

Meeting	Council
Date and Time	Thursday, 26th February, 2026 at 6.30 pm.
Venue	Council Chamber, Castle Hill, Winchester SO23 8UL and streamed live on YouTube at www.youtube.com/winchestercc

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that an Ordinary Meeting of the Council will be held at 6.30 pm on Thursday, 26th February, 2026 in the Council Chamber, Castle Hill, Winchester SO23 8UL and all Members of the Council are summoned to attend.

Note: This meeting is being held in person at the location specified above. Members of the public should note that the meeting will be streamed live to the council's YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/WinchesterCC).

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 working days before the meeting. Please note that priority will be given to those having registered to speak during the Public Question session over those wishing to attend and observe. Please note that Questions must be received in writing by Democratic Services (democracy@winchester.gov.uk) prior to **10am**, five working days preceding the day of the council meeting.

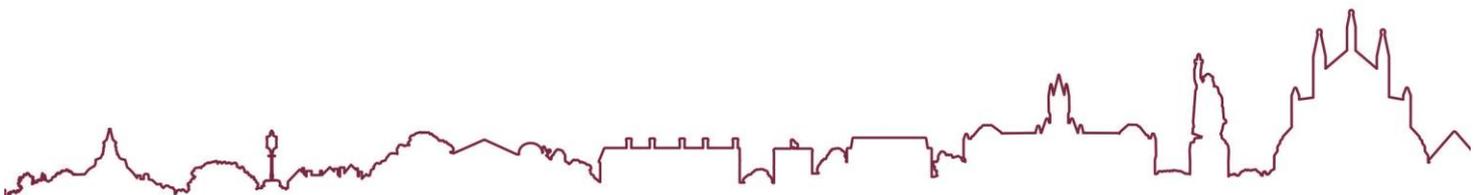
AGENDA

1. **Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 14 January 2026**
(Pages 9 - 10)

2. **Disclosure of Interests**
To receive any disclosure of interests from Councillors or Officers in matters to be discussed.

Note: Councillors are reminded of their obligations to declare disclosable pecuniary interests (DPIs), other registerable interests (ORIs) and non-registerable interests (NRIs) in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct.

3. **Announcements from the Mayor, Leader and Chief Executive.**



4. **Questions from Members of the Public**
To receive and answer and questions from the public.
(Questions must be received in writing by Democratic Services – democracy@winchester.gov.uk – no later than 10am on Thursday 19 February)
5. **To consider and determine the following Recommended Minutes: Cabinet held 12 February 2026 - Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget 2026/27 (CAB3540 - REVISED) (Pages 11 - 46)**

Please note revised versions of Report CAB3540 and Appendices 1, 3 and 7 from those considered at Cabinet on 12 February 2026.

RECOMMENDED (TO COUNCIL):

1. That the HRA Financial Plan operating account, including annual working balances be noted, as detailed in Appendix 6 of report CAB3540.
2. That the 2026/27 Housing Revenue Account budget be approved, as detailed in Appendices 1 and 2 to the report.
3. That the proposed capital programme for maintenance, improvements and renewals totalling £162.7m be approved.
4. That capital expenditure be approved and authority be delegated to the Strategic Director with responsibility for housing to enter into necessary contracts for the 2026/27 capital programme of £22.8m, as detailed in Appendix 3 of the report in accordance with Financial Procedure Rule 7.4.
5. That a change in approach to delivery of retrofit installation of solar panels and batteries to achieve best value for money following the decision by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero to withhold Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund grant on battery installations be approved, as outlined at paragraphs 11.56 to 11.63 of the report.
6. That the proposed 10 year capital programme for new homes totalling £202.8m, and expenditure of £21.8m in 2026/27 be approved, as detailed in Appendix 4 of the report in accordance with Financial Procedure Rule 7.4.
7. That the financing of the HRA Capital Programme be approved as detailed in Appendix 5 of the report, (noting the planned repayment of borrowing following the 1000 homes programme).
8. That the revenue savings target of £1.13m at Appendix 7 of the report as amended be approved, which was outlined to Cabinet in November

2025 (CAB3523) and includes additional savings as outlined at paragraphs 11.32-11.38 of the report.

9. That the Section 151 Officer be authorised, in consultation with the Strategic Director with responsibility for Housing to approve buybacks of individual former HRA properties sold under the Right to Buy during 2026/27, following positive financial appraisal, utilising the unallocated New Homes budget (see paragraph 11.26 of the report).
 10. That subject to the acceptance of the expression of interest to the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) round 4:
 - a. the Strategic Director with responsibility for Housing be authorised to enter into a revised Memorandum of Understanding with Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government to secure additional LAHF funding.
 - b. Authority be delegated to the Section 151 Officer to approve capital expenditure (subject to financial appraisal, in accordance with Financial Procedure Rule 7.4) of up to £12m to purchase up to 30 properties between 2026/27 and 2029/30 using the approved HRA unallocated new build budget, to be part-financed by LAHF grant with any balance via prudential borrowing.
 - c. The Corporate Head – Asset Management and the Strategic Director with responsibility for Housing be authorised to purchase up to 30 properties. (Paragraphs 11.74-11.78 of the report).
 11. That the average rent increase for 2026/27 for all affordable, Shared Ownership and social housing of 4.8% be approved, based on the September 2024 CPI figure of 3.8% +1% (Paragraphs 11.6-11.8 of the report).
 12. That amendments to HRA tenant service charges in 2026/27 be approved to reflect cost recovery based on 2024/25 actual costs (see paragraphs 11.41 to 11.45 of the report).
 13. That it be noted that the draft HRA Business 30-year Plan is viable and sustainable and has the capacity to support the delivery of 1,000 new affordable homes
6. **To consider and determine the following Recommended Minutes: Cabinet held 12 February 2026 - General Fund Budget 2026/27 (CAB3541 - REVISED) (Pages 47 - 82)**

Please note revised versions of Report CAB3541 and Appendices A and C from those considered at Cabinet on 12 February 2026.

a) RECOMMENDED (TO COUNCIL):

1. That the level of General Fund Budget for 2026/27 be agreed and the summary be recommended as shown in Appendix A of CAB3541, as

amended, due to the late change in the Government's local government financial settlement announced by MHCLG on 10 February 2026.

2. That in relation to the Greener Faster Council Plan priority:
 - a. a growth of £30,000 be approved to increase the annual Town Account tree maintenance budget as a result of risks associated with the effects of climate change and associated tree disease.
3. That in relation to the Healthy Communities priority of the new Council Plan:
 - a. the revised income bands for the Council Tax Reduction scheme for working age applicants (set out in Appendix E of report CAB3541) be approved, that ensure claimants continue to receive the appropriate level of support after the DWPs increase in Universal Credit rates with effect from 1 April 2026.
4. That in relation to the Efficient and Effective priority:
 - a. a growth to the annual expenditure budget of £89,000 be approved for improvements to make the way our residents' contact us is easier and faster.
5. That other service expenditure annual budgets be amended as follows, in response to revised estimates:
 - a. Utility budget increased by £150,000 in order to cover the additional forecast utility costs from 2026/27.
 - b. An additional budget of £115,000 per annum from 2026/27 for the Corporate Head of Resources.
 - c. A growth of £130,000 to reflect the net budget pressure of the migration of the Land Charges service to HM Land Registry.
 - d. A net budget saving of £215,000 per annum to reflect changes to forecast employers' pension contributions and rates.
6. That one-off service expenditure budgets be approved as follows:
 - a. A £470,000 digital transformation budget, relating to the implementation of improvements to make our residents' digital contact with us easier and faster, with £400,000 funded from the digital transformation reserve and £70,000 funded from the transitional reserve.
 - b. A Town Account budget of £15,000 for feasibility work related to speed indicators within the town area, funded by the town reserve.
 - c. £1.7m for essential structural and repair works to the Guildhall to maintain this listed civic building (and required prior to further decision making on the future operating model of the Guildhall and Abbey House) funded from Property - Asset Management Reserve, and delegates authority to:

- i. the Strategic Director to appoint, in accordance with the council's Contract Procedure Rules (CPRs), all necessary consultants to prepare design work for the works required to the Guildhall through a competitive bid process or framework;
 - ii. the Strategic Director to undertake a procurement exercise to obtain bids or use of a framework to appoint a contractor(s) for the works required to the Guildhall, in accordance with the council's CPRs;
 - iii. the Strategic Director to appoint the relevant contractors and to negotiate and agree contractual heads of terms with the contract appointment; and
 - iv. the Service Lead: Legal to prepare and enter into all relevant agreements, negotiate the contractual agreements and see them to completion to enable the Guildhall works.
7. That following a review of earmarked reserves they be amended as follows:
 - a. £2m of the Major Investment Reserve be re-allocated to the Property Reserve to fund maintenance requirements of corporate properties.
 - b. £1m from the Major Investment Reserve be re-allocated to the Car Parks Property Reserve to fund maintenance of and investment in parking.
 - c. An additional £500,000 per annum be set aside into the Property Reserve, for the maintenance of and investment in operational assets.
8. That the sum of £1,434,779 be treated as Special Expenses under Section 35 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 in respect of the Winchester Town area as set out in section 17 and Appendix D of the report.
9. That the Council Tax for the Special Expenses in the Winchester Town area at Band D for 2026/27 be increased by 5% (£4.50) to £94.58.
10. That the surplus balance on the Council Tax Collection Fund for distribution to this Council, calculated in January 2026 of £107,910, be approved.
11. That the level of Council Tax at Band D for City Council services for 2026/27 be increased to £168.49, an increase of £4.83 reflecting an average Council tax increase of 2.95% (the maximum allowed under the referendum limit of 2.99% when combined with the increase to the Special Expenses for the town area).
12. That the carry forward of the balance of the Council Tax Exceptional Hardship Fund in 2025/26 to 2026/27 be approved in order to extend

this vital support for those on low income.

- b) **TO PASS A FORMAL RESOLUTION SETTING THE COUNCIL TAX FOR THE CITY OF WINCHESTER FOR THE YEAR COMMENCING 1 APRIL 2026.**

- 7. **To consider and determine the following Recommended Minutes: Cabinet held 12 February 2026 - Capital Investment Strategy 2026 - 36 (CAB3539) (Pages 83 - 128)**

RECOMMENDED (TO COUNCIL):

- 1. The Capital Investment Strategy be approved including:
 - a) the Capital Programme and Capital Programme Financing (Appendices A and B to report CAB3539);
 - b) the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy Statement (Appendix E of the report);
 - c) the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy (Appendix G of the report); and
 - d) the prudential indicators detailed in the report and Appendix F of the report.

- 8. **To consider and determine the following Recommended Minutes: Cabinet held 12 February 2026 - Treasury Management Strategy 2026/27 (CAB3538 - REVISED) (Pages 129 - 160)**

Please note revised version of Report CAB3538 (Appendix D) from that considered at Cabinet on 12 February 2026.

RECOMMENDED (TO COUNCIL):

- 1. That the Treasury Management Strategy Statement which includes the Annual Treasury Investment Strategy for 2026/27 (and the remainder of 2025/26) is approved;
- 2. That authority be delegated to the Section 151 Officer to manage the council's pooled property investment and long-term borrowing according to the Treasury Management Strategy Statement as appropriate; and
- 3. That authority be delegated to the Section 151 Officer, who in turn discharges this function to Hampshire County Council's Director of Corporate Operations, as agreed in the Service Level Agreement, to manage all council investments (other than the high yield portfolio) and short-term borrowing according to the Treasury Management Strategy Statement as appropriate.

9. **Changes to Committee Memberships**

To receive any resignations from committees and to make any necessary re-appointments.

10. **Questions from Members of Council**

The total time for questions and the answer and supplementaries thereto shall not exceed 40 minutes.

LAURA TAYLOR
Chief Executive

All of the Council's publicly available agendas, reports and minutes are available to view and download from the Council's [Website](#) and are also open to inspection at the offices of the council. As part of our drive to minimise our use of paper we do not provide paper copies of the full agenda pack at meetings. We do however, provide a number of copies of the agenda front sheet at the meeting which contains the QR Code opposite. Scanning this code enables members of the public to easily access all of the meeting papers on their own electronic device. Please hold your device's camera or QR code App over the QR Code so that it's clearly visible within your screen and you will be redirected to the agenda pack.



18 February 2026

Agenda Contact: David Blakemore, Democratic Services Team Manager

Tel: 01962 848217 Email: dblakemore@winchester.gov.uk

Quorum = 15 members

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Members of the public may ask questions of the Leader, Cabinet Members and Committee Chairs at Ordinary Meetings of the Council. The total time allocated for questions by the public shall normally be limited to 20 minutes.

A question may only be asked if notice has been given by delivering it in writing to Democratic Services no later than 5 working days preceding the Council meeting. For example, if the Council meeting is being held at 7pm on a Wednesday then the question would need to be received by 10am on the preceding Wednesday. Please email to democracy@winchester.gov.uk.

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](#).

DISABLED ACCESS:

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