced in the planning approval. She also queried the level for contingency proposed and whether there was additional costs due to the higher specifications for the properties.

Councillor Reach together with the Service Lead – New Homes responded to the questions raised. The Service Lead agreed to check further on the point relating to nutrient mitigation costs and respond to Councillor Horrill outside of the meeting.

In response to questions from Cabinet Members, the Strategic Director confirmed that the business plan did take account of any future right-to-buy options.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the exempt appendix be noted.

The meeting commenced at 9.30 am and concluded at 11.30 am

Chairperson