

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 2 December 2025

Attendance:

Councillors
Pett (Chairperson)

Brophy
Bennett
Lee

Power
Warwick
Westwood

Apologies for Absence:

Councillors Latham and Miller

Deputy Member:

Councillor Warwick (deputy for Councillor Miller)

Others in attendance who addressed the meeting:

Councillor Becker (Cabinet Member for Healthy Communities) and Councillor Learney (Cabinet Member for the Climate and Nature Emergency)

[Full Video Recording](#)

1. **APOLOGIES AND DEPUTY MEMBERS**

Apologies were noted as above

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors Warwick declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in respect of any agenda items it may impact due to her role as a Hampshire County Councillor. However, as there was no material conflict of interest, she 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.

Councillor Lee made a personal statement that he was a Trustee of WinACC, should any discussion arise in this respect during the consideration of items.

Councillor Pett declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in respect of any agenda items it may impact, due to being a member of the South Downs National Park Authority. However, as there was no material conflict of interest,

he stated that he had a dispensation granted by the Monitoring Officer that enabled him to speak and vote on these matters.

3. **CHAIRPERSON'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairperson made the following announcements:

- (i) Tender process for verge management contract (currently held by IdVerde) – The Chairperson had requested that the committee view the invitation to the future tender for the contract, which would be made available in the new year. It was agreed that the document be shared via email due to timeline pressures.

For clarification, the Strategic Director set out the deadlines of the process and emphasised that feedback from the parish councils would be incorporated into the draft tender specification.

- (ii) It was noted that timings had been allocated to business items on the agenda to allow the ample opportunity for each matter to be considered within a reasonable time.

4. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meetings held on the 18 September 2025 be approved and adopted.

5. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no comments or questions made during public participation.

6. **CLIMATE ADAPTATION - HEP045 AND PRESENTATION (45 MINUTES)**

Councillor Learney introduced the report, emphasising the climate emergency as the council's overarching priority, with preventing climate change through carbon reduction being the main focus. She made reference to the climate risks and impacts, due to the escalating severity of global warming and set out the need to protect residents and adapt to changes for the future. The report provided a progress update on the climate adaptation work carried out to date. The views of the committee and feedback on specific areas were sought to help inform and shape the development of the Climate and Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (CRVA), as set out within the report.

The Sustainability Manager and Sustainability Programme Manager gave a presentation setting out the context, identifying the risks and hazards and the changes in patterns across the district. Several questions were asked which were responded to by the Cabinet Member and relevant officers, including the following:

1. Further clarification was sought on why marine and coastal risks were excluded from the assessment given that the Winchester district contained a small section of coastline and neighbouring authorities faced high exposure to rising sea levels. In response, it was noted that the exclusion resulted from a materiality assessment based on a premise of limited impact, though the risk could be re-evaluated if members considered it was necessary.
2. A question was asked regarding the omission of the National Farmers' Union (NFU) and the Countryside Land and Business Association (CLA) from the list of stakeholders, as farmers were significantly impacted by extreme weather events. Officers confirmed that these organisations would be noted for future engagement.
3. Further clarification was sought regarding the engagement of smaller family farms in river valleys which were at higher risk of flooding compared to larger farm clusters. It was noted that these stakeholders needed to be engaged as the work moved forward.
4. An enquiry was made concerning errors in the consultation table, specifically the listing of Hampshire twice and the omission of Portsmouth Water and the Environment Agency Southern Regional Flood Committee. It was agreed that these bodies would be included in the stakeholder list.
5. A question was asked why air quality was not listed as a top-level risk category in the assessment. It was responded that air quality factors were considered within the health and wellbeing category under risk H07.
6. Further clarification was sought on which climate risks would have the greatest impact on the district. Suggestions included flooding, drought, heatwaves, wildfires, and prolonged poor air quality, with some noting that the impact of high winds on infrastructure could affect thousands of residents. In addition, the creation of a matrix not only setting out the risks, but how these risks may affect different groups of people (such as those with vulnerabilities) was also suggested, setting out the measures of resilience and infrastructure in place to respond.
7. A question was raised regarding which council services would be most impacted by climate change. Suggestions included emergency planning, housing services, public protection, and communications.
8. An enquiry was made as to whether other local authorities in Hampshire were following similar models and timescales for their climate adaptation work. It was responded that several other authorities were leading on this work and that the council followed a model set by the national Local Partnerships toolkit.
9. A recommendation was made that councillors and staff should undergo water safety training provided by the Fire and Rescue service.

10. Further clarification was sought on the resilience of the district to once-in-a-generation events, such as significant snowfall, which could impact food and water supplies.

In conclusion, the committee thanked officers and the Cabinet Member for an informative update.

RESOLVED:

That the report and presentation be received and the comments raised by the committee, as summarised above, be noted.

7. **COMMUNITY RESILIENCE STRATEGY - HEP044 (45 MINUTES)**

Councillor Becker introduced the report which set out the draft strategy to build strong and resilient communities across the district. The strategy also facilitated direction and access of the support and opportunities that were available to communities. It was noted that five pathways and associated principles were proposed in the draft strategy to focus efforts, as outlined in the report. The views of the committee on specific questions were sought to help shape the draft strategy, as referenced within the report.

The Service Lead: Communities and Wellbeing set out the context of the strategy, setting out the broad variety of communities across the district and how the council could contribute to empowering all these communities to build resilience and promote their capacity to thrive.

The committee were reminded that this was a draft strategy which would be formulated and finalised to create a publicly accessible document that signposted communities and promoted community engagement.

Several questions were asked which were responded to by the Cabinet Member and the Service Lead: Communities and Wellbeing, including the following:

1. Further clarification was sought on the scope of the strategy and how it differed from an existing emergency response plan. It was explained that while the strategy was related to emergency response, it focused on building social capital and empowering communities to respond to challenges and improve their own well-being.
2. A question was raised regarding how the council balanced the celebration of local resources with the requirement to meet the safeguarding needs of vulnerable individuals. It was noted that the council's role involved supporting communities to understand safeguarding issues through awareness and education, such as by reviewing the policies of organisations during grant application processes.

3. Reference was made to the benefit of areas creating a 'village charter' as a blueprint to enable areas to build resilient communities in their local area. In addition, reference was also made to the Empowering Healthy Places LGA report which included a checklist for promoting neighbourhood health and wellbeing which could be signposted to within the strategy.
4. Further clarification was sought on how the council identified the causal relationships between local assets, such as pubs or churches, and community resilience. The response indicated that the strategy was an enabling piece of work intended to allow communities to lead and identify the assets that they considered important.
5. An enquiry was made as to whether the strategy would identify geographical "hotspots" of deprivation where community facilities, such as playing fields or halls, were lacking. It was stated that while mapping of such facilities existed through other health priority work, this strategy focused on the people-oriented side of how communities engaged and came together.
6. A question was asked concerning what "good" looked like in a resilient community and if there were specific examples that the council aimed to encourage elsewhere. It was noted that all communities possessed different strengths, but those that were self-sustaining and possessed proactive parish councils, such as Bishop's Waltham, were highlighted as positive examples
7. Further clarification was sought on how the council intended to reach non-participatory groups or areas that lacked formal governance structures to amplify their voices. It was explained that the council acted as a facilitator between agencies and was reviewing governance gaps in the Winchester town area, such as the St Luke area of Stanmore, where community channels were more challenging to identify.
8. An enquiry was made regarding the potential for the strategy to include a tailored blueprint or checklist for different types of settlements, such as market towns and rural villages. It was noted that community infrastructure and support for new developments were secured through planning agreements and the local plan to help foster a sense of identity.
9. A question was raised as to whether the council could celebrate instances where communities successfully provided their own resources to meet a need through parish newsletters. It was confirmed that the council would seek to share and celebrate such examples of community activity.
10. Further clarification was sought on the definition of "community" and whether the strategy adequately addressed non-geographical groups, such as those based on interest or specific needs. Officers acknowledged that the strategy needed to more clearly define and

incorporate these different dimensions of community to ensure it addressed the city environment and residents facing anonymity or loneliness.

11. A request was made to ensure that the final document included a clear definition of what the strategy was trying to achieve to prevent the focus from diverging.

The committee thanked officers and the Cabinet Member for an informative update.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received and the comments raised by the committee, as summarised above, be noted.

8. **TO NOTE THE WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2025/26**

The Strategic Director advised that the following items would be added to the existing committee work programme for consideration by the committee at its meeting on 25 February 2026.

- (i) Public Spaces Protection Orders and Enforcement
- (ii) Building a resilient Waste Service for the future

In addition, the Strategic Director reminded the committee that an all member training session was due to take place on 19 January 2026 regarding green financing, following an action from Scrutiny Committee.

The Chairperson made reference to the two areas that were subject of a task and finish group as follows. He stated that both had recently met to define what was to be taken forward, with further work to progress in the new year.

1. Identifying current barriers to increasing the availability and accessibility of Electric Vehicle Charging Points across the Winchester.
2. Developing practicable incentives, including indicative costs, for householders off mains drainage to modernise private sewerage systems to reduce the risk of the leaching of nutrients into the surrounding land and watercourses.

In response, the Strategic Director emphasised that officers would need to be involved in this process, given that service planning for 2026/27 was taking place. Therefore, the work of the task and finish groups would need to feed into the wider service planning work so this could be facilitated accordingly.

RESOLVED:

That the work programme for 2025/26 and items for inclusion on 25 February 2026 as detailed in (i) and (ii) above, be noted.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and concluded at 8.00 pm

Chairperson