



**Meeting** Cabinet

**Date and Time** Thursday, 12th March, 2026 at 9.30 am.

**Venue** Walton Suite, Guildhall, Winchester and streamed live on YouTube at [www.youtube.com/winchestercc](http://www.youtube.com/winchestercc).

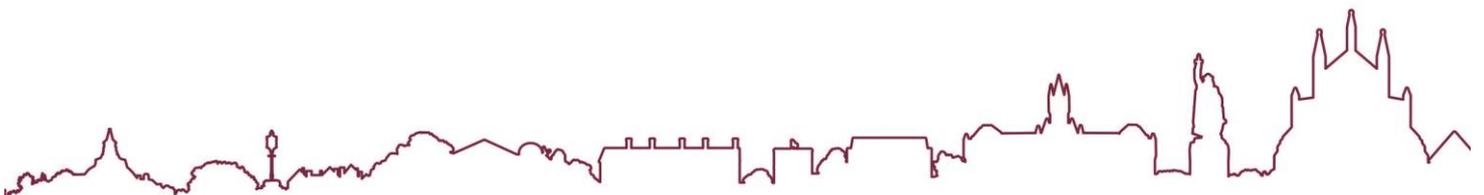
**Note:** This meeting is being held in person at the location specified above. Members of the public should note that a live video feed of the meeting will be available from the council's YouTube channel ( [youtube.com/WinchesterCC](http://youtube.com/WinchesterCC) ) during the meeting.

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 wishing to attend and address the meeting over those wishing to attend and observe.

## AGENDA

### PROCEDURAL ITEMS

- 1. Apologies**  
To record the names of apologies given.
- 2. Membership of Cabinet bodies etc.**  
To give consideration to the approval of alternative arrangements for appointments to bodies set up by Cabinet or external bodies, or the making or terminating of such appointments.
- 3. 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.*
- 4. To note any request from Councillors to make representations on an agenda item.**  
*Note: Councillors wishing to speak address Cabinet are required to register with Democratic Services three clear working days before the meeting (contact: [democracy@winchester.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@winchester.gov.uk) or 01962 848 264). Councillors will normally be invited by the Chairperson to speak during the appropriate item (after the Cabinet Member's introduction and questions from other Cabinet Members).*



## BUSINESS ITEMS

### 5. **Public Participation**

– to note the names of members of the public wishing to speak on general matters affecting the District or on agenda items (in the case of the latter, representations will normally be received at the time of the agenda item, after the Cabinet Member's introduction and any questions from Cabinet Members).

*NB members of the public are required to register with Democratic Services three clear working days before the meeting (contact: [democracy@winchester.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@winchester.gov.uk) or 01962 848 264).*

Members of the public and visiting councillors may speak at Cabinet, provided they have registered to speak three working days in advance. Please contact Democratic Services **by 5pm on Friday 6 March 2026** via [democracy@winchester.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@winchester.gov.uk) or (01962) 848 264 to register to speak and for further details.

### 6. **Minutes of the previous meeting held on 12 February 2026** (Pages 7 - 18)

### 7. **Leader and Cabinet Members' Announcements**

### 8. The extension of the existing waste and recycling collection contract (less exempt appendix) (Pages 19 - 40)

**Key Decision** (CAB3535)

### 9. Approval of Tourism Strategy for Winchester District (Pages 41 - 90)

**Key Decision** (CAB3545)

### 10. Thriving and Resilient Communities Strategy (Pages 91 - 170)

**Key Decision** (CAB3549)

### 11. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Funding (Pages 171 - 206)

**Key Decision** (CAB3547)

### 12. Future arrangements for development management in the South Downs National Park for the period 1 October 2026 to 31 March 2032 (Pages 207 - 214)

**Key Decision** (CAB3546)

### 13. Annual Review of Risk Management Policy 2026/27 (Pages 215 - 258)

**Key Decision** (CAB3548)

14. Q3 Finance & Performance Monitoring (Pages 259 - 312)

**Key Decision**

(CAB3537)

15. To note the future items for consideration by Cabinet as shown on the April 2026 Forward Plan. (Pages 313 - 316)

16. EXEMPT BUSINESS:

To consider whether in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

- (i) To pass a resolution 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 100 (I) and Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

17. The extension of the existing waste and recycling collection contract (exempt appendix) (Pages 317 - 318)

**Key Decision**

(CAB3535)

**Laura Taylor**  
**Chief Executive**

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4 March 2026

Agenda Contact: Nancy Graham, Senior Democratic Services Officer  
Tel: 01962 848 235, Email: [ngraham@winchester.gov.uk](mailto:ngraham@winchester.gov.uk)

*\*With the exception of exempt items, Agenda, reports and previous minutes are available on the Council's Website [www.winchester.gov.uk](http://www.winchester.gov.uk)*

## **CABINET – Membership 2025/26**

**Chairperson:** Councillor Tod - Leader and Cabinet Member for Regeneration

**Vice-Chairperson:** Councillor Cutler - Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation

<u>Councillor</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>
Becker	Cabinet Member for Healthy Communities
Cramoysan	Cabinet Member for Recycling and Public Protection
Learney	Cabinet Member for the Climate and Nature Emergency
Porter	Cabinet Member for Place and the Local Plan
Thompson	Cabinet Member for Business and Culture
Reach	Cabinet Member for Good Homes

**Quorum** = 3 Members

### **Corporate Priorities**

As Cabinet is responsible for most operational decisions of the Council, its work embraces virtually all elements of the Council Strategy.

### **Public Participation at meetings**

Representations will be limited to a maximum of 3 minutes, subject to a maximum 15 minutes set aside for all questions and answers.

To reserve your place to speak, you are asked to **register with Democratic Services three clear working days prior to the meeting** – please see public participation agenda item below for further details. People will be invited to speak in the order that they have registered, subject to the maximum time period allowed for speaking not being exceeded. Public Participation is at the Chairperson’s discretion.

### **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](#). Please note that the video recording is subtitled but you may have to enable your device to see them (advice on how to do this is on the meeting page).

### **Disabled Access**

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

### **Terms Of Reference**

Included within the Council’s Constitution (Part 3, Section 2) which is available [here](#)

## CABINET

Thursday, 12 February 2026

Attendance:

Councillors  
Tod (Chairperson)

Cutler  
Cramoysan  
Becker  
Learney

Porter  
Reach  
Thompson

Members in attendance who spoke at the meeting

Councillors Batho, Godfrey and Horrill

[Video recording of this meeting](#)

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1. **APOLOGIES**

No apologies were received.

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 roles 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.

Councillor Becker declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in respect of the Housing Revenue Account Budget (HRA) 2026/27 (CAB3540) as a property owner with a connection to a council sewage treatment works for which she paid an annual fee. However, as there was no material conflict of interest, she remained in the room, spoke and voted under the dispensation granted by the Monitoring Officer to participate and vote on the matters in the report.

Councillor Batho declared an other registrable interest in respect of report CAB3542(H) as he was a council appointed director to the Venta Living Ltd board. He spoke as a member of the public on this item and then left the room prior to any debate or decision.

4. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Ian Tait spoke regarding reports CAB3540 and CAB3542(H) as summarised under the relevant minutes below.

5. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 21 JANUARY 2026, LESS EXEMPT MINUTE.**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 21 January 2026, less exempt minute, be agreed as a correct record.

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

Councillor Becker announced that the Council in partnership with ActiveMe would be offering the usual football activities during the February half term week.

Councillor Learney provided an update on the recent river management and flood prevention measures being undertaken by the council in response to the heavy rain falls and rising groundwater levels.

Councillor Tod announced that the works on The Buttercross in Winchester were due to start at the end of the month.

Councillor Tod also announced that the council had agreed a plan with Southwestern Railway to improve the appearance of the front approach to Winchester train station by removing the concrete blocks and the fencing.

7. **GENERAL FUND BUDGET 26/27**  
**(CAB3541)**

Councillor Cutler introduced the report and drew attention to the notification earlier that week that the Government had made a calculation error regarding business rate pooling which had resulted in a reduction in the settlement by just under £1.4 million per annum. The government had agreed one-off Adjustment Support Grants for 26/27 to cover this loss for the current year, however the annual £1.4 million reduction would impact subsequent years. Appendices A (General Fund Medium Term Financial Projections) and C (Reserves) of the report had been updated and circulated to Cabinet and other members present.

Councillor Cutler advised that the government error had been reported to Scrutiny Committee on 10 February and noted that the draft minutes of that committee had been circulated to Cabinet and other members present.

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

Councillor Godfrey

Councillor Godfrey criticised the budget as unambitious, arguing that it prioritised retaining millions in reserves over the immediate interests of Winchester taxpayers. He believed that a maximum council tax increase was unnecessary given the generous government settlement and opposed allocating funds for local government reorganisation rather than providing direct services. He urged the council to use its reserves for tangible community benefits, such as home insulation and support for small businesses. Finally, he questioned the high expenditure on the Guildhall, noting that the building would remain largely closed to the public despite the investment

Councillor Batho

Councillor Batho, acting as the coordinator of community speed watch in Winchester, highlighted the prevalence of motorists exceeding speed limits on residential roads and the resulting concerns expressed by local residents. He supported the proposed budget for 2026/27 regarding feasibility work on speed indicator devices, asserting that these tools effectively remind motorists of speed limits and facilitate the council's active travel objectives. He requested that Cabinet prioritise this feasibility study as soon as possible.

Councillors Cutler, Learney and Tod responded to the comments made, including emphasising the importance of council reserves in the current national climate of high levels of uncertainty.

Councillor Tod also made reference to a question received from Councillor Lee who was unable to attend the meeting.

Councillor Cutler proposed an amendment to the report's first recommendation to reflect the amendment to Appendix A of the report due to the late change in the Government's local government financial settlement referred to above. This was agreed and it was noted that an amended report and appendices would be submitted to Council.

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

**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 the report) 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.

RESOLVED:

13. That authority be delegated to the Director (Finance), in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation, to procure, award and enter into any necessary contract(s) required to progress the Customer Experience Digital Project, within the approved budget envelope.

14. That the proposal to write-off the three individual outstanding Non-Domestic Rate debts totalling £228,435.25, listed in Appendix F of the report be approved, in accordance with Financial Procedure Rule 12.7(f).

15. That the proposal to write-off the debt of £53,649.94 owed by Provident Asset Management in connection with rent arrears of £27,649.94 and dilapidation liabilities for external repairs of £26,000 be approved.

8. **HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) BUDGET 26/27**  
(CAB3540)

Councillor Reach introduced the report which had been produced following consultation with tenants, including the TACT board on 4 February. The report had also been considered at Scrutiny Committee on 10 February, the draft minutes of which had been circulated to Cabinet and other members present. Councillor Reach provided further response to a number of the corrections and clarifications sought at Scrutiny Committee and it was noted that an amended report would be submitted to Council.

Ian Tait spoke in public participation as summarised briefly below.

Mr Tait referenced the council's previous acquisition of the Corner House, Winchester and subsequent decision to dispose of the asset. He estimated that the pending sale would result in a loss of approximately £500,000 and emphasised that this was HRA monies. Consequently, he queried the report's description of the sale as providing a "valuable capital receipt", highlighting that he had raised concerns on this matter at several previous meetings.

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

Councillor Horrill welcomed the additional budget savings identified since the November budget options report, but expressed disappointment that the lack of a timely government decision on rent convergence would defer its implementation until the following financial year. She raised concerns regarding the fairness of cost recovery from leaseholders via the section 20 process and also the imbalance in fees for sewage treatment works. She queried why the new maintenance and repairs contract was omitted from the risk register and queried whether there were sufficient skilled resources to complete the energy enhancement works. Finally she expressed concern that the long-standing commitment to building new affordable homes appeared to end in 2032.

Councillors Reach, Cutler and Tod, together with the Director (Finance) responded to the comments made. Councillor Reach highlighted that the future of the HRA policy including the new homes programme was scheduled for discussion at Economy and Housing Policy Committee on 23 February 2026.

Councillor Tod also made reference to a question received from Councillor Lee who was unable to attend the meeting.

Councillor Reach proposed that Appendix 7 of the report would be amended to reflect feedback from the TACT Board that the £52,000 neighbourhood budgets saving be replaced with the £50,000 frequency of external decoration saving. This was agreed and it was noted that an amended Appendix 7 would be prepared for submission to Council.

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

**RECOMMENDED (TO COUNCIL):**

- 1. That the HRA Financial Plan operating account, including annual working balances be noted, as detailed in Appendix 6 of the report.**
- 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 2025 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.

9. **CAPITAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY 26-36**  
(CAB3539)

Councillor Cutler introduced the report noting that it had been considered at Scrutiny Committee on 10 February, the draft minutes of which had been circulated to Cabinet and other members present.

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

**RECOMMENDED (TO COUNCIL):**

1. The Capital Investment Strategy be approved including:
  - a) the Capital Programme and Capital Programme Financing (Appendices A and B to the report);
  - 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.

RESOLVED:

2. Subject to Council approval of the capital programme, the following capital expenditure be approved:

- a) IMT equipment in 2026/27 (£154,000) as detailed in paragraph 11.8.6 of the report;
  - b) Repairs to the Guildhall clocktower in 2026/27 (£250,000);
- and

c) Capital improvements to the Guildhall in 2026/27 and 2027/28 (£3,300,000)

3. That the requirement to ensure Members have the right knowledge and skills to undertake their governance role be noted and that the ongoing support and training offered to members is continued and enhanced as required.

10. **TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 26/27**  
(CAB3538)

Councillor Cutler introduced the report noting that it had been considered at Scrutiny Committee on 10 February, the draft minutes of which had been circulated to Cabinet and other members present. Councillor Cutler advised that a replacement Appendix D of the report had been circulated to members present and would be included in the updated report to Council. The amendment did not impact on the report's recommendations.

Councillor Tod made reference to a question received from Councillor Lee who was unable to attend the meeting.

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

**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.**

11. **VENTA LIVING - BUSINESS PLAN 26/27 (LESS EXEMPT APPENDIX)**  
(CAB3542(H))

Councillor Reach introduced the report. The report had been considered at Cabinet Committee: Housing on 2 February 2026 which had approved the recommendations for consideration by Cabinet.

Ian Tait spoke during public participation as summarised briefly below.

Mr Tait questioned the viability of the company's business model, arguing that recent economic and regulatory changes would likely prevent the venture from trading with an acceptable surplus. He suggested the council should wind up the company and outsource the management of the 41 Winnall flats to an independent provider rather than persevering with an unproven model.

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

Councillor Horrill reiterated her support for a separate housing company to provide diverse tenures and affordable homes, while acknowledging the progress made with residents settling at the Winnall development. She expressed disappointment regarding the lack of proposals to expand the company's remit for 2026/27 and queried what specific criteria would be used to initiate future market acquisitions. She queried whether the company was being underutilised and also whether it would resource itself independently rather than continuing to purchase administrative support from the council.

Councillor Batho also spoke during public participation as a council appointed director to the Venta Living board. His comments are summarised briefly below and he left the meeting following his address to Cabinet.

Councillor Batho described Venta Living as a success for both residents and the council, emphasising its role in providing energy-efficient housing and offering the authority valuable visibility into the private rental market. He detailed the proposed 5.26% rent increase for the flats at Foxglove House and noted that the company was currently focused on consolidation and preparing for the implementation of the Renters' Rights Bill. Finally, he confirmed that while there are no immediate plans to expand the company's remit, the directors remained open to evaluating future business cases as new opportunities arise.

Councillor Reach responded to the comments made, including advising that the exempt appendix confirmed that the company was sustainable in the long term.

Cabinet and other members present confirmed they did not wish to go into exempt session to consider further the contents of the exempt appendix.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the updated financial business plan be approved, as recommended by Cabinet Committee: Housing.
2. That the proposed rent increase for 2026/27 of 5.26% to £1100 per month be approved.
3. That the move to a dynamic renting model following the implementation of the renters rights Bill in May 2026 be approved, allowing for prevailing market rents to apply to individual units at the point of relet.

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

RESOLVED:

That the list of future items as set out in the Forward Plan for March 2026 be noted.

13. **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>
14	Exempt minute of previous meeting held 21 January 2026	) Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). (Para 3 Schedule 12A refers)
15	Venta Living Ltd business plan (exempt appendix)	)

) 12A refers)

14. **EXEMPT MINUTE OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 21 JANUARY 2026**

RESOLVED:

That the exempt minute of the previous meeting held 21 January 2026 be agreed as a correct record.

15. **VENTA LIVING - BUSINESS PLAN 26/27 (EXEMPT APPENDIX)**

RESOLVED:

That the exempt appendix be noted.

The meeting commenced at 9.30 am and concluded at 11.30 am

Chairperson

CAB3535  
CABINET

REPORT TITLE: THE EXTENSION OF THE EXISTING WASTE AND RECYCLING COLLECTION CONTRACT

12 MARCH 2026

REPORT OF CABINET MEMBER: Cllr Steve Cramoysan Cabinet Member for Recycling and Public Protection

Contact Officer: Campbell Williams, Corporate Head of Service, Place

Tel No: 01962 848476

Email: [cawilliams@winchester.gov.uk](mailto:cawilliams@winchester.gov.uk)

WARD(S): ALL

## PURPOSE

The Council is committed to providing waste and recycling services that residents can rely on every week, while accelerating delivery of the Greener Faster priority within the Council Plan.

This report reviews options for these services at the end of the existing contract in February 2029 and recommends seeking approval to extend the current waste and recycling collection contract with Biffa under its terms for a further eight years.

Extending the existing waste and recycling collection contract with Biffa for a further eight years provides the confidence and stability for a reliable service and delivers the ability to go 'greener faster.'

A contract extension safeguards service continuity during a period of local government reorganisation and major national reform in the waste sector, ensuring residents continue to receive a consistent, dependable service without disruption. For residents, this means certainty, familiarity, and confidence that collections will continue to operate smoothly while improvements are planned and introduced in a managed way.

A longer-term arrangement gives the Council and its waste partner the ability to plan and deliver change well. It allows future service improvements to be aligned with the national Simpler Recycling programme and the opening of the new Materials

Recycling Facility (MRF), expected in 2028, ensuring that changes are introduced at the right time and clearly, well-communicated, and easy for residents to understand.

The extension also supports confident delivery by strengthening operational resilience and managing risk proactively. This creates a stable platform for improving recycling performance, reducing residual waste, and supporting residents to recycle more, without compromising service reliability.

By maintaining the current arrangements, the council is prioritising delivery confidence, a positive resident experience, and long-term environmental outcomes — ensuring services remain reliable today whilst being well positioned to deliver greener, more efficient waste services in the years ahead.

RECOMMENDATIONS, that Cabinet:

1. Approve, an extension of council's existing waste and recycling collection contract with Biffa, in line with the extension provisions contained within the current contract, (CAB3202 November 2019) for a period of eight years, which is compliant with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.
2. Delegate authority to the Strategic Director, in consultation with the Director of Finance and Director of Legal, to finalise the contract extension and secure the necessary provisions to ensure the Council can fully comply with the national Simpler Recycling programme.
3. Agree to include, in light of the local government reorganisation, a clause into the existing contract allowing the novation of the existing contract to a new organisation, and to ensure that any contact extension allows the same.

## IMPLICATIONS:

### 1. COUNCIL PLAN OUTCOME

#### **1.1. Greener Faster**

- 1.1.1. Extending the waste and recycling collection contract will support the council's ambition to become greener faster by ensuring continuity of service during a period of significant change in the waste sector and the wider transition associated with local government reorganisation.
- 1.1.2. The extension provides stability while the new Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) and Simpler Recycling reforms are introduced. These reforms will expand the range of materials recycled in the district, helping reduce waste, increase recycling rates and support the council's goal to be carbon neutral by 2030.
- 1.1.3. The MRF's indicative operational date of 2028 means that maintaining the existing contract ensures the council can transition to the new system without disruption. This will help reduce contamination, improve recycling quality and divert more waste from landfill and incineration.
- 1.1.4. By safeguarding service continuity, the extension enables the council to plan for future low carbon operations and more efficient collection routes. This supports the wider ambition to reduce emissions associated with waste operations and contributes to the district's net zero targets.

#### **1.2. Thriving Places**

- 1.2.1. The extension supports the council's ambition for attractive, well maintained places by ensuring that waste and recycling services remain stable and are undertaken in an effective and efficient manner.
- 1.2.2. A clean, well-serviced environment supports strong footfall, encourages investment and contributes to thriving high streets and local centres.

#### **1.3. Healthy Communities**

- 1.3.1. Reliable waste and recycling services are essential to maintaining clean, safe neighbourhoods. The contract extension ensures that residents continue to benefit from consistent collections during a period of national reform.
- 1.3.2. Cleaner public spaces support physical activity, outdoor play and use of green spaces, contributing to improved health and wellbeing across the district.

#### **1.4. Good Homes for All**

- 1.4.1. Reliable waste and recycling services are fundamental to ensuring that all homes remain clean, safe and well-maintained.
- 1.4.2. A stable contract allows the Council to plan for future improvements, including the decarbonisation of waste operations, which aligns with the ambition for homes and neighbourhoods to be resilient to climate change.

### **1.5. Efficient and Effective**

- 1.5.1. The extension provides operational stability and avoids the need for a complex procurement exercise during a period of local government reforms and national waste-sector reform.
- 1.5.2. Legal advice confirms that the extension, being within the scope of the original terms of the contract, is compliant with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 reducing risk and ensuring the Council remains fully compliant with public procurement law.
- 1.5.3. Proceeding with an extension, without service changes at this stage, ensures the council can adopt Simpler Recycling when the MRF is fully operational.

### **1.6. Listening and Learning**

- 1.6.1. The extension provides the council with the time needed to engage residents on future service changes, including the introduction of Simpler Recycling and the MRF.
- 1.6.2. It supports improved satisfaction by ensuring that waste services remain reliable and responsive while the council prepares for future organisational and waste reforms.
- 1.6.3. Engagement is being undertaken with residents throughout 2026 to inform the introduction of Simpler Recycling requirements.

## **2. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 2.1. The existing contract was awarded following a full and robust competitive tendering process, and that it explicitly provides for an extension of up to eight years. Biffa has delivered and improved the waste and recycling collection service since winning that tender.
- 2.2. It should also be noted that direct comparisons of waste and recycling collection contract costs across authorities are inherently difficult due to differing local, geographical and social factors, however financial benchmarking shows Winchester's collection costs per household are broadly similar to comparable councils.
- 2.3. The current contract specifies the service and how the annual cost is determined based upon the number of properties and frequency of

collections. An extension of the contract means that future year costs will be in line with recent years but will be inflated based on a formula set out in the contract which allows for inflation, wage and fuel cost fluctuations.

### 3. Contract discussions with BIFFA

- 3.1. Discussions regarding a contract extension have taken place with Biffa and the city council has received an offer from them. This is still subject to their board approval, however the key points of their offer are;
- 3.2. BIFFA are willing to extend the contract for a further eight years. Eight years represents the lifetime of a collection vehicle. After this length of time any service would become unreliable, and shorter than eight years would significantly increase the annual cost.
- 3.3. We would jointly need to review existing prices in the contract and ensure that the costs and services offered reflect the financial position now in terms of wages, inflation, and housing numbers.
- 3.4. BIFFA are proposing to offer a small percentage contract saving per year compared to the current contract value.
- 3.5. The experience of BIFFA will enable their expertise to support a significant shift in recycling rate to 60%, in line with other contracts they run. Whilst not of any financial value now to the city council, once Local Government Re-organisation occurs and costs of disposal fall to the new unitary authority, a change of this scale will save significant sums, and a shared programme incentivising both partners is available.

### 4. LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. Legal advice confirms that the current contract with Biffa which was the subject of a competitive tendering process allows for a single extension of up to eight years.
- 4.2. The Biffa contract has an initial term of eight years from 1 February 2021 to 31 January 2029. Clause three addresses potentially extending the contract beyond that initial term. This may be as one single extension of up to eight years but not by multiple extensions having a cumulative extended period of up to eight years. The council can therefore choose to seek an extension for eight years or for a shorter extended period. To trigger an extension the council must serve written notice on Biffa to that effect at least 18 months before 31 January 2029 (so by 31 July 2027 at the latest). As drafted, the contract does not allow the council to propose an extension period with a related break clause added so the contract would continue for that full duration unless terminated with cause. Biffa may, by serving notice within three months of the Council's notice, reject the proposed extension if it is unable or unwilling to continue the contract beyond its initial eight-year term.

## 5. WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. The internal project team will manage the contract extension process, ensuring that the work remains within the agreed scope, timescales and budget.
- 5.2. The contract extension itself does not require immediate changes to operational staffing levels. Operational staff delivering the waste and recycling service will continue to be employed by Biffa under the existing arrangements. However, as the council moves closer to adopting Simpler Recycling and the expanded range of materials, additional operational and administrative capacity may be required, and this will be planned in partnership with Biffa as part of future service design.
- 5.3. A full retendering of the waste and recycling collection contract would have staffing implications and would require a project budget to be allocated to undertake the necessary work to retender.

## 6. PROPERTY AND ASSET IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. The proposed eight-year extension to the waste and recycling collection contract does not require any immediate changes to property or assets, as the service will continue to operate from the existing Barfield Close Depot under the current lease arrangement.

## 7. CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

- 7.1. Preparation of this report has involved engagement with the waste contractor, the portfolio holder, senior Cabinet Members, and officers from Legal, Finance, Procurement and the Senior Leadership Team to ensure the recommendations are robust and fully informed.

## 8. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1. A contract extension would support long-term environmental improvements across the district. This includes the transition to more sustainable waste systems, aligning with the Local Area Energy Plan, enabling future investment in lower-carbon fleet technologies as they become viable, and ensuring the service remains adaptable to national reforms in the waste sector, including the introduction of Simpler Recycling and related policy changes over the coming years.
- 8.2. Maintaining a reliable and consistent waste collection service contributes to a cleaner and healthier environment, supporting the council's wider objectives for nature recovery, improved air quality and reduced pollution in local watercourses. The contract extension ensures these environmental protections remain in place while providing the flexibility and resilience needed to respond to future national waste reforms without compromising service quality or resident experience.

## 9. PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

- 9.1. An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed for the waste and recycling collection contract extension and is available at Appendix A.
- 9.2. The Assessment concludes that mitigation to address potential equality impacts have been built-in to the main waste and recycling service provision and these arrangements, such as assisted collections for residents who require them, will continue to be delivered as part of the contract extension.
- 9.3. Mitigation has been built into the contract to strengthen fair and inclusive employment practices and maximise social value. The contractor is required to demonstrate equitable recruitment, training and progression opportunities and to promote an inclusive working environment. These measures support wider social value over the life of the contract.

## 10. DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 10.1. The current contract conditions relating to data protection would continue under this extension. There would be no additional sharing of personal data or addresses above or beyond what is set out in the contract.

## 11. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 11.1. Key considerations are summarised below.

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>
Financial Exposure	Financial modelling, scenario planning, early negotiation, inclusion of price adjustment clauses	Opportunity to benchmark costs and secure value-for-money through proactive planning
Local government re-organisation	Extend contract to ensure service deliver continues	Able to learn from others and benchmark.
Exposure to challenge	Legal advice, compliance with public procurement law	Demonstrate robust governance and transparency
Innovation	Include innovation clauses in extension; monitor technology trends	Ability to adopt new recycling technologies and improve efficiency
Reputation	Clear communication strategy, FAQs, press releases, crisis comms plan. Less risk of impact on service through stable service.	Maintain public confidence through transparency and engagement
Achievement of outcome	Strong project governance, early	Deliver improved recycling service aligned

	planning, monitoring KPIs, engagement with current contractor.	with national policy through engagement with Biffa
Community Support	Public consultation, engagement loops, clear messaging	Increased resident buy-in and smoother implementation
Timescales	Adjusted timetables, milestone tracking, reminders for deadlines	Opportunity to demonstrate efficient project delivery
Project capacity	Dedicated programme lead, resource monitoring	Build internal capability for future projects
Other	Policy flexibility clauses, contingency planning for supplier workforce stability	Ability to adapt to policy changes without major disruption

## 12. SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

12.1. The existing waste contract ends in February 2029, eight years after its start date of February 2021. The contract was originally tendered in late 2019, with the start date delayed by four months due to Covid (Cab 3203 Nov 2019).

12.2. The current contract has now completed five years of the eight originally agreed and has delivered significant improvements in waste and recycling for the residents of Winchester. It is fully supporting the move to carbon neutrality that is at the heart of the city council's operations. Key activities currently underway include

- An estimated 140,000 collections each week of waste or recycling.
- Delivered using vehicles powered by hydrotreated vegetable oil except for one truck powered using 100% renewable electricity
- Operation of a bulky waste collection service for residents
- Delivery and replacement of an estimated 240,000 containers for food waste, recycling, residual, garden and glass.
- Operation throughout all seasons and weathers

12.3. Improvements introduced as part of or since the contract started including

- A full re-route to support a more balanced collection system and save an estimated 13,000 miles per year.
- The introduction of food waste recycling across Winchester
- The introduction of a charged for garden waste service
- The introduction of the collection of small waste electrical equipment and batteries

12.4. In addition to what they do, how BIFFA operate is also important, and they make a significant contribution to social value in Winchester through

- 12.4.1 Education and Schools Engagement: Delivery of 30 school visits, providing educational sessions focused on environmental responsibility, sustainability, and road safety awareness in relation to our fleet operations.
- 12.4.2 Community Volunteering: Quarterly volunteer days within local communities, with funded resources and employee participation to support projects that improve and enhance local environments.
- 12.4.3 Community Engagement and Events: Attendance at or hosting of six community events, including interactive recycling education initiatives designed to improve recycling behaviours in an accessible and engaging way.
- 12.4.4 Employment and Skills Development: Delivery of quarterly Employment Academies, supporting unemployed individuals into sustainable employment, based on cohorts of eight participants per programme.
- 12.4.5 Investment in Skills and Qualifications: Funding for three HGV licences and one driving licence to support the development and progression of operational colleagues.
- 12.4.6 Workforce Development: Investment in colleague development, including five employees enrolled on the Accelerate development programme and one fully funded apprenticeship.
- 12.4.7 Health and Wellbeing: Delivery of quarterly wellbeing initiatives, providing free wellbeing support to promote a healthier, more resilient workforce.
- 12.5. Whilst the city council is still awaiting the effect of the complete roll out of the food waste service. It is on track to see an increase of our recycling rate, and the residual waste tonnage per household is falling.
- 12.6. In terms of customer service, the current services are operating consistently, to a high standard, and is subject to levels of missed bins and complaints which are well within target operating levels.
- 12.7. Alongside local government reorganisation there are once in a generation changes to the waste and recycling national systems which will affect residents in Winchester.
  - 12.7.1 In October 2027 a Deposit Return Scheme is scheduled to be implemented across England, seeing a small deposit charged on all non-glass drinks packaging. This makes up a small percentage of tonnage collected, but is high volume and high value, and is often visible when deposited as litter.

- 12.7.2 The Council is required to implement Simpler Recycling to align with national waste policy and improve recycling performance. The new disposal infrastructure being built by Hampshire is due to open in the Spring / Summer of 2028 and will see the collection from the kerbside of pots, tubs, trays and cartons for the first time.
- 12.7.3 In 2028 the existing emissions trading scheme is set for a major expansion, with the inclusion of the waste incineration and energy-from-waste (EfW) sectors. This has the potential to add significant costs to the disposal of residual waste within Hampshire, where the main final disposal is through the energy from waste incinerators run by the three current waste disposal authorities.
- 12.8. So whilst there have been significant advances in our recycling there remain several improvements and changes which need to be managed carefully. Maintaining the existing service through an extended contract, with the existing contractors, during period of significant change for local government appears to be the lowest risk option.
- 12.9. A decision is required on extending the contract, allowed under the existing contract for a further eight years, extending the contract for a shorter single period, retendering entirely or moving to an in-house service.
- 12.10. The waste contract is currently for eight years as this represent the working life of a collection vehicle, balancing the reliability of the service with the reduced annual cost.
- 12.11. To pursue a contract extension for eight years considers the benefits of service continuity, cost certainty and alignment with forthcoming national waste reforms. In the current global and national financial context, including inflationary pressures and volatility in fuel, labour and capital costs, there is no clear evidence to suggest that returning to market at this point would deliver savings over the existing contract, or that any potential benefit would outweigh the cost and risk of a full re-procurement exercise.
- 12.12. Due to local government reorganisation, the existing contract which does not include a novation clause, will need to have one inserted to enable it to transfer to a new organisation, and the extension will need to be written to allow for flexibility for a new organisation from April 2028.
13. CONCLUSION
- 13.1. A contract extension with Biffa is proposed to ensure continuity of service while preparing for future waste and recycling changes brought about by national legislation and the development of new recycling infrastructure. This represents the lowest risk for the continued excellent service for a core front line service, at a time of significant change in both local government and waste and recycling nationally.

- 13.2. This proposal offers continuity, cost control, and operational resilience, whilst mitigating risks through robust governance, legal compliance, and transparent communication, and it is recommended to;
  - 13.3. Approve an extension, to the council's existing waste and recycling collection contract with Biffa, in line with the extension provisions contained within the current contract, (CAB3202 November 2019) for a period of eight years, which is compliant with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.
  - 13.4. Delegate authority to the Strategic Director, in consultation with the Director of Finance and Director of Legal to finalise the contract extension and secure the necessary provisions to ensure the Council can fully comply with the national Simpler Recycling programme.
  - 13.5. Agree to include, in light of the local government reorganisation, a clause into the existing contract allowing the novation of the existing contract to a new organisation, and to ensure that any contact extension allows the same.
14. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED
- 14.1. Retendering would require a full procurement exercise. Although this could have tested the market, the timing is unsuitable. With LGR underway, maintaining service stability is essential, and a new contract that was entered into now may need to be revisited when Simpler Recycling is introduced in Spring 2028 as the MRF becomes operational, creating unnecessary disruption. Given that the existing contract permits extensions of up to eight years, it was concluded that retendering was not appropriate and therefore not an option to pursue.
  - 14.2. The service could potentially be brought in-house, but the council is not in a position to pursue this option at present. Although bringing the service in-house may offer greater control in the longer term, the transition to a new unitary authority makes this a challenging time to undertake a complex, and high-profile service transfer. Extending the current contract provides stability while the new authority considers future delivery models. Some potential LGR partners have already brought their services in-house, so there may be scope to explore this option in the future once the new authority is established.
  - 14.3. A shorter extension would mean the new unitary authority would need to begin the retendering process soon after vesting, limiting its ability to take a strategic, long-term approach. It is also likely to be much more expensive as vehicles which would otherwise be depreciated over 8 years would then be depreciated over fewer years, significantly increasing the overall cost.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:-

Previous Committee Reports:-

CAB3202 November 2019. ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES – AWARD OF CONTRACT

Other Background Documents:-

None

APPENDICES:

Appendix A - Equality Impact Assessment

Exempt Appendix B – BIFFA contact discussions

Appendix A - Equality Impact Assessment

**Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)**

Section 1 - Data Checklist

When undertaking an EqIA for your policy or project, it is important that you take into consideration everything which is associated with the policy or project that is being assessed.

The checklist below is to help you sense check your policy or project before you move to Section 2.

		Yes/No	Please provide details
1	Have there been any complaints data related to the policy or project you are looking to implement?	No	
2	Have all officers who will be responsible for implementing the policy or project been consulted, and given the opportunity to raise concerns about the way the policy or function has or will be implemented?	Yes	Senior officers responsible for implementing the waste and recycling contract extension have been consulted and given the opportunity to raise concerns. Their input has helped shape the approach to ensure operational continuity, compliance with equality duties, and readiness for future legislative changes such as Simpler Recycling.
3	Have previous consultations highlighted any concerns about the policy or project from an equality impact perspective?	No	

		Yes/No	Please provide details
4	Do you have any concerns regarding the implementation of this policy or project?  <i>(i.e. Have you completed a self-assessment and action plan for the implementation of your policy or project?)</i>	No	
5	Does any accessible data regarding the area which your work will address identify any areas of concern or potential problems which may impact on your policy or project?	No	
6	Do you have any past experience delivering similar policies or projects which may inform the implementation of your scheme from an equality impact point of view?	Yes	The council previously extended contracts including the waste and recycling contract before entering the current contract. This provided insights into managing service continuity, and equality considerations during transitional periods.
7	Are there any other issues that you think will be relevant?	Yes	The Council must be aware of the contractor's employment practices, as these could, unintentionally, result in indirect discrimination against people with any of the nine protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. These were checked as part of tendering exercise.

## Section 2 - Your EqIA form

<b>Directorate:</b> Place	<b>Your Service Area:</b> Environmental waste services	<b>Team:</b> Future of waste and recycling	<b>Officer responsible for this assessment:</b> Nadine Fox	<b>Date of assessment:</b> November 2025
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	<b>Question</b>	<b>Please provide details</b>
1	What is the name of the policy or project that is being assessed?	Waste and recycling contract extension.
2	Is this a new or existing policy?	Existing contract.
3	Briefly describe the aim and purpose of this work.	<p>The aim of this purposed work is to consider extending the existing waste and recycling contract for, up to, a further eight (8) years.</p> <p>The extension would ensure that the council retains local control and influence over the service during the LGR transition period, while maintaining financial stability, operational efficiency, and continuity of service delivery for residents.</p> <p>This approach helps the council make best use of its resources, keep services running smoothly, and giving reassurance to staff, residents, and the contractor while the organisation changes.</p>
4	What are the associated objectives of this work?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To retain the council's ability to manage, oversee, and influence local waste and recycling priorities prior to and during the LGR.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Future readiness - To allow the council to align future procurement and service design with the outcomes of the Local Government Review, the Simpler Recycling legislation, and being compliant with national waste legislation.</li> <li>• Simpler Recycling - To allow sufficient time and flexibility within the extended contract to prepare for and implement the government’s Simpler Recycling legislation.</li> <li>• Service continuity - to ensure uninterrupted delivery of waste and recycling services for residents throughout the period of organisational change and during the transition to new local government arrangements.</li> <li>• Service quality and standards - to maintain service performance, customer satisfaction, and compliance with environmental standards while adapting to new recycling and waste reduction goals.</li> <li>• Operational efficiency - to continue working with an established and experienced contractor to ensure efficient, reliable service delivery.</li> <li>• Workforce and contractor stability - to provide reassurance for staff and contractors, maintaining service expertise through a period of structural and policy change.</li> <li>• Financial stability - to reduce financial uncertainty in waste and recycling services during a period of organisational change.</li> </ul>
5	Who is intended to benefit from this work and in what way?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residents - ensuring uninterrupted and reliable waste and recycling services, including support for vulnerable groups.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The council - by maintaining local control, financial stability, and operational efficiency during LGR.</li> <li>• Staff and contractors - will gain employment stability and service continuity during organisational change.</li> <li>• Environment – benefits from sustained recycling standards in preparation for Simpler Recycling.</li> </ul>
6	What are the outcomes sought from this work?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Future proofing the service.</li> <li>• Consistent and reliable service delivery.</li> <li>• Financial stability.</li> <li>• Simpler Recycling policy implementation readiness.</li> </ul>
7	What factors/forces could contribute or detract from the outcomes?	<p><b>Contribute:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Established contractor knowledge of local services and routes.</li> <li>• Reduced risk of service disruption from changing contractors</li> <li>• Reduced operational and financial risk during a period of LGR uncertainty.</li> <li>• Time to prepare for Simpler Recycling implementation</li> </ul> <p><b>Detract:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential loss of innovation from other contractors by not going to the market.</li> </ul>
8	Who are the key individuals and organisations responsible for the implementation of this work?	Future of waste and recycling project team
9	Who implements the policy or project and who or what is responsible for it?	Future of waste and recycling project Board

		Please select your answer in <b>bold</b> . Please provide detail here.		
10a	Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of race differently in a negative way?	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>	
10b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	<p>It could have an indirect negative effect on people from different racial or ethnic backgrounds. Language barriers may make it harder for some residents to get important service information, like recycling instructions, collection times, or how to make a complaint. This could lead to confusion, lower participation, or less satisfaction with the service.</p> <p>Accessible format information is provided and different language versions can be made available on request.</p>		
11a	Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of sex differently in a negative way?	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>	
11b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	N/A		
12a	<p>Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of disability differently in a negative way?</p> <p><i>you may wish to consider:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Physical access</i></li> <li>• <i>Format of information</i></li> <li>• <i>Time of interview or consultation event</i></li> <li>• <i>Personal assistance</i></li> </ul>	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Interpreter</i></li> <li>• <i>Induction loop system</i></li> <li>• <i>Independent living equipment</i></li> <li>• <i>Content of interview)</i></li> </ul>			
12b		<p>Some residents may face physical barriers when accessing waste and recycling services, particularly in areas with communal bins or kerbside collections.</p> <p>Others may find information difficult to access if it is not provided in suitable formats, such as large print, audio, or easy-read guides.</p> <p>The Council provides assisted collection services based on certain criteria to overcome this issue.</p>		
13a	Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of sexual orientation differently in a negative way?	Y	N	
13b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	N/A		
14a	Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals on the basis of age differently in a negative way?	Y	N	Older people may face challenges accessing waste and recycling services due to mobility issues or difficulties using communal bins and online systems. The Council provides assisted collection services based on certain criteria to overcome this issue.
14b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?			
15a	Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of religious belief differently in a negative way?	Y	N	

15b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	N/A		
16a	Could this policy or project have the potential to affect individuals on the basis of gender reassignment differently in a negative way?	Y	N	
16b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	N/A		
17a	Could this policy or project have the potential to affect individuals on the basis of marriage and civil partnership differently in a negative way?	Y	N	
17b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	N/A		
18a	Could this policy or project have the potential to affect individuals on the basis of pregnancy and maternity differently in a negative way?	Y	N	
18b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	N/A		

19	Could any negative impacts that you identified in questions 10a to 15b create the potential for the policy to discriminate against certain groups on the basis of protected characteristics?	Y	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disabled individuals</li> <li>• Elderly</li> <li>• Non-English speakers (language access)</li> <li>• The incumbent contractor’s employment practices could indirectly discriminate against people with any of the nine protected characteristics.</li> </ul> <p>Accessible format information is provided and different language versions can be made available on request.</p> <p>Contractors' employment policies are checked.</p>
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20	Can this negative impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for certain groups on the basis of protected characteristics? Please provide your answer opposite against the relevant protected characteristic.	Y	N	<p>Race (language): materials should be provided in accessible formats such as translated materials and use multilingual communications.</p> <p>Sex: N/A</p> <p>Disability: Assisted collection is available to residents with mobility issues. Communications can be provided in accessible formats (large print, audio, pictorial), telephone and face-to-face support where needed.</p> <p>Sexual orientation: N/A</p> <p>Age: Assisted collection is available to residents with mobility issues. Communications can be provided in accessible formats (large print, audio, pictorial), telephone and face-to-face support where needed.</p> <p>Gender reassignment: N/A</p> <p>Pregnancy and maternity: N/A</p> <p>Marriage and civil partnership: N/A</p> <p>Religious belief:</p>
21	How will you mitigate any potential discrimination that may be brought about by your policy or project that you have identified above?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing assisted collections and accessible information for disabled residents.</li> <li>• Offering clear, easy-to-read and non-digital options for older people.</li> <li>• Sharing key information in other languages and visual formats for non-English speakers.</li> </ul>		

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Including equality and diversity requirements in the contractor's agreement and monitoring fair employment practices.</li> </ul>		
22	Do any negative impacts that you have identified above impact on your service plan?	Y	<b>N</b>	Potential negative impacts can be managed through targeted mitigation.

Signed by completing officer	Nadine Fox
Signed by Service Lead or Corporate Head of Service	Campbell Williams

REPORT TITLE: APPROVAL OF THE TOURISM STRATEGY FOR WINCHESTER DISTRICT

12 MARCH 2026

REPORT OF CABINET MEMBER: Cllr Lucille Thompson, Cabinet Member for Business & Culture

Contact Officer: Andrew Gostelow Tel No: 07980 732 149 Email agostelow@winchester.gov.uk

WARD(S): ALL

PURPOSE

This report sets out the Tourism Strategy (see Appendix 1) for the Winchester district to 2031. The strategy aims to:

- guide Winchester district's visitor economy into a new era of sustainable growth
- provide a collective roadmap for the entire district, providing a clear vision and actionable plan to enhance the appeal of Winchester district.

Underpinned by a comprehensive evidence, base and an extensive programme of stakeholder engagement, the strategy sets out priorities under four themes: Market Focus; Positioning and Destination Marketing; Destination Development and Destination Management. Within each of these areas there are a series of priorities and suggested actions.

The strategy provides a robust framework that not only strengthens our local visitor economy but also positions us as a leading contributor to the delivery of tourism support across a broader geography through the Hampshire, Portsmouth, Southampton and Winchester Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP).

This approach aligns with Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and creates opportunities to play a pivotal role in future devolution arrangements for driving regional growth and collaboration. It ensures Winchester district's expertise and assets are at the heart of shaping Hampshire's visitor economy of the future.

As the LGR arrangements are confirmed and as greater clarity emerges on the mayoral combined county authority's growth plan priorities for culture and the visitor economy, revisions to this strategy may be required. This will ensure its aims and objectives remain relevant in a wider geography.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS:

Cabinet is asked to:

1. Approve the Winchester District Tourism Strategy 2026-2031, which will be led and delivered by Winchester City Council in collaboration with partners and businesses operating within the visitor economy.
2. Delegate authority to the Strategic Director responsible for Economy and Tourism to revise the strategy, at an appropriate time, to reflect the new operating landscape as a result of LGR and the mayoral combined county authority.

#### IMPLICATIONS:

##### 1 COUNCIL PLAN OUTCOME

###### **Greener Faster**

- 1.1 Tourism generates significant impacts from travel and the consumption of experiences and accommodation. The Winchester visitor economy should support the ambitions of the council to be a carbon neutral district by 2030. The Green Economic Development Strategy supports this by recognising the need to reduce the carbon impacts from tourism, strengthen local supply chains, reduce the consumption of scarce resources and support biodiversity. One of the actions of the Winchester District Tourism Strategy will be to explore a sustainable destination certification. The strategy will develop a focus for local businesses to undertake individual business certification, and in doing so, monitor, plan and make changes which improve the destination's sustainability and advocate regenerative tourism practices.

###### **Thriving Places**

- 1.2 Tourism remains a vital contributor to Winchester district's economy, generating an estimated £292.2 million through visitor spending and related activities. This includes 220,000 staying trips, worth £55.1 million, and 7.86 million day visits, contributing £237.1 million. The sector supports 5,760 jobs accounting for 7% of local employment and drives an additional £78 million

through supply chain spending (Winchester District Economic Impact Report, 2022). These figures underpin the strategic importance of the district's visitor economy and the need for continued investment in infrastructure, skills, product development, visitor information, and marketing to sustain growth and competitiveness. A thriving visitor economy enhances Winchester district's appeal as somewhere people want to live, work, study and invest, delivering wider benefits for the whole community and place.

### **Healthy Communities**

- 1.3 The visitor economy and the delivery of the actions outlined in the tourism strategy play an important role in fostering healthy communities, both physically and socially for all ages and abilities. This includes the promotion of active lifestyles through walking trails, cycling routes, and outdoor recreation spaces, and encouraging participation in cultural and nature-based activities that involve movement. By supporting events and cultural activities it will reinforce social connections bringing residents and visitors together. The strategy will encourage volunteer opportunities and community involvement in tourism initiatives. A vibrant visitor economy is one that will create local jobs and stimulate small business growth through developing and expanding the tourism markets. Economic stability contributes to improved health outcomes for residents.

The Purple Pound (spending power of disabled people) is estimated to be valued at over £14.6bn in England alone. While there are clear benefits for visitors from an accessible and inclusive destination, it also provides great benefits to local residents, communities, employees and businesses. The tourism strategy will signpost and provide training and events for the sector, look to increase the number of businesses making improvements with accessibility champions, accessibility guides, accessible facilities as well as dementia and autism friendly initiatives, and showcase examples of best practice from within district.

### **Good Homes for All**

- 1.4 The strategy is primarily an economic and place-shaping strategy, however it indirectly supports the priority of Good Homes for All through strengthening the local economy which helps address the issue of the district's housing affordability. Development of the sector will provide growth in the local workforce through increased local employment opportunities in hospitality, culture, leisure, retail and tourism services.

### **Efficient and Effective**

- 1.5 The strategy is built on a detailed baseline review which aligns with the Council Plan goal of improving the way the council uses data and insight to design services more efficiently. This in turn enables the targeting of tourism investment where it delivers the greatest return and analysing data to improve forecasting, budget prioritisation and evaluation of tourism services. The baseline review also included an assessment of marketing performance and

digital channels to inform recommendations in the strategy which align with the Council Plan's ambition to make better use of technology and digital tools.

## **Listening and Learning**

- 1.6 In developing the baseline review, a comprehensive engagement programme with businesses, stakeholders, residents, visitors and non-visitors was undertaken (see section 6). This was strengthened by analysis of previous surveys including responses from over 450 residents to the Culture and Creative Activity Survey in 2023 (part of the Winchester District Cultural Strategy evidence base) and Winchester City Council Resident Survey in 2024.

## **2 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 2.1 The Economy and Tourism team will have responsibility for managing the overall implementation of the strategy and already takes a lead role in promoting and engaging with the sector and key stakeholders, through the Visit Winchester brand. This work is funded from the team's annual baseline budget which includes Fees and Charges generated via the Visit Winchester Partnership & Marketing Programme. When grant programmes or investment opportunities become available, the team will bid for funding to further support the delivery of the strategy.

## **3 LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 There are no direct implications for legal and procurement arising from approval of the strategy. The Economy & Tourism team will take advice from Legal and Procurement teams should any need arise.

## **4 WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The strategy and its implementation do not create any direct workforce implications. The strategy provides focus, priorities and a road map for existing staff resources, including the Winchester Visitor Information Centre and the Tourism Marketing team, who will lead on the strategy delivery, monitoring and reporting, destination marketing, culture and creative sector development and strategic destination development. The teams, with the support of the wider existing Economy and Tourism team, will continue to support and advocate for the sector, alongside facilitating and enabling the outputs of this strategy. In addition, the team will engage internally to encourage alignment with other key council strategies, where appropriate and externally to support businesses and sector collaboration in delivering the strategy.
- 4.2 This strategy aims to share the responsibilities, its success, and be realistic about the resources it will require and that are available. The council will continue to work alongside a range of stakeholders supporting, facilitating, and enabling partnership activity.

- 4.3 In addition, the council has set up a cross-sector advisory group comprised of strategic partners (see 6.2) to provide advocacy at the highest level and help drive forward the strategy, working with the council to continue to shape, monitor and review its direction.

## 5 PROPERTY AND ASSET IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The strategy does not create any property implications.
- 5.2 The council owns the building in which the Winchester Visitor Information Service is provided. Whilst the strategy does not impose any obligations on the centre, the centre is a valuable asset, providing a vital physical touchpoint for the brand, visitors and stakeholders. Continued provision will support delivery of the outcomes around the priority areas of marketing and positioning, destination development and management.
- 5.3 The Visit Winchester brand is a valuable asset and must be retained and managed by the council.
- 5.4 The council own, and in some cases contracts organisations to operate properties, which are used for cultural and creative activities. Whilst the strategy does not impose any obligations on these properties and organisations, as active partners in the delivery of the strategy, some changes may be suggested in the future.

## 6 CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

- 6.1 As part of the work to develop the strategy, one-to-one consultations were held with 15 key stakeholders to discuss the destination, visitor markets, challenges and opportunities in greater detail. These were facilitated by Blue Sail Consultancy and those attending included Winchester Cathedral, Winchester College, Marwell, The Science Centre, Hampshire Cultural Trust, The Hat Fair (Play to the Crowd), Winchester BID, Hampshire Fare, South Downs National Park, Lainston House, Wallops Wood, Long Barn, The Grange Wine and Vineyards of Hampshire.
- 6.2 Two stakeholder workshops were held in July 2025 attended by over 60 businesses and stakeholders across both dates. Emerging themes and priorities were tested at Visit Winchester Attractions Partnership and Meet in Winchester meetings in September 2025. An Advisory Group of key sector representative was also set up in October 2025 to review and comment on the vision, objectives, emerging themes and priorities.
- 6.3 A visitor panel survey was conducted online between 30 May and 22 June 2025, gathering 1,015 interviews from recent visitors (visited in the last two years), past visitors (visited over two years ago), and non-visitors, as well as local (Hampshire residents) and non-local respondents
- 6.4 In addition to the consultation with the tourism sector, council officers and relevant Cabinet Members were also able to provide feedback and a draft

strategy was considered by the Economy and Housing Policy Committee (EHP57) at its September meeting.

## 7 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 Environmental responsibility is a key cross-cutting theme of the strategy and is also embedded as a priority under the theme 'destination management'. The strategy recognises the role of the visitor economy in inspiring people to explore the great outdoors and promoting the closeness to countryside, nature, walks and trails.
- 7.2 The strategy will seek to achieve the balancing of economic impact with environmental sustainability through exploring destination certification, both for the district and supporting businesses to undertake certification. Tourism experiences can also be used to engage people in considering, addressing and seeking local solutions to climate issues, leaving minimal impact on the area they visit and contributing to regenerative tourism practices. The sector commits to reviewing its practices and policies to ensure appropriate measures are taking place to reduce the sectors impact on climate change.

## 8 PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

- 8.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), at section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, requires public bodies, including the council to have due regard to the aims of the general equality duty when making decisions and when setting policies.
- 8.2 Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity involves considering the need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- 8.3 The strategy recognises the importance to equality, diversity and inclusion and embeds this under the 'destination management' priority. It recognises that whilst there are clear benefits for visitors, an accessible and inclusive destination also provides great benefits to local communities, employees and businesses. The strategy will support this through signposting to resources, toolkits and training, and showcasing best practice examples from across the Winchester district via visitor platforms.

## 9 DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 9.1 All personal information collected as part of the process to develop the strategy will be held in accordance with the Council's Data Protection Policy and comply with the six Data Protection Principles set out in Article 5(1) of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and sections 35 to 40 of the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA).

## 10 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 10.1 The council's current overall risk appetite is defined as MODERATE. This means the council remains open to innovative ways of working and to pursue options that offer potentially substantial rewards, despite also having greater level of risks. However, the council's preference is for safe delivery options which have a lower degree of risk, especially for those services required by statute. This Strategy aligns with the Council's risk appetite.

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>
<p><b>Financial Exposure</b> External investment and funding cannot be secured to enable implementation of the action plan.</p>	<p>A review of the action plan and timeline will ensure resources are directed to the main priorities.</p> <p>Development of strong partnerships and collaborations for projects supported by robustly developed business cases to stand the best chance of attracting external funding and investment.</p>	<p>The strategy is built on a comprehensive baseline review and is closely aligned with new national and regional structures such as the Hampshire, Portsmouth, Southampton and Winchester LVEP. This creates strong foundations for attracting public, private, and partnership-led investment in several ways.</p> <p>The strategy recognises and a strengthens Winchester district's assets, creating a compelling narrative for potential inward investment.</p>
<p><b>Exposure to challenge</b> There are no legal and procurement implications arising from this report.</p>	<p>Extensive engagement with the sector to ensure proposed actions are achievable and realistic for the sector to deliver.</p>	<p>Agile approach allows sector to be responsive to new or emerging challenges.</p>
<p><b>Innovation</b> The strategy stifles or limits the ability of the sector to innovate.</p>	<p>Working in collaboration reduces the risk on individual partners (including the council) to enable innovative ways of working.</p>	<p>Working with a variety of stakeholders with diverse skills, and businesses of varying sizes, across the visitor economy, will enable innovative responses to challenges and implementation.</p>

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>
<p><b>Reputation</b> The delivery of the strategy and action plan fails to build consensus amongst the stakeholders and damages the perception of the council's role in supporting visitor economy.</p>	<p>The development and delivery of the action plans will be closely monitored and measured through robust management and corporate reporting processes.</p> <p>Consensus and engagement from stakeholders on developing a shared destination narrative.</p>	<p>Successful delivery of the strategy will recognise and build a reputation for the district's visitor offer. The council's role as a partner will enhance the reputation of the council in its leadership role and supports its values of empowerment and collaboration.</p>
<p><b>Achievement of outcome</b> The strategy priorities and actions are not achieved within timescales.</p>	<p>Scenario planning with regular reviews via the industry networking groups will allow for different levels of effort both by the council and the other strategy stakeholders to be directed at those outcomes that most need addressing.</p>	
<p><b>Property</b> None</p>		
<p><b>Community Support</b> The sector does not participate in working collaboratively to deliver the strategy and its actions.</p>	<p>An active group of stakeholders have already been engaged via the Visit Winchester Partnership and Marketing Programme for many years already. This will continue, with networking meetings providing the opportunity for stakeholders to continue to take an active role in the delivery of the strategy which will include influencing and mobilising the sector.</p>	<p>Reinforcement of brand and stronger coalition of partners working together on destination development priorities.</p>

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>
<p><b>Timescales</b> This is a five-year plan however there is expectation that change and action can be demonstrated early, which may not be possible due to the long-term nature of some of the projects to design, resource and deliver.</p>	<p>The Action Plan identifies projects that need to be implemented early, and have the greatest impact, or large transformational projects are planned and commenced as they will take time to complete.</p>	<p>A clear timeline will maintain focus and ensure resources are directed to the main priorities.</p>
<p><b>Project capacity</b> Key internal personnel monitoring delivery of the strategy or involved in delivering actions become unavailable</p>	<p>An organisation-wide approach to creating and delivering the action plan will be adopted. This will include several Senior Officers and service teams, offering resilience in the event of reduced capacity in any one area. The strategy has been developed collaboratively with the sector and strategy stakeholders, one of which is the council, who will be responsible for leading delivery. This offers resilience in event of reduced capacity from within the council.</p>	<p>Empowering the sector to lead themselves.</p>
<p><b>Local Government Reorganisation</b> Reduced influence over tourism priorities tailored to Winchester district's unique heritage, culture, and visitor economy. Potential dilution of the district's identity within a broader geographic area with competing priorities.</p>	<p>Maintain the formalised Visit Winchester Partnership &amp; Marketing Programme to give Winchester a collective voice that persists regardless of future structures.</p> <p>Front-load deliver of high-impact, time-sensitive projects and prioritise projects that require</p>	<p>The strategy documents the district's tourism priorities to influence future unitary plans and protect brand integrity.</p> <p>Secure the Winchester brand within the LVEP framework.</p> <p>Winchester is the strongest destination brand compared to nearest neighbour</p>

Risk	Mitigation	Opportunities
	district-level decision-making before 2027/28.	<p>authorities and is one of Hampshire’s anchor brands, alongside Portsmouth, Southampton and New Forest. The other brands have a different offer.</p> <p>LGR, and a unitary authority will extend boundaries further, offering product development opportunities and an increased tourism offer that is an attractive proposition to a visitor looking to stay longer.</p>
Other		

## 11 SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

### **Background**

- 11.1 As highlighted, the visitor economy is important to Winchester district, it contributes to the image, profile and reputation as a place to do business, live, relocate and study, with Winchester district recognised for its:
- rich history and heritage
  - unique city, market town, and countryside blend
  - location within the South Downs National Park
  - strong cultural offer and vibrant food and drink scene
- 11.2 The district’s location means it acts as centre for people wishing to visit the places, attractions and experiences in Hampshire, from the south coast to the rural landscapes of the South Downs. Visitors are able to move around and between areas and places of interest positioning us as central hub from which to access the whole county. This is recognised in our relationship with the LVEP and our work to help the Destination Management Plan for Hampshire.
- 11.3 This strategy is the culmination of a comprehensive project undertaken by Winchester City Council with support from Blue Sail. Our approach was to

create a robust evidence base, including extensive data analysis, stakeholder consultations, and a review of the district's visitor economy, to inform and shape a new tourism strategy for the entire district. The full baseline report has been published on our website.

### **Strategic approach and objectives**

- 11.4 The vision is for Winchester district to lead as a distinctive, trailblazing destination, where heritage and originality come together to create memorable experiences. The strategy aims to drive sustainable growth, enhancing the visitor experience, and strengthening a culture of partnership across all organisations involved in supporting the visitor economy.
- 11.5 The objectives to achieve this vision are ambitious yet practical:
- 11.6 Objective 1: Increase the economic value of tourism by growing the overnight visitor market and further unlocking spend.
- 11.7 Objective 2: Develop a more dynamic and contemporary brand identity. Adopt a "Heritage Plus" approach that complements the district's historic strengths with themes like food and drink, events, and nature to attract new and younger audiences.
- 11.8 Objective 3: Enhance and expand the visitor offer and product. This includes joining up existing experiences and creating new ones that go beyond the district boundary, especially in food and drink, events, and nature. It also aims to support high-quality, family-friendly accommodation to address current gaps and to support longer visitor stays.
- 11.9 Objective 4: Strengthen collaboration and management within the tourism sector by positioning the local authority as a convenor, bringing the sector together to improve marketing, share data, and provide training and support to businesses.
- 11.10 Objective 5: Improve connectivity and infrastructure, making it easier for visitors to access the wider district's attractions and to promote sustainable travel.

### **Stakeholder landscape**

- 11.11 To make the most of the opportunities identified in this strategy, greater coherence and stronger partnerships with key stakeholders will be key to managing the visitor economy across the Winchester district. This includes but is not limited to:

National: VisitEngland, VisitBritain, UKInbound, Trade Associations

Regional/county: Tourism South East, LVEP, Hampshire Cultural Trust, South Downs National Park Authority, Hampshire Fare

Local: Visit Winchester, Winchester City Council, Chambers of Commerce, Parish and town councils, businesses.

### **Priority themes, related action plans and performance monitoring**

11.8 The following priority themes and actions have been identified:

#### **11.9 Market focus:**

- Domestic visitors are the priority, maintaining appeal to the established Country Loving Traditionalists, whilst introducing a sharp focus on growing visits from Curious Families and Cultural Foodie Explorers. Longer term, there is scope to attract Global Experience Seekers.

#### **11.10 Positioning and destination marketing:**

- Develop and embed a compelling, brand-led destination narrative for Winchester, supported by a focused marketing plan, a practical toolkit for partners, and a 'test and learn' campaign approach.
- Strengthen Visit Winchester's channels with targeted content for growth markets; maintain baseline promotion that encourages overnight stays.
- Facilitate stronger industry collaboration through an active Winchester Attractions Group, while disseminating data, insights, and marketing opportunities through the toolkit and ongoing networking events. Support tourism businesses by responding to training needs in customer service, marketing, and digital skills.

#### **11.11 Destination management:**

- Create themed city and district itineraries that promote both daytime and overnight experiences and help link attractions and other businesses across the area.
- Improve visitor navigation through a coordinated physical and digital wayfinding plan, while actively encouraging sustainable travel by promoting public transport.
- Assess current accommodation provision and develop an investment prospectus to guide new development and support businesses with planning and diversification.
- Establish a clear event typology and criteria to inform strategic investment in outdoor events.
- Strengthen Winchester's food and drink offer by supporting producers to diversify and promoting distinctive experiences.

- Provide training to help tourism businesses create and enhance bookable visitor experiences.

#### 11.12 Destination development

- Regularly measure and share destination performance through annual economic impact studies, accommodation data, and a trade data hub.
- Create an online business advice portal offering insights, toolkits, funding information, training, and resources.
- Improve the quality and welcome at all gateways and expand visitor information through a strengthened VIC network and volunteer ambassadors.
- Enhance city dressing for major events and explore destination-wide sustainability certification while supporting local businesses to adopt accredited practices.
- Deliver a programme of networking events aligned to strategic priorities, continue using the attractions group to support shared marketing and itinerary development.
- Provide training to improve accessibility and showcase best-practice examples across the district.

11.13 The key measures for monitoring progress over the five years of this strategy are also included in the strategy. In some cases, they will require baseline data to be able to monitor progress.

## 12 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

12.1 Do nothing: The council's production and delivery of a Winchester District Tourism Strategy, whilst an action in the Green Economic Development Strategy, is a discretionary function and the council could opt to not initiate but allow the sector to take total responsibility for. This option was rejected due to the important role such a strategy plays in demonstrating the council's leadership to the sector in sustaining and growing the visitor economy across the district.

12.2 To ensure that Winchester district as a destination is managed, developed and promoted in a way that will deliver greatest economic impact, organisations across the visitor economy must work collaboratively. Winchester City Council has an important role as 'enabler', driving the actions in this strategy forward with the support, investment and participation of others.

## BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:-

### Previous Committee Reports:-

- [EHP57 – Winchester District Tourism Strategy, 16 September 2025](#)
- [EHP58 – Local Visitor Economy Partnership, 25 November 2025](#)

### Other Background Documents:-

- [Baseline Report](#)
- [Audience Insight Report](#)
- [Winchester District Economic Impact Report 2022](#)

## APPENDICES:

- Appendix 1 – Winchester District Tourism Strategy
- Appendix 2 – Equality Impact Assessment

Winchester District

# Tourism Strategy

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2026 - 2031



Tourism plays a vital role in the Winchester District, driving **local growth** while celebrating the area's **rich heritage, culture** and **landscapes**.





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# Foreword

The Winchester District Tourism Strategy is a shared vision that celebrates what makes our district one of England's most captivating and welcoming destinations.

Winchester has long been a place where history, landscape, culture and community come together, and this strategy sets out how we will protect these strengths while supporting a thriving, sustainable visitor economy for the years ahead.

Tourism is a vital part of our district's identity and prosperity. From our historic city centre to our market towns and rural villages, the visitor economy supports local businesses, creates employment opportunities, and sustains the cultural and natural assets that residents and visitors cherish. As we look to the future, it is essential that we continue to nurture these assets while adapting to changing expectations and new opportunities.

This strategy has been shaped through close collaboration with stakeholders, businesses, and residents across the district. Their insight and ambition have ensured that the priorities we set out are rooted in local knowledge and shared aspirations. Together, we have identified clear pathways to strengthen our year-round offer, enhance the visitor experience, and champion regenerative tourism that benefits both our communities and our environment.

Winchester has a powerful opportunity to grow its visitor economy by unlocking further growth from its current visitor base of families and older, affluent day-trippers, whilst also looking to capture the imaginations and tap into the high value of younger cultural foodies and experience seekers.

Our aim is simple: to ensure Winchester district remains a place people feel inspired to visit, proud to live in, and confident to invest in. Whether through improved connectivity, enriched cultural programming, support for businesses operating within the sector, or the promotion of our exceptional experiences, heritage and landscapes, this strategy sets the foundation for a vibrant, forward-looking tourism sector.

I would like to thank everyone who contributed their time, enthusiasm and expertise. Your commitment to the future of Winchester district is present through every part of this strategy. I look forward to working together as we bring this vision to life.



**Councillor Lucille Thompson**

Cabinet Member for Business & Culture



# Introduction

This tourism strategy for Winchester district has been developed from a thorough analysis of visitor data, market trends, and stakeholder consultations. The purpose of this strategy is to guide the Winchester district visitor economy toward a new vision: to evolve from a day-trip destination into a vibrant, high-value, short-break and overnight destination. This strategy is not merely a report; it is a blueprint for collaborative action, grounded in a robust evidence base.

## About Winchester district

Winchester, England's ancient capital, is a destination of profound historical significance, celebrated for its rich heritage, iconic architecture, and authentic 'quintessential England' appeal. Beyond its world-renowned cathedral and The Great Hall, Winchester district offers a diverse and evolving experience, from a vibrant food and drink scene, diverse and picturesque market towns, rich countryside with a unique position as the gateway to the South Downs National Park. Spanning 250 square miles of central Hampshire, the district's visitor economy attracts over **7.8 million day visitors** and supporting **220,000 overnight visitors**, generating **over £292m to the local economy**, supporting **over 5760 jobs**, equivalent to 7% of the district's employment.

## How the strategy was developed

This strategy is the culmination of a comprehensive project undertaken by Winchester City Council with support from Blue Sail. The project's purpose was to create a robust evidence base, including extensive data analysis, stakeholder consultations, and a review of the district's visitor economy, to inform and shape a new tourism strategy for the entire district.

## Purpose of the strategy

The primary purpose of this strategy is to guide Winchester district's visitor economy into a new era of sustainable growth. The strategy serves as a collective roadmap for the entire district, providing a clear vision and an actionable plan to enhance Winchester's appeal. It recognizes that the responsibility for its success rests not just with the council, but with every business, attraction, and individual stakeholder who contributes to the visitor experience. It is a strategy for the district, not just the district council. It is built on the principle that sustainable tourism growth benefits all sectors and residents. The approach is rooted in an objective, evidence-based methodology, ensuring that all recommendations are practical, relevant, and designed to foster a shared sense of ownership among all stakeholders. The strategy provides a framework for a unified effort, ensuring that every action - from marketing to product development- works in harmony to achieve our shared vision.



The Winchester District Tourism Strategy also provides a robust framework that not only strengthens our local visitor economy but also positions us as a leading contributor to the wider delivery of tourism support across a broader geography. This approach aligns with the ambitions of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and creates opportunities to play a pivotal role in future devolution arrangements, ensuring that Winchester district's expertise and assets drive regional growth and collaboration. Moreover, Winchester's instrumental role in shaping and delivering the Hampshire, Portsmouth, Southampton and Winchester Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP), and its associated Destination Management Plan, will ensure co-ordination of priorities across the region.

# Looking forward

## Our Vision

*From its iconic cathedral and vibrant food scene to chalk landscapes and characterful market towns, the Winchester district will stand out as a leading destination embracing sustainability, collaboration and creativity.*

*It will be the quirky heart of England - where history meets innovation and every visit feels unforgettable.*

## Aims

Winchester district will be a destination that achieves **sustainable growth**, is **confident & bold**, with an **improved experience**, fostered in an environment of **partnership & collaboration**.

### Page 59 Sustainable growth

Blending the traditional and contemporary, Winchester district's distinctive destination story now speaks to new, younger markets, from foodies to families, whilst retaining appeal to its existing, older market.

### Confident & bold

Uniquely placed at the very heart of England's history, Winchester is far more than a charming heritage city. One of Hampshire's tourism anchors, it's the food capital of the South East, home to award-winning vineyards, artisan producers and excellent eateries, as well as tempting experiences. It's a green destination with exemplary eco credentials and easily accessed nature from water meadows to the rare chalk grasslands of the South Downs National Park. It's a vibrant place with engaging attractions and experiences as well as a compelling cultural and events programme across the district. It's a well-connected spot, with bus and active travel options opening up access to everything the market towns and villages have to offer.

### Improved experience

Welcoming and well-managed, Winchester district is increasingly a destination of choice, and more visitors are opting to stay, whether in the city or surrounds. This increased spend is making a valuable contribution to the sustainable growth of the visitor economy and ultimately supports place-making for the benefit of both residents and visitors alike. And this growing popularity has put Winchester district firmly on the radar of the private sector, driving a range of investments, particularly in relation to accommodation and experiences.

### Partnership & collaboration

Partnerships underpin this success. Acting as an enabler, the local authority has engaged with the tourism sector, understood their needs and helped to move the dial forward. Within the wider strategic context, including the regional LVEP, Winchester's confidence and collaborative mindset have ensured its position as a key player, driving regional collaboration and national recognition.

# Strategic approach and objectives

The objectives to achieve this vision are ambitious yet practical:

## Objective 1

### **Increase the economic value of tourism by growing the overnight visitor market.**

While Winchester attracts a large volume of day visitors (7.86 million), they account for a lower spend compared to staying visitors. The strategy aims to increase the number of staying visitors, who, though fewer in number (220,000), contribute significantly more to the local economy and account for 19% of the total tourism spend.

## Objective 2

### **Develop a more dynamic and contemporary brand identity.**

The current perception of Winchester is often “old-fashioned” and “indistinct”. The strategy seeks to enrich its heritage offer with other themes like food and drink, events, and nature, creating a “Heritage Plus” approach to appeal to new and younger markets.

## Objective 3

### **Enhance and expand the visitor offer and product.**

This includes joining up existing experiences and creating new ones that go beyond the district boundary, especially in food and drink, events, and nature. The strategy also aims to support the development of more quality and family-friendly accommodation to address the current shortage and encourage longer stays.

## Objective 4

### **Strengthen collaboration and management within the tourism sector.**

The strategy emphasizes the need for the local authority to act as a convenor, bringing the sector together to improve marketing, share data, and provide training and support to businesses.

## Objective 5

### **Improve connectivity and infrastructure.**

A key objective is to improve rural transport and active travel links to make it easier for visitors to access the wider district's attractions and to promote sustainable travel.

## Strategic approach

Working towards this vision and these objectives over the five years of this strategy will require focused effort across several areas. Some ‘quick wins’ will have an immediate impact. Other actions will take longer or will be about preparing the ground for longer term more strategic goals.

This strategy, in the following sections, sets out priorities under four areas:

- **Market Focus**
- **Positioning & Destination Marketing**
- **Destination Development**
- **Destination Management**

Within each of these areas are a series of priorities and suggested actions.

Some of the priorities and actions are part of broader strategic ambitions around for example transport. However, it is critical for future programmes of work to ensure that from a policy and operational perspective, visitor needs are fully considered and adopted as part of planning and delivery. There is an important role for Visit Winchester to have a voice in these plans and to ensure that the needs of visitors are adequately represented.

# Targets and KPIs

The key measures for monitoring progress over the five years of this strategy are shown here. In some cases, they will require baseline data to be able to monitor progress.

Target measure	Rationale	How to measure	Suggested target by 2030
1. Economic impact	Economic impact derived from visitor spend will lead to increased prosperity, profitable businesses and jobs.	Annual Economic Impact Study	10% over rate of inflation vs baseline
2. Visitor sentiment	Tracking progress around perceptions, attitudes and satisfaction from actual visitors will help determine how the destination is seen and whether it is improving as a result of the strategy actions.	Net Promoter Score	5% over baseline
3. Visitor awareness	To track whether awareness of Winchester district among prospective visitors is improving.	Omnibus panel survey	2.5% increase in awareness over baseline
4. High value (overnight) visitors	An increase in the proportion of people staying overnight means more higher value visitors.	Annual Economic Impact Study	5% increase in overnights vs the baseline

# Making it happen

The visitor economy is made up from a disparate collection of organisations which encompass the public, private and third sector. Some are large strategic bodies but there are also lots of small and medium sized enterprises. The visitor economy doesn't exist in isolation – the shops, attractions, events, restaurants and landscapes which draw in visitors also provide an important amenity for local communities. The combined buying power of residents and visitors is what sustains these visitor businesses and the jobs they create.

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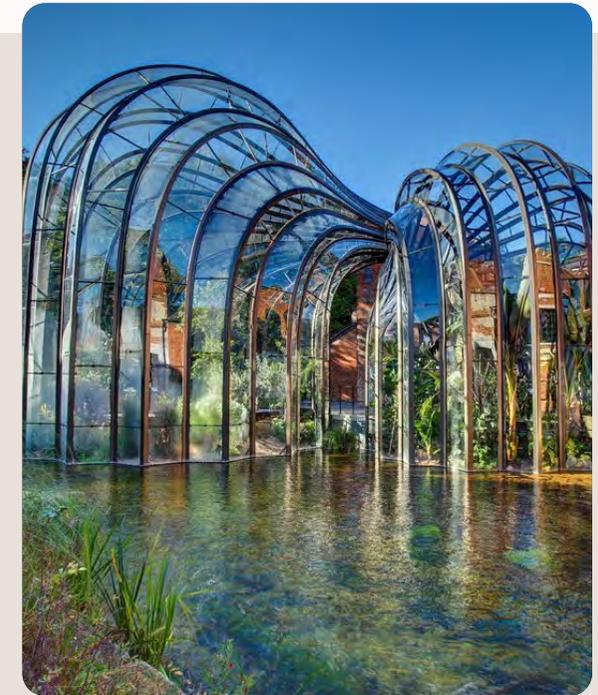
Because of this no one body is responsible for the visitor economy, and to ensure that Winchester district is marketed and managed in a way that will attract and delight visitors, all these different organisations have to work collaboratively. Winchester City Council has an important role as 'enabler', driving the actions in this strategy forward with the support, investment and participation of others.



Visit Winchester – which sits within Winchester City Council – provides the glue bringing different strands of activity and the visitor economy together, while representing the interests of visitors in policy and investment decisions.

In addition, with the changes taking place regionally with the establishment of the Hampshire, Portsmouth, Southampton and Winchester LVEP, Winchester has an important role to play in positively influencing regional and national support in areas that include policy, training and funding.

Funding to support the priorities and actions in this strategy are increasingly under pressure. While this strategy sets out an ambitious pathway to prosperity, it is pragmatic in identifying actions which can be delivered from within existing budgets, which are about leveraging support and investment collectively (for example in joint marketing) and which are about influencing investment already taking place to ensure it meets the needs of the visitor economy (e.g. transport plans, major developments, private investment).



# Roles and responsibilities

Greater coherence and stronger partnerships are the key to managing the visitor economy across the Winchester district and making the most of the opportunities identified in this strategy. Moreover, this strategy recognises the opportunities through working in partnership with other destinations and stakeholders across Hampshire, whose tourism assets align and complement those within Winchester district. The roles and responsibilities for all the players in the Winchester district visitor economy are illustrated here.

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# Our priorities

Setting clear priorities provides a shared direction for partners, businesses and stakeholders across the district, ensuring we focus our efforts on the areas that will have the greatest impact.

## OUR PRIORITY

# Visitor market focus

Domestic visitors are the priority, maintaining appeal to the established Country Loving Traditionalists, whilst introducing a sharp focus on growing visits from Curious Families and Cultural Foodie Explorers. Winchester district's product aligns with the travel motivations for these two primary growth segments which have strong potential to increase demand for accommodation supply and support increase in overnight stays and to raise destination awareness. Longer term, there is scope to attract younger Global Experience Seekers, provided enhanced public transport links, digital connectivity and an appealing evening offer are in place.

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### Curious Families



### Cultural Foodie Explorers



### Global Experience Seekers



### Country Loving Traditionalists





## Curious Families

### Type

**Primary Growth**  
(Limited)

### Who they are and what they want

- Families with children up to age 12
- Often multigenerational (with grandparents)
- Day trips & short breaks
- Keen to spend quality time together

Enjoy attractions, outdoors, culture & events, learning  
Value is important but will spend on treats

### Rationale

- Will spend on activities to keep children happy.
- May convert from a day visit to overnight given enough to do
- Active on social media – easy to reach; engage them as advocates)

### The opportunity

- Raise profile of rounded family offer to grow destination awareness
- Build overnights via family-friendly accommodation and school holiday promotions



## Cultural Foodie Explorers

### Type

**Primary Growth**  
(New)

### Who they are and what they want

- Couples or groups of friends
- Aged 25 to 55, travelling without children
- Affluent professionals
- Keen on food & drink experiences, history, contemporary art, outdoor activities (gentle), independent shopping

### Rationale

- High propensity to spend e.g. accommodation, meals, experiences
- Take regular breaks both city & rural
- Typically from London & South East, with easy access to Winchester district

### The opportunity

- Leverage food & drink to raise awareness and appeal
- Potential to increase overnights year round
- Can help to drive a more contemporary image



## Global Experience Seekers

### Type

**Development**  
(Longer term)

### Who they are and what they want

- Below 40, couples or friends, without children
- UK and international
- Take city & rural breaks
- 'Only here' experiences – culture, events, learning
- Packed itineraries – daytime & evening
- Quality, varied & safe night-time offer
- Public transport & digital connectivity are vital

### Rationale

- Frequent travellers who spend on unique experiences
- Active on social media – advocacy & user-generated content (UGC)
- Like to support local independents
- Champions for sustainability & inclusivity

### The opportunity

- Longer-term prospect
- Year-round weekend overnights
- Can help support perception change, particularly regarding reputation for sustainability & inclusivity



## Country Loving Traditionalists

### Type

**Maintenance**  
(Existing)

### Who they are and what they want

- Affluent 55+, couples and groups
- Take regular UK breaks, midweek & weekend
- Enjoy heritage, landscape, local culture, particularly good food & drink
- Looking for quality accommodation
- Currently visiting from Hants, S East & London

### Rationale

- Existing core market, important to maintain
- Ideal prospects for out of season travel
- Loyal audience, word of mouth effect

### The opportunity

- Continue to attract not alienate
- Opportunity to encourage repeats & overnights
- Potential to increase volume of visits from existing geographies and to draw in from a wider radius

## OUR PRIORITY

# Positioning and destination marketing

With clarity on the target markets, Winchester district needs to be effectively positioned and marketed in order to reach, engage and attract both growth segments as well as to retain the maintenance segment.

## A new narrative

To invite consideration and attract visits from the primary growth markets, visitors need to know

### ‘Why Winchester district?’

Refreshing and strengthening the story that the district tells about itself is vital to successfully answering this question. A contemporary destination narrative will act as the cornerstone of Winchester district’s future marketing strategy. With competition from the likes of Bath, York and Salisbury, we need to be clear about what we have to offer that is distinct and special, and to also promote our proximity to neighbouring destinations to widen our appeal, attract diverse audiences for longer.

The city is, of course, recognised for its heritage and there is potential to explore how this could be deepened and made more distinctive. However, heritage alone is not enough. To reinforce the district’s distinctiveness, the narrative positioning must embrace other key themes which have emerged during the research and consultation process. Leaning into the food and drink offer (including vineyards),

the easy access to nature (including water meadows and unique chalk landscapes) and local commitment to creating a sustainable destination will all enrich the narrative. Finally joining together the city and rural proposition, alongside products and experiences beyond the district boundary, is vital too. Presenting them together will create a sense of unity; strengthen destination appeal; and increase dwell time and spend by offering a wider range of things to do, see and experience. Wrapping these elements into a richer narrative will also support continued engagement with the Country Loving Traditionalists.

For the refreshed narrative to do its job, it must be used consistently by Visit Winchester and underpin all marketing messaging. It also needs to be shared with and adopted by stakeholders, such as Visit Hampshire, Tourism South East and Visit England, as well as local tourism providers/businesses. Visit Winchester can support this amplification by providing practical resources to encourage take up of the messaging. Over time this consistency - alongside other destination marketing activity - will cut through.



## Destination marketing

The overall aim of destination marketing for Winchester district is to raise profile, shift perceptions, increase visitor numbers and maximise the value of visits, with overnight stays being a priority.

Visit Winchester leads on destination marketing and has the foundations in place, with the city council team managing various channels to market including the website, e-newsletter, social media and PR activity (outsourced to an agency). This baseline activity should continue but will need to reflect the needs and interests of the growth markets and leverage the new narrative, for example, to steer blog content themes and PR angles.

Critical to the future promotion of the district is a market-focused campaign mindset. Winchester's digital content is unlikely to make it onto the radar of the growth

Page 69 segments organically. Highly targeted digital advertising will be necessary, supported by wider activity such as PR and social media collaborations. Supporting imagery and video must also be carefully considered - it needs to catch the attention and encourage clickthrough. Resources are limited but prioritising targeted campaign activity will be key to growth as it will extend reach and profile in relation to best prospect markets.

VisitWinchester.co.uk will sit at the heart of all marketing activity and must be primed to meet the needs of new prospects. For example, adding an 'About Winchester' summary and a location map would be useful to those living outside the South East who are unfamiliar with the district and its geography.

Local, regional and national partners will also play a role in promoting the district to their networks. Keeping stakeholders abreast of marketing activity and offering ways to participate and support will deepen the impact. The sample campaign below illustrates what a campaign might look like.

### Sample campaign

## Winchester 3-Day Food Safari aimed at Cultural Foodie Explorers

- Create a foodie itinerary with places to visit, experience, eat, stay and shop, plus striking images. Available as web content or downloadable PDF with links.
- Target growth segment via Meta (Facebook & Instagram) paid advertising, reinforced by PR and social media partnerships e.g. Fiona Beckett. Run a competition to win a foodie stay to raise awareness and build database (GDPR compliant) e.g. with Jude's ice-cream.
- Run the content across Visit Winchester's channels, creatively using the theme e.g. short 'show & tell' reels from producers, mini vineyard tours
- Work with partners such as Visit Hampshire, Tourism South East England and Hampshire Fare plus local businesses to spread the word further e.g. links to the itinerary on their sites, social tagging/sharing.
- Evaluate performance to inform future activity e.g. understanding best performing ads in terms of both messaging and imagery.



## Priority action areas: Positioning and destination marketing

There are three priority action areas for positioning and marketing:

- 👑 **Development of a refreshed destination narrative**
- 👑 **Destination promotion with a focus on targeted campaigns**
- 👑 **Engagement and partnership**

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Positioning and marketing priorities	Action	Timescale	Lead
<b>PRIORITY 1: DESTINATION NARRATIVE</b> Develop a contemporary narrative to underpin marketing by Visit Winchester and partners, including businesses.	Commission a clear and compelling <b>destination narrative</b> which captures what is special about Winchester district as a place to visit. The destination narrative will be underpinned by a clear <b>brand vision statement</b> .	2026 – 2027	Visit Winchester
	Produce a <b>light-touch toolkit</b> for tourism businesses and partners with sample copy and images. Roll out via online webinars and live events.	2026 – 2027	Visit Winchester

Positioning and marketing priorities	Action	Timescale	Lead
<p><b>PRIORITY 2: DESTINATION PROMOTION</b></p> <p>Proactively market to new growth segments, building on the foundational marketing activity already in place.</p>	<p>Draft a practical and tightly-focused <b>Marketing Plan</b>, allowing a minimum of one campaign per growth market. Monitor and review annually.</p>	2027	Visit Winchester
	<p>Thread the new narrative across Visit Winchester <b>owned channels and review</b> where additional info is required for growth markets, whether content related e.g. location map, family-friendly articles, or user experience related e.g. easier access to blog.</p>	2027	Visit Winchester
	<p>Applying a ‘test and learn’ approach, deliver <b>campaign activity</b>, working closely with PR agency and partners to amplify. Monitor closely to build understanding of the target audiences and how Winchester can best appeal.</p>	2026 – 2027	Visit Winchester
	<p>Continue with <b>baseline promotion</b>, evaluating performance to inform future activity. Ensure new content is devised <b>with growth segments in mind</b> and proactively promotes overnight stays e.g. a compelling 2-night itinerary for each segment.</p>	2026 – 2027	Visit Winchester
<p><b>PRIORITY 3: ENGAGEMENT &amp; PARTNERSHIP</b></p> <p>Act as an enabler by bringing together partners and the sector to collaborate and network. Extend reach, increase share of voice in the marketplace and secure alignment in marketing the destination by working together for the benefit of all.</p>	<p>Facilitate collaborative working by establishing the <b>Winchester Attractions Group</b> focused on networking, sharing performance data, supporting campaigns, cross-promotion and in-destination on-selling/referrals, special offers and deals.</p>	2026	Visit Winchester & attractions
	<p><b>Disseminate information</b> on data and insights on target markets, new Marketing Plan and opportunities to get involved to tourism businesses and providers via the toolkit (above) and at ongoing networking events.</p>	2026 – 2027	Visit Winchester & sector
	<p><b>Support training needs</b> where possible, responding to demand for help with customer services, marketing and digital skills</p>	2026 – 2027	Visit Winchester

## OUR PRIORITY

# Destination development

Winchester district has a strong visitor offer that must continue to be supported. There are however a handful of development priorities which address market opportunities, are relevant to Winchester and overcome the challenges the destination faces. These will often be medium to longer term projects given their complexity but there are short term actions that help move them forward. These projects improve competitiveness and create the capacity for growth. While an indication of resource needs is provided in the tables, it is worth noting that in many cases the costs are born through other planned or existing programmes of work (e.g. Local Transport Plan investment or private investment in accommodation development). There is however a need for the voice of visitors, through Visit Winchester, to be included in planning.

Destination development priorities	Action	Timescale	Lead
<p><b>PRIORITY 1: KEEPING VISITORS FOR LONGER</b></p> <p>Page 72</p> <p>There is a need to help visitors understand all that the district has to offer and to recognise why they should take longer to stay and explore. Use of wayfinding, itineraries and route development to present a coherent offer will help join up the offer into a coherent package. There is a continued requirement to work with partners beyond the current district boundary to further enhance the existing offer and increase dwell time.</p>	Develop city and district <b>itineraries</b> and trails (half-day, day, 24 and 48 hours) which align to thematic strengths and target market segments e.g. food and drink, active family experiences, nature and outdoors, history and heritage. Overnight itineraries to also promote evening economy offer, e.g. dark skies, theatre, food and drink. Promoted via Visit Winchester and partners and used to join up the disparate visitor attractions and experiences across the district.	2026 - 2027	Visit Winchester
	Deliver a <b>visitor wayfinding</b> plan, using physical and digital tools to encourage exploration and enjoyment of the city and which align to wider district development projects and the city Movement Strategy.	2026 - 2030	Winchester City Council
	Elevate awareness of the district's close connections to key destinations across Hampshire, signpost to tourism assets across the county and create seamless, cross-boundary itineraries that make sense to visitors and inspire multi-stop, multi-day journeys.	2026 - 2028	Visit Winchester, LVEP
<p><b>PRIORITY 2: RURAL CONNECTIVITY</b></p> <p>Winchester is a rural district with many delightful towns and villages, attractions and experiences outside of the city, which acts as the main gateway for visitors.</p> <p>Actively promoting and encouraging use of rural and sustainable transport will help to meet climate change targets while supporting the viability of these services for local communities and business.</p>	Actively <b>promote rural transport</b> services (mainly bus) for visitors to reach attraction and experiences. Develop itineraries which illustrate how public transport can be used. Have VIC staff experience the services first hand to help them to promote the services.	2026 - 2028	Visit Winchester, Tourism Businesses, Transport Providers
	Expand take up of <b>Good Journey</b> , a car-free visitor planning tool, across the destination. Use the existing assets such as Park & Ride to encourage sustainable travel choices by visitors.	2026 - 2027	Visit Winchester, Tourism Businesses
	Promote, expand and improve the <b>active travel</b> network across the destination, capitalising on the gateway role for the South Downs Way and existing assets such as the Clarendon Way, King Alfred's Way, St James Way and NCN23.	Ongoing	WCC, Hampshire Country Council, Walk Wheel Cycle Trust, SDNP

Destination development priorities	Action	Timescale	Lead
<p><b>PRIORITY 3: ACCOMMODATION DEVELOPMENT</b></p> <p>To sustainably grow the impact from tourism, Winchester will need visitors to stay longer in the district and convert more day visitors to staying visitors. Data shows Winchester hotel performance is robust, and the destination should look to add to the available supply of visitor accommodation.</p>	<p>Review the full diversity of accommodation provision and map to supply, need and demand, with a view to look in detail at the potential for new accommodation development, including the location and type of accommodation, potential providers/investors and to support Planning Policy decisions and private investment.</p>	2026 - 2028	Winchester City Council and Visit Winchester
	<p>Produce an accommodation <b>investment prospectus</b> and actively promote sites and investment opportunities to investors. Signpost existing business to support and advice available from the council with regards to planning (supporting applications and influencing local plan, and decision-making) funding via government grants (farm diversification). Produce an audit of available</p>	2026 - 2028	Winchester City Council and Visit Winchester
<p><b>PRIORITY 4: EVENTS WITH IMPACT</b></p> <p>In support of the Winchester District Cultural Strategy and specifically priorities around Events and Festivals, there is scope to ensure that events can grow their impact to attract and keep visitors in the district. There is already breadth to the events offer but greater potential to increase impact.</p>	<p>Establish a clear <b>typology</b> of outdoor events (Signature, Growth, Community) and criteria (impact, seasonality, quality, distinctiveness, commercial, reputation) which can be embedded within a high-level Events Strategy to guide support and investment in outdoor events. Use this to increase the impact in generating visits and visitor spend when determining which events to support.</p>	2026-2030	Winchester City Council, Cultural Partners and Event Organisers
<p><b>PRIORITY 5: EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT</b></p> <p>Winchester already has many outstanding attractions and experiences but to remain relevant to changing needs of visitors, continuous investment is needed to remain competitive.</p> <p>There is also potential from the development of new experiences including food and drink experiences (e.g. vineyards).</p>	<p>Actively support the development of <b>food and drink experiences</b> among producers with diversification of the offer (tours, tasting, education, retail, dining, events, weddings, accommodation) to strengthen Winchester's reputation as a foodie destination.</p>	2026 - 2028	Visit Winchester, Hampshire Fare, Winchester City Council, TSE/ Training Provider
	<p>Promote food and drink experiences, offering target segments a <b>uniquely 'Winchester experience'</b> working with businesses and major partners.</p>	2026 - 2028	Visit Winchester, Hampshire Fare, Winchester City Council, TSE/ Training Provider
	<p>Deliver training for tourism businesses to review and develop bookable experiences for visitors.</p>	2026 - 2028	Visit Winchester, Hampshire Fare, Winchester City Council, TSE/ Training Provider

## OUR PRIORITY

# Destination management

The visitor economy is one which needs to build resilience while at the same time visitors have an expectation that the places they visit will be sustainable, accessible and inclusive. So, providing the tools to help business prosper, bringing the sector together so that all the businesses and organisations with an interest in the destination are aligned and collaborating, and having the data and insights to make informed decisions is critical.

Destination management priorities	Action	Timescale	Lead
<p><b>PRIORITY 1: DATA AND INSIGHTS</b></p> <p>It is important to understand how the destination is performing and whether our actions are having a measurable impact. It is also necessary to understand our visitors and their changing habits. Disseminating data and insights among the visitor economy will help to drive improvements across the visitor economy.</p>	Produce an annual Economic Impact Study to monitor destination performance and invest in accommodation performance data (e.g. COSTAR).	2026	Visit Winchester
	Disseminate findings among Visit Winchester members and partner organisations via a trade data hub and at regular meetings.	2026	Visit Winchester
<p><b>PRIORITY 2: BUSINESS SUPPORT</b></p> <p>Great destinations are built on the experiences provided by businesses. Providing them with tools and insights which can help them plan and align their own activity to the wider destination strategy is critical. Digital portals can also signpost to wider sector support, advice and information on our markets and activity such as campaigns, PR, accessibility or sustainability.</p>	Create an online portal and business advice hub which actively promotes and signposts to insights and data, sustainability and accessibility toolkits, networking events, funding opportunities, marketing support, information on training, events and webinars from local providers, including the emerging LVEP and VisitEngland.	2026 - 2029	Winchester City Council and Visit Winchester

Destination management priorities	Action	Timescale	Lead
<p><b>PRIORITY 3: A GREAT VISITOR WELCOME</b></p> <p>The first and last impressions visitors have of a destination have a lasting impact on their overall impressions and satisfaction. There is a need to understand the current offer and take steps to improve it where possible to present a high quality welcome.</p> <p>While a TIC is an important tool in visitor welcome and resident inclusion, there is potential to take information to where visitors are by developing a network of Tourist Information Points in partner businesses.</p>	<p>Ensure all gateways provide a high quality environment and experience which enhances welcome and provides the type of information, signage, transport links, wayfinding and experience which is high quality for residents and visitors. Monitor all gateways by mode of arrival (rail, bus, car, foot, bike) to identify visitor improvements.</p>	<p>2025 - 2028</p>	<p>Winchester City Council, Winchester BID, transport and parking providers</p>
	<p>Develop the VIC as a hub for a wider network of Visitor Information Points at visitor businesses and explore establishing a volunteer network of Ambassadors or Greeters.</p>	<p>2026 onwards</p>	<p>Visit Winchester</p>
	<p>Explore opportunities to improve city dressing for major events and to enhance welcome and environment.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Winchester City Council, Winchester BID, Visit Winchester</p>
<p><b>PRIORITY 4: SUSTAINABILITY</b></p> <p>Tourism generates significant impacts from travel and the consumption of experiences and accommodation. The Winchester district visitor economy should support the ambitions of the council to be a carbon neutral district and the Green Economic Development Strategy to reduce the carbon impacts from tourism, strengthen local supply chains, reduce the consumption of scarce resources and support biodiversity.</p>	<p>Explore destination certification (Glasgow Declaration, GDS Index or Green Tourism).</p>	<p>2026 - 2028</p>	<p>Visit Winchester, LVEP, Business, Winchester BID</p>
	<p>Develop a focus for Winchester district businesses to undertake certification and in doing so monitor, plan and make changes which improve the destination's sustainability.</p>	<p>2026 - 2028</p>	<p>Visit Winchester, LVEP, Business, Winchester BID</p>

Destination management priorities	Action	Timescale	Lead
<p><b>PRIORITY 5: NETWORK &amp; COLLABORATION</b></p> <p>Winchester tourism businesses and organisations highly value the opportunities which Visit Winchester provides for them to come together, to learn and collaborate.</p> <p>Strengthening this over the life of this strategy will help to ensure the destination grows together. It also helps the sector recognise that the delivery of the strategy requires all of them to contribute. The local authority has an important role, but this is the strategy for the district with the council as an 'enabler' rather than the default 'deliverer'.</p>	<p>Establish a regular calendar of business networking and member events, in collaboration with other organisations (BID, LVEP) where it makes sense. Create a thematic focus to each event so they can support strategic priorities.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Visit Winchester, Businesses</p>
	<p>Continue to use the attractions group to support itinerary development, marketing and sharing of insights.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Visit Winchester, Visitor Attractions</p>
<p><b>PRIORITY 6: ACCESSIBILITY &amp; INCLUSION</b></p> <p>The Purple Pound (spending power of disabled people) is estimated to be valued at over £14.6bn in England alone.</p> <p>While there are clear benefits for visitors, an accessible and inclusive destination also provides great benefits to local communities, employees and businesses.</p>	<p>Signpost and provide training/ events for the sector. Increase the number of businesses making improvements with accessibility champions, accessibility guides, accessible facilities as well as dementia and autism friendly initiatives. Showcase examples of best practice from within Winchester on visitor platforms.</p>	<p>2026 - 2029</p>	<p>Visit Winchester, Business, VisitEngland, LVEP</p>

# Conclusion

This strategy maps out a pathway to greater prosperity for the visitor economy in Winchester district. It advocates for a new way of working which plays to the district's strengths and existing markets while unlocking opportunities to grow the value from visitors by targeting longer stays, including more overnight visits, and new markets which can be attracted to the Winchester district.

Developing and adding to the current offer, presenting the breadth of it as a coherent package through targeted promotion and building a case for collective investment by the whole visitor economy are not easy tasks.

But Winchester district has it all to play for. Looking at the data, it tells us there is clear 'headroom' for growth. This strategy balances ambition for the destination with a reality check about the level of available resources (money and people) to take it forward. In some situations, the opportunity is in leveraging the work and investment of others to achieve stronger outcomes for the visitor economy.

The strategy has been developed in partnership with businesses operating in the visitor economy and associated stakeholders. It belongs to all of us and we all have a responsibility to play our part in delivering it, for the benefit of all. The local authority has an important role as 'enabler' and 'convenor' of the wider industry – but there is no expectation that the strategy is for the authority to take forward on its own.

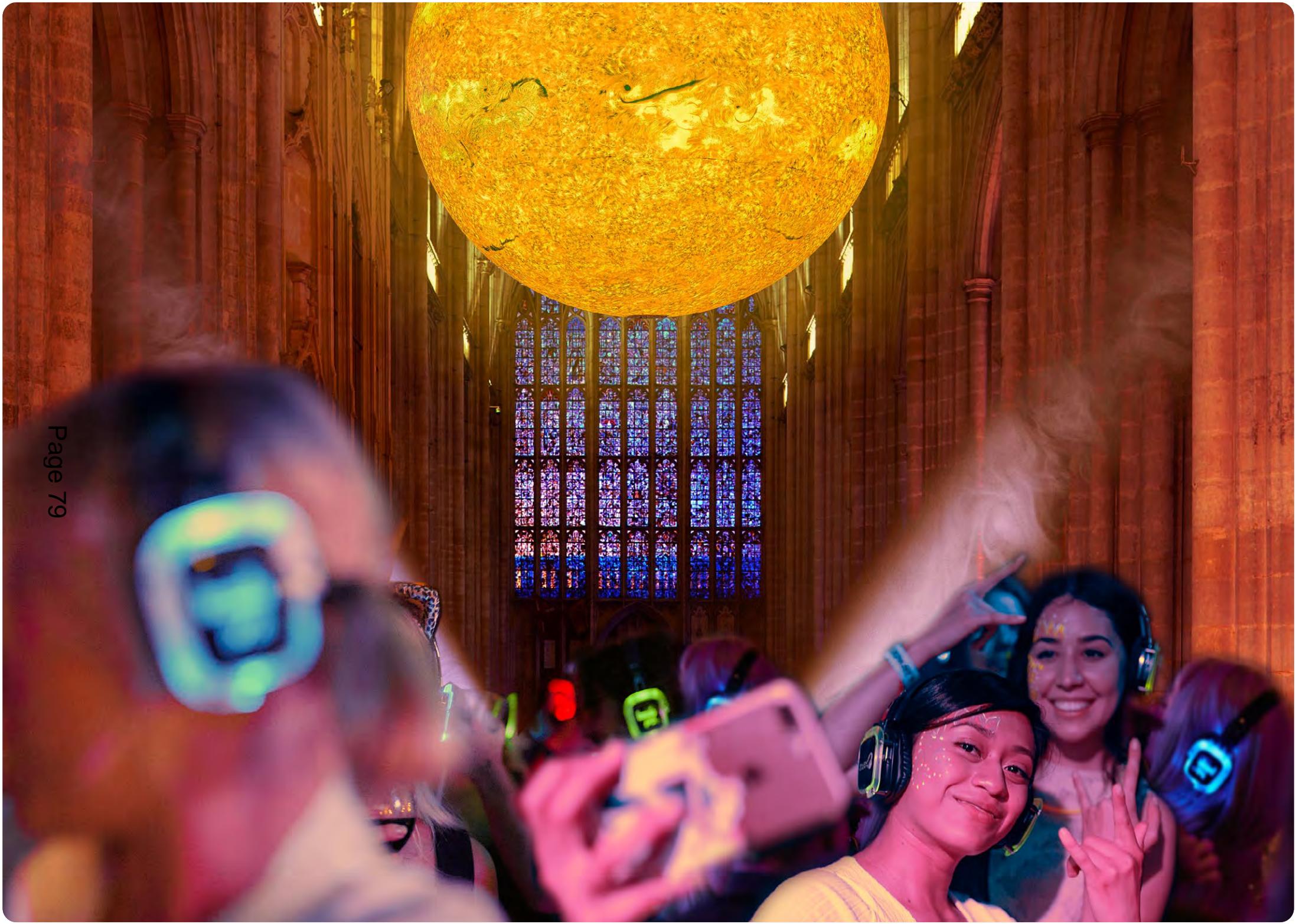
While some of the priorities and actions will take time, others can be delivered at pace as 'quick wins'. In the first 12 months of the strategy this includes:

- Market focus, positioning and toolkit
- Marketing plan and test campaigns
- Itineraries, trails and wayfinding improvements
- Improved visitor welcome
- Data and insights developed and shared
- Strengthened collaboration and networks

There are many changes taking place with regards devolution and to regional tourism structures. This strategy will enable us to positively influence these new structures and the work those new organisations will deliver. This strategy is designed to remain flexible as wider changes occur, providing strong foundations to enhance the Visit Winchester brand and position the district as a leading tourism destination in Hampshire. It aims to support sustainable, inclusive growth in the visitor economy, maintain Winchester's leadership within the regional LVEP partnership, and ensure Council ambitions align with wider regional initiatives. Overall, it establishes bold, evidence-based groundwork for future growth, collaboration, and place promotion across the South.

A scenic landscape at sunset with rolling green hills and a bright sun on the horizon. The sky is a mix of blue, orange, and yellow. The foreground shows a large green field with a path or road. The background features rolling hills and a distant horizon.

Winchester District invites  
visitors to experience  
***history, culture*** and  
***countryside*** in a  
way that is authentic,  
welcoming and  
sustainable.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank Blue Sail and the multiple businesses and partners across Winchester district's visitor economy and across Hampshire who have supported development of this strategy.

 [visitwinchester.co.uk/industry-and-trade](https://www.visitwinchester.co.uk/industry-and-trade)

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**Winchester**  
City Council



**VISIT  
WINCHESTER**

**Winchester City Council**  
**Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)**



Section 1 - Data Checklist

When undertaking an EqIA for your policy or project, it is important that you take into consideration everything which is associated with the policy or project that is being assessed.

The checklist below is to help you sense check your policy or project before you move to Section 2.

		Yes/No	Please provide details
1	Have there been any complaints data related to the policy or project you are looking to implement?	No	
2	Have all officers who will be responsible for implementing the policy or project been consulted, and given the opportunity to raise concerns about the way the policy or function has or will be implemented?	Yes	Officers mostly likely to be involved in implementing the strategy have been involved in all stakeholder discussions. Officers in adjoining teams attended workshops to understand and input into the proposals.
3	Have previous consultations highlighted any concerns about the policy or project from an equality impact perspective?	No	
4	Do you have any concerns regarding the implementation of this policy or project?  <i>(i.e. Have you completed a self-assessment and action plan for the implementation of your policy or project?)</i>	No	
5	Does any accessible data regarding the area which your work will address identify any areas of	No	

		Yes/No	Please provide details
	concern or potential problems which may impact on your policy or project?		
6	Do you have any past experience delivering similar policies or projects which may inform the implementation of your scheme from an equality impact point of view?	Yes	The team has previous experience of delivering similar projects and partnership working. The team also has access to support and toolkits from Visit England around Accessibility, Equality, Inclusion and Diversity.
7	Are there any other issues that you think will be relevant?	No	

## Section 2 - Your EqIA form

<b>Directorate:</b> Place	<b>Your Service Area:</b> Economy and Community	<b>Team:</b> Tourism and Economy	<b>Officer responsible for this assessment:</b> Rachel Gander	<b>Date of assessment:</b> 30 January 2026
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	<b>Question</b>	<b>Please provide details</b>
1	What is the name of the policy or project that is being assessed?	Winchester District Tourism Strategy 2026-2031
2	Is this a new or existing policy?	This strategy succeeds the previous Destination Management Plan which was developed in 2015.
3	Briefly describe the aim and purpose of this work.	The strategy is designed to identify opportunities for sustainable and inclusive growth for Winchester district's visitor economy over the next five years.
4	What are the associated objectives of this work?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To grow the value of tourism by increasing overnight stays.</li> <li>• Develop a more dynamic and contemporary brand identity.</li> <li>• Enhance and expand the visitor offer and product.</li> <li>• Strengthen sector-wide collaboration and management within the tourism sector.</li> <li>• Improve connectivity and infrastructure.</li> </ul>
5	Who is intended to benefit from this work and in what way?	Businesses: increased footfall and longer term sustainable growth. Better coordination and support. Residents and visitors: stronger local economy and job creation. Improved local services, facilities and infrastructure, enhance sense of place and community pride. A more compelling and diverse visitor experience.
6	What are the outcomes sought from this work?	Sustainable and inclusive growth; a stronger, more competitive destination; a richer, better connected visitor

		experience; a more compelling brand identity; better co-ordination, management and sector collaboration; improved connectivity and access across the district.
7	What factors/forces could contribute or detract from the outcomes?	Forces that contribute to success: strong heritage and cultural assets, engaged stakeholders, regional alignment (LVEP), economic strengths, headroom for growth, and sustainability momentum. Forces that detract from success: outdated perceptions, limited accommodation, transport barriers, fragmented experiences, strong competition, funding uncertainty, and a heavy reliance on day visitors.
8	Who are the key individuals and organisations responsible for the implementation of this work?	Winchester City Council together with tourism businesses and stakeholders across the Winchester district visitor economy.
9	Who implements the policy or project and who or what is responsible for it?	Winchester City Council in collaboration with stakeholders across the district's visitor economy.

		Please select your answer in <b>bold</b> . Please provide detail here.		
10a	Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of race differently in a negative way?	Y	<b>N</b>	
10b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?			
11a	Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of sex differently in a negative way?	Y	<b>N</b>	
11b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?			

12a	<p>Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of disability differently in a negative way?</p> <p><i>you may wish to consider:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Physical access</i></li> <li>• <i>Format of information</i></li> <li>• <i>Time of interview or consultation event</i></li> <li>• <i>Personal assistance</i></li> <li>• <i>Interpreter</i></li> <li>• <i>Induction loop system</i></li> <li>• <i>Independent living equipment</i></li> <li>• <i>Content of interview</i></li> </ul>	Y	N	
12b	<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p>			
13a	<p>Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of sexual orientation differently in a negative way?</p>	Y	N	
13b	<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p>			
14a	<p>Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals on the basis of age differently in a negative way?</p>	Y	N	
14b	<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p>			
15a	<p>Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of religious belief differently in a negative way?</p>	Y	N	
15b	<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p>			

16a	Could this policy or project have the potential to affect individuals on the basis of gender reassignment differently in a negative way?	Y	N										
16b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?												
17a	Could this policy or project have the potential to affect individuals on the basis of marriage and civil partnership differently in a negative way?	Y	N										
17b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?												
18a	Could this policy or project have the potential to affect individuals on the basis of pregnancy and maternity differently in a negative way?	Y	N										
18b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?												
19	Could any negative impacts that you identified in questions 10a to 15b create the potential for the policy to discriminate against certain groups on the basis of protected characteristics?	Y	N										
20	Can this negative impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for certain groups on the basis of protected characteristics? Please provide your answer opposite against the relevant protected characteristic.	Y	N	<table border="1"> <tr><td>Race:</td></tr> <tr><td>Sex:</td></tr> <tr><td>Disability:</td></tr> <tr><td>Sexual orientation:</td></tr> <tr><td>Age:</td></tr> <tr><td>Gender reassignment:</td></tr> <tr><td>Pregnancy and maternity:</td></tr> <tr><td>Marriage and civil partnership:</td></tr> <tr><td>Religious belief:</td></tr> </table>	Race:	Sex:	Disability:	Sexual orientation:	Age:	Gender reassignment:	Pregnancy and maternity:	Marriage and civil partnership:	Religious belief:
Race:													
Sex:													
Disability:													
Sexual orientation:													
Age:													
Gender reassignment:													
Pregnancy and maternity:													
Marriage and civil partnership:													
Religious belief:													
21	How will you mitigate any potential discrimination that may be brought about by your policy or project that you have identified above?												

		<p>The team has access to VisitEngland’s Training Academy which provides training, toolkits and advice related to all the above. In addition, any risks can be mitigated through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• inclusive design of infrastructure and communications,</li> <li>• accessible marketing and visitor information,</li> <li>• diverse stakeholder engagement, and</li> <li>• ensuring that all new products and experiences are created with universal access and representation in mind.</li> </ul> <p>If potential discrimination is identified, the strategy will respond accordingly.</p>		
22	Do any negative impacts that you have identified above impact on your service plan?	Y	N	

Signed by completing officer	
Signed by Service Lead or Corporate Head of Service	

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CAB3549  
CABINET

REPORT TITLE: THRIVING AND RESILIENT COMMUNITIES STRATEGY

12 MARCH 2026

REPORT OF CABINET MEMBER: Cllr Kathleen Becker, Cabinet Member for Healthy Communities

Contact Officer: Steve Lincoln Tel No: 01962 848 110 Email  
[slincoln@winchester.gov.uk](mailto:slincoln@winchester.gov.uk)

WARD(S): ALL WARDS

PURPOSE

This strategy sets out the council's approach to building strong and resilient communities. This will be achieved through our own place-shaping and capacity building activity, and through the fostering of an environment where communities can grow, evolve and solve their own challenges.

To help focus efforts of both the council and the wider Winchester district community, five pathways are proposed in the strategy:

1. Social connection, inclusion and belonging
2. Community capacity and local leadership
3. Access to community assets, services and opportunities
4. Supporting people facing the toughest circumstances
5. Strong community networks and partnerships

The impact of this Plan will be seen and felt in daily life: more people taking part, more places open and welcoming, stronger neighbourhood identity, and a voluntary sector that is confident, collaborative and equipped for the future.

As we move towards local government reorganisation, this strategy sets out our ambition for Winchester's communities. It establishes a foundation from which we can move forward jointly with our new partner districts – increasing opportunities for

communities to shape decisions, express local priorities, have influence close to where they live, and potentially take responsibility for local services and assets.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Adopt the Winchester District Winchester District Thriving and Resilient Communities Strategy (2026-2030) as shown in appendix 1.

IMPLICATIONS:1 COUNCIL PLAN OUTCOME

## 1.1 Greener Faster

1.2 The provision of services and activities within local communities, often by local voluntary or community groups, will increase their accessibility by public transport, foot or bike.

1.3 Environmental or climate action is often led by local activists, and this strategy creates an environment in which community-led activity can thrive.

## 1.4 Thriving Places

1.5 The strategy recognises the importance of community facilities and the important role they play in activating smaller settlements. Parish councils and volunteers play a key role in maintaining attractive, clean public spaces and facilities across the district.

## 1.6 Healthy Communities

1.7 This strategy is pivotal to the achievement of the Council Plan's 'healthy communities' ambitions.

1.8 A thriving local voluntary, and community sector underpins our efforts to tackle isolation, build community cohesion and support those in need. We have neither the capacity, the expertise nor the connections to provide the level of support that is required to support those people across the district who need the most help. Our supportive and enabling relationship with the voluntary, and community sector allow them to do what they are best placed to do and generates the best possible outcomes for residents.

1.9 Our planning role helps to ensure strong health and community infrastructure across the district. This network of facilities provides a physical base from which residents are engaged, supported and form connections and relationships - social interaction that is key to their personal wellbeing.

## 1.10 Good Homes for All

## 1.11 N/A

## 1.12 Efficient and Effective

1.13 Working in partnership with parish councils and other community organisations can improve the efficiency and effectiveness of what we do, by utilising their local knowledge and by unlocking their capacity to do things for themselves.

## 1.14 Listening and Learning

- 1.15 The strategy aims to strengthen the voice of local communities, allowing them to better express their views and to increase their influence over local decisions and service design. This includes those sectors of the community who are seldom heard.
- 1.16 The strategy is also closely aligned with the Council Plan aim to see a strong network of parish and town councils across the entire district – capable of operating in any new local government structures.

## 2 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1 The evidence base that supports the strategy was developed by consultants Temple Group, thanks to funding secured from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.
- 2.2 There are no other direct financial implications. Delivery of this strategy involves primarily enabling and supporting communities and organisations across the district, so it is expected that the council's actions to deliver the strategy will come from existing resources.
- 2.3 Any additional projects or actions that might emerge, and require further resources, would be subject to future decisions. Working with partners, stakeholder and communities may lead to opportunities to apply for external funding to support specific projects or groups and these will be explored where possible.

## 3 LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 This strategy operates in the context of a framework of statutory duties and national and regional policies relating to resilience and wellbeing, as set out in section 2.8 of the strategy. Particularly relevant is the Localism Act (2011), which was designed to devolve power away from central government, giving local councils, communities, and individuals greater control over local decisions.
- 3.2 A formal grant agreement is produced for any organisation receiving council grant funding to support its work. This is reviewed regularly to ensure the funding is delivering the expected outcomes.
- 3.3 Any procurement of works or services will be compliant with the council's Contract Procedure Rules and applicable external legislation.
- 3.4 The principles set out in this strategy will be incorporated in the council's Sustainable Procurement Guide which is published to assist council officers to effectively procure contractors and suppliers to deliver work for the council.

## 4 WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None. The ambitions set out in this strategy can be delivered through the work of existing teams and require no additional staff resources.

## 5 PROPERTY AND ASSET IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None. The majority of community buildings referenced in the strategy are owned and operated by external community organisations.

## 6 CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

- 6.1 The initial work of consultants Temple Group in 2025 provided an evidence base to inform the strategy. This work included several elements:
- a) An insight questionnaire was available online for five weeks and promoted via social media channels, website and newsletters, to obtain qualitative insights of subjective experiences of community wellbeing and resilience.
  - b) A community panel of representatives from local organisations and charities, as well as residents with professional experience relating to resilience and wellbeing, discussed statistical findings and preliminary insights.
  - c) Targeted community engagement was undertaken through organised events at specific locations including Wickham's Men's Shed, Unit 12 Community Pantry, and the Wellbeing Renew Café. Additional unstructured interviews were conducted at public spaces including Whiteley Shopping Centre, The Arc Library, the University of Winchester Students Union, and Winchester City's high street.
  - d) Online engagement with councillors was undertaken to understand constituency-specific challenges and identify systemic gaps in community resilience and wellbeing support.
- 6.2 The Health and Environment Policy Committee considered a first draft of the strategy at its meeting on 2 December 2025.
- 6.3 Stakeholder engagement sessions were held in Wickham, Alresford and Winchester during December 2025 to test the draft pathways and principles, and to receive general feedback on the emerging ideas. A similar session was also held online with representatives of parish and town councils.
- 6.4 If approved, we will publish a public-facing summary document (see appendix 2) including key content from the full strategy and clearly communicating the pathways and principles that will resonate with residents and community stakeholders. Its accessible and engaging style will ensure that residents are clear what we are seeking to achieve and how we all have a part to play in creating places where people feel connected, confident with thriving and resilient communities.

## 7 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 None.

7.2 PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

7.3 An equality impact assessment has been undertaken see appendix 3 for details.

8 DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

8.1 None required.

9 RISK MANAGEMENT

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>
<u>Financial Exposure</u> None		
<u>Exposure to challenge</u> Challenge to our prioritisation of target communities based on need.	Data-led approach underpinned by statistical evidence of need.	Demonstrate the positive impact of our work.
<u>Innovation</u> None		
<u>Reputation</u> None		
<u>Achievement of outcome</u> Grants awarded do not bring about the expected results.  Community initiatives fail.	Application process seeks evidence of deliverability.  Grants above a certain size threshold are paid in instalment and capital funding paid on production of invoices.  Involvement of stakeholders on project design.	Learning opportunities from unsuccessful initiatives often lead to subsequent successes.
<u>Property</u> None		
<u>Community Support</u>		

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>
Lack of understanding or awareness of the strategy.	A public-facing summary document (see appendix 2) and associated communications plan to raise awareness.	Utilise stakeholder networks to cascade information and help raise awareness.
<u>Timescales</u> None		
<u>Project capacity</u> Small team leading this work is impacted by vacancies or other loss of staff.	Proactive recruitment.  Embedding principles within the work of other teams helps sustain progress.	
<u>Local Government Reorganisation</u> Approach varies from other LGR partners.	Discussion and collaboration with some potential LGR partners have identified a good degree of alignment.  LGR workstreams will explore the challenges around neighbourhood working and governance.	The community 'culture' of Winchester is documented and known.

## 10 SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

### Background

- 10.1 The UK and its communities have faced unprecedented challenges in recent years; these include the COVID-19 pandemic, a cost-of-living crisis and an accelerating climate crisis. These challenges have impacted communities and individuals in a variety of ways, felt most keenly by those least able to manage.
- 10.2 The draft Winchester District Thriving and Resilient Communities Strategy (see appendix 1) sets out our approach for creating stronger, more resilient communities across the district through to 2030 working alongside our diverse communities. By delivering this strategy, we aim to create the conditions in

which communities across the district can thrive — socially, economically, culturally and environmentally. Our goal is to strengthen the social fabric of Winchester by building local capacity, enhancing belonging, and enabling residents and community groups to lead the activity that matters most to them.

- 10.3 The council recognises the vital role that is played by ‘community’ in all its senses, so the strategy sets a framework for how the council will both deliver services and work collaboratively with others to create communities that can thrive in both good and bad times.

#### The Strategy

- 10.4 We have defined community as:

***“A group of people connected by shared place, identity, or interest, who experience a sense of belonging and engage in mutual support or collective action.”***

Communities are able to thrive when they are inclusive, connected, resilient, and full of opportunities, where people feel they belong, can influence decisions, support one another, enjoy good quality of life and are able to fulfil their potential.

- 10.5 We have defined resilience, in the context of our communities, as:

***“The capacity for individuals and communities to respond to and overcome shocks or challenges. It is underpinned by personal and community wellbeing, which creates the capacity to transcend challenges”.***

- 10.6 The remaining factors that directly influence levels of personal resilience and wellbeing are classified as ‘social capital and support networks’. It is important that we remain sighted on the community-level need that sits below these strategic documents. Work with partners such as the police, health agencies and county council help us to achieve this but, most importantly, we must have a basis for constructive engagement with our communities.
- 10.7 The clear correlation between social connections and life satisfaction suggests investing in community networks could significantly enhance community resilience and help them thrive. This requires supporting social network formation in new developments and maintaining existing community facilities, particularly in areas with economic challenges where such spaces serve as hubs for social connection.
- 10.8 The data tells us where inequality is the greatest and health outcomes for people are worse. The same areas often show weaker social networks, less volunteering and fewer community groups and activities. This gives us a clear steer as to the areas where we should focus and prioritise our support and will

help inform the sort of programmes and activities we enable, commission or deliver.

10.9 Despite many years of work supporting communities across the district, the council has never had a strategy to provide clear direction to its work with communities. This new strategy fills that gap and has been informed by various other council documents and by local, regional and national policy and legislation. Engagement with local people, elected representatives and organisations has helped ensure a local context.

10.10 The strategy sets out five pathways and a series of associated principles, by which to build social capital and create stronger, more resilient communities.

a) **Social connection, inclusion and belonging**

We want residents to experience stronger social ties, reduced isolation, and a greater sense of belonging to their neighbourhoods.

We will help them to...

- Promote and celebrate local identity and pride in place
- Celebrate diversity and promote inclusion
- Secure, protect, support and promote the use of key community assets

b) **Community capacity and local leadership**

We want communities to feel confident, skilled and supported to lead local activity, shape decisions, and mobilise resources.

For example, through...

- An effective network of parish and town councils
- Voluntary sector representation as a strategic partner
- Local involvement in emergency response
- Working with communities to build skills and participation in local projects

c) **Access to community assets, services and opportunities**

We want people to easily engage in activities that support their wellbeing, culture, skills and social participation.

To achieve this, we recognise the importance of...

- Grant funding and other support
- Promotion and encouragement for volunteering
- Collaboration with other stakeholders

- Activating and utilising under-used public spaces, such as schools or churches, for wider community activity

d) **Supporting people facing the toughest circumstances**

We want individuals and families with long-term vulnerabilities to feel supported, connected and able to participate in community life.

To make this possible, we will...

- React and respond to changing circumstances
- Target effort to maximise impact
- Show compassion

e) **Strong community networks and partnerships**

We want to see a well-connected voluntary, community and social enterprise ecosystem that collaborates effectively and shares resources.

To bring this about, we will encourage...

- Networking and collaboration
- Sharing of information, data and intelligence
- Measuring and demonstrating the impact of community initiatives

Next steps

10.11 The principles detailed in the strategy are supported by the ongoing work of a number of council teams. Working with communities in an enabling role to increase their capacity will help advance our ambitions in all these areas, but there are some where there appears to be greater opportunity to build and strengthen.

- a) The impending reorganisation of local government in Hampshire makes the role of parish and town councils ever more important as the most local level of democracy. Work is already underway to address the democratic deficit caused by the lack of a parish or town council for the town wards of Winchester, but there is also potential to work with existing parish and town councils to ensure they are fully prepared for the change and to embrace their role in a unitary world and the opportunities it presents them.
- b) The council's Emergency Response Plan recognises the important role of communities to prepare, respond and recover to emergencies or other unexpected events. Several communities within the district have developed community resilience plans, which formalise the ways in which they work alongside statutory public bodies in responding to emergencies or other unexpected events, as part of a wider multi-agency response. Working alongside colleagues in the Local

Resilience Forum, a suite of community resilience related plans has been recently developed, including a handbook for residents which could be used to engage with parishes and residents to further strengthen community preparedness.

- c) Targeted support for key community assets such as community centres and village halls to help them thrive and succeed as a focal point for community life.
- d) Grant funding and other support to our voluntary and community sector allows them to build on existing assets and strengths to meet the needs of people in the district. At a time of increasing pressure on public sector resources, we can focus even harder to ensure that our grant funding is used as effectively as possible and brings maximum benefit.
- e) Recent work with Hampshire County Council's Public Health team has seen us identify a series of health priorities to address health inequalities in the district. Led by those findings and the associated data, we can look to target efforts more systematically at the areas where they are needed the most to ensure that we are helping the people who face the toughest circumstances. We have recently established a community network of agencies operating in Stanmore and intend to work with partners to strengthen the impact of our collective efforts.

10.12 The impact of this strategy will be seen and felt in daily life: more people taking part, more places open and welcoming, stronger neighbourhood identity, and a voluntary sector that is confident, collaborative and equipped for the future.

10.13 Local government reorganisation will see a change in the way that services are delivered. This creates opportunities for the new unitary authority to do things differently and for communities to shape decisions, express local priorities, have influence close to where they live, and potentially take responsibility for local services and assets. This strategy sets out our ambition for Winchester district's communities to be at the forefront and establishes a foundation that will inform neighbourhood governance arrangements in the new unitary authority and from which we can move forward jointly with our new partner districts.

## 11 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

11.1 The council could opt to continue without adopting the Winchester District Thriving and Resilient Communities Strategy. However, this would mean moving towards LGR without any formally approved approach to working with communities or published aspiration for our

communities to thrive and succeed. This would risk a new unitary authority taking a different direction, so this option is discounted.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:-

Previous Committee Reports:-

2 December 2025 – HEP044: Community Resilience Strategy

Other Background Documents:-

Community Wellbeing and Resilience Strategy – Report to Winchester City Council by Temple Consultants (March 2025)

APPENDICES:

1. Winchester District Winchester District Thriving and Resilient Communities Strategy (2026-2030)
2. Draft Public-facing summary document
3. Equality impact assessment

**Winchester District  
Thriving and Resilient Communities  
Strategy  
2026-2030**

**Winchester City Council  
January 2026**

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Abbreviation	Definition
<b>ABCD</b>	Asset Based Community Development
<b>IDACI</b>	Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index
<b>IMD</b>	Indices of Multiple Deprivation
<b>JSNA</b>	Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
<b>LGA</b>	Local Government Association
<b>LSOA</b>	Lower Layer Super Output Area
<b>OECD</b>	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
<b>ONS</b>	Office for National Statistics
<b>WARM</b>	Wellbeing and Resilience Measure
<b>WELLBY</b>	Wellbeing-Adjusted Life Year

DRAFT

## Foreword

I am delighted to introduce the Winchester District Thriving and Resilient Communities Strategy 2026–2030. This strategy marks an important step in our commitment to supporting the wellbeing of all who live, work and volunteer across our district. It sets out how we will work alongside communities—large and small, urban and rural—to build places where people feel connected, confident and able to thrive.

Despite the challenges of COVID-19, ongoing cost-of-living pressures, growing inequalities, and the effects of a changing climate, the people of Winchester district have continually demonstrated compassion, creativity and resilience. From neighbourhood support groups and volunteer-led services to faith organisations, charities, community centres, and informal networks — our communities are rich with strength and determination. This strategy builds on those foundations.

We recognise the diverse nature of our district — its market towns, rural villages, new developments, and the historic city — and the different pressures each face. By listening to local voices and focusing on areas where inequalities are greatest, this strategy provides a shared framework for action that responds to these challenge and real need.

We have sets out five pathways that will guide our work. These pathways reflect what residents, community organisations and partners told us they value most, and where the council can play a meaningful role. Our ambition is to support communities, so they feel empowered to lead local solutions, build strong networks and take advantage of opportunities as they arise.

By 2030, we want to see communities that are more connected, more confident and more resilient — places where people feel a sense of belonging, where local assets flourish, and where residents can live healthier, happier and more fulfilling lives.

I would like to thank everyone who contributed their experiences, insights and expertise to help shape this strategy. Your voices have made it stronger.

Together, we can build a more vibrant, inclusive and resilient Winchester district for all.

**Councillor Kathleen Becker**

**Cabinet Member for Healthy Communities**

# 1 Executive Summary

- 1.1.1 This strategy sets out our approach for creating stronger, more resilient communities across the district through to 2030 working alongside our diverse communities. By delivering this strategy, we aim to create the conditions in which communities across the district can thrive — socially, economically, culturally and environmentally. Our goal is to strengthen the social fabric of Winchester by building local capacity, enhancing belonging, and enabling residents and community groups to lead the activity that matters most to them.
- 1.1.2 This includes drawing on the strengths and assets that already exist in communities throughout the Winchester district, and new communities, for example through major housing developments or refugees displaced because of war or conflict.
- 1.1.3 We know our residents and communities have faced unprecedented challenges in recent years, including the COVID-19 pandemic, a cost-of-living crisis and an accelerating climate crisis.
- 1.1.4 Greater resilience will be achieved through both place-shaping and capacity building activity, and through the fostering of an environment where communities can grow, evolve and solve their own challenges. In doing so, this will actively help to deliver the Council Plan priorities of Healthy Communities and Thriving Places.
- 1.1.5 We have defined community as:
- “A group of people connected by shared place, identity, or interest, who experience a sense of belonging and engage in mutual support or collective action.”***
- 1.1.6 Communities are able to thrive when they are inclusive, connected, resilient, and full of opportunities, where people feel they belong, can influence decisions, support one another, enjoy good quality of life and are able to fulfil their potential.
- 1.1.7 We have defined resilience, in the context of our communities, as:
- “The capacity of individuals and communities to respond to and overcome shocks or challenges, underpinned by personal and community wellbeing”.***
- 1.1.8 We will seek to foster vibrant, inclusive, and connected communities that can thrive. Winchester district’s communities have consistently demonstrated their ability to come together, support their most vulnerable members and create positive change. The strategy builds on these foundations and explores how we can support the community structures and social relationships with friends, family or the wider community that can serve as support networks.

1.1.9 The strategy identifies the drivers that fall within two main domains of wellbeing and resilience:



1.1.10 We already have a broad and comprehensive set of strategies that direct our work on the key enabling infrastructure of wellbeing and resilience. As a result, we can take a high level view of the situation and the key challenges that exist.

Driver	Council strategy	
<b>Housing</b>	Housing Strategy (2023–2028)	Housing affordability ratio significantly higher than both Hampshire and England/Wales.  Most obvious in areas with high levels of social housing and higher rates of poor self-reported health e.g. <b>St Luke ward</b> .
<b>Income</b>	Green Economic Development Strategy (GEDS)	Median weekly resident pay exceeds both the Hampshire average and most neighbouring districts.  IMD data shows <b>St Luke and St Bartholomew wards</b> as most challenged areas.  The <b>South Hampshire Urban Areas</b> show moderate IDACI scores compared to other geographies.
<b>Transport</b>	The Winchester District Transport Statement  Winchester Movement Strategy	Significant gaps exist in transport options across the district, particularly in the <b>rural areas</b> .  <b>Disabled residents</b> particularly emphasised transport's role in accessing essential services.

Driver	Council strategy	
	Local Cycling and Walking Implementation Plans	
<b>Crime and Community Safety</b>	Community Safety Partnership District Strategic Assessment	Total recorded offences (56.09 per 1,000) substantially below the Southeast average.  Specific concerns about safety affecting service access, particularly for <b>women and vulnerable groups</b> .  <b>Young students</b> express safety fears when walking between university to their accommodation after dark.
<b>Employment</b>	Green Economic Development Strategy (GEDS)	Overall economic inactivity rates are lower than the national average.  Economic activity rates are generally lower in the <b>urban areas</b> .
<b>Education</b>		Strong formal educational attainment, significantly exceeding the national average, with most schools achieving Good or Outstanding Ofsted ratings.  The <b>Market Towns and Rural Area</b> face challenges in accessing further education and skill development opportunities.
<b>Physical Health</b>	Playing Pitch Strategy	Average life expectancy exceeds the national average.  Pronounced inequalities within Winchester Town, with <b>St Luke ward</b> recording the lowest life expectancy.
<b>Mental Health and Wellbeing</b>	Health Priorities Statement Cultural Strategy	Mental health of <b>young people</b> emerged as a particular concern - evidence showing elevated self-harm rates in <b>urban wards including St Michael, St Paul, and St Bartholomew</b> .
<b>Environmental quality and access to green space</b>	Open Spaces Assessment Nature Improvement Plan	Winchester Town wards like <b>St Luke and St Paul</b> have smaller private outdoor spaces and Town wards show greater deficits in public open space.  <b>Denmead</b> shows a notable public space deficit.

1.1.11 It is important that we remain sighted on the community-level need that sits below these strategic documents. Work with partners such as the police, health agencies and county council help us to achieve this but, most importantly, we must have a basis for constructive engagement with our communities.

- 1.1.12 The clear correlation between social connections and life satisfaction suggests investing in community networks could significantly enhance community resilience and help them thrive. This requires supporting social network formation in new developments and maintaining existing community facilities, particularly in areas with economic challenges where such spaces serve as hubs for social connection.
- 1.1.13 The data tells us where inequality is the greatest and health outcomes for people are worse. The same areas often show weaker social networks, less volunteering and fewer community groups and activities. This gives us a clear steer as to the areas where we should focus and prioritise our support and will help inform the sort of programmes and activities we enable, commission or deliver.
- 1.1.14 By focusing on the social network drivers, we have identified a series of pathways and principles through which we will seek to make this possible.

DRAFT

**We commit to supporting five pathways to build social capital and create stronger, more resilient communities across the district.**



## **Social connection, inclusion and belonging**

**We want residents to experience stronger social ties, reduced isolation, and a greater sense of belonging to their neighbourhoods.**

**We will help them to...**

- Promote and celebrate local identity and pride in place
- Celebrate diversity and promote inclusion
- Secure, protect, support and promote the use of key community assets

## Community capacity and local leadership

**We want communities to feel confident, skilled and supported to lead local activity, shape decisions, and mobilise resources.**

**For example, through...**

- An effective network of parish and town councils
- Voluntary sector representation as a strategic partner
- Local involvement in emergency response
- Working with communities to build skills and participation in local projects

## Access to community assets, services and opportunities

**We want people to easily engage in activities that support their wellbeing, culture, skills and social participation.**

**To achieve this, we recognise the importance of...**

- Grant funding and other support
- Promotion and encouragement for volunteering
- Collaboration with other stakeholders
- Activating and utilising under-used public spaces, such as schools or churches, for wider community activity

## Supporting people facing the toughest circumstances

**We want individuals and families with long-term vulnerabilities to feel supported, connected and able to participate in community life.**

**To make this possible, we will...**

- React and respond to changing circumstances
- Target effort to maximise impact
- Show compassion

## Strong community networks and partnerships

**We want to see a well-connected voluntary, community and social enterprise ecosystem that collaborates effectively and shares resources.**

**To bring this about, we will encourage...**

- Networking and collaboration
- Sharing of information, data and intelligence
- Measuring and demonstrating the impact of community initiatives

1.1.15 The council takes on a variety of different roles, depending on the context and the needs of our communities.

- As an **Enabler** we create the conditions for community organisations and the voluntary sector to succeed.
- As a **Facilitator** we bring people and organisations together to collaborate, share resources, and solve problems.
- As a **Provider** (or **Commissioner**) we directly deliver services to residents, or purchase services from external providers to meet community needs.
- As an **Advocate** we represent the interests of residents at regional or national levels.
- As a **Guardian** we look after public assets and community wellbeing.

1.1.16 Our success will be evidenced by measurable growth in community-led action, deeper participation, stronger local networks, increased access to local opportunities, and improved wellbeing — particularly for those facing the toughest circumstances. Over time, communities will become more confident, better connected and more self-sustaining, reducing dependency on reactive support and enabling a shared culture of collective responsibility, pride and everyday resilience.

1.1.17 The impact of this strategy will be seen and felt in daily life: more people taking part, more places open and welcoming, stronger neighbourhood identity, and a voluntary sector that is confident, collaborative and equipped for the future.

## 2 Introduction

### 2.1 Setting the scene

- 2.1.1 The UK and its communities have faced unprecedented challenges in recent years; these include the COVID-19 pandemic, a cost-of-living crisis and an accelerating climate crisis.
- 2.1.2 These challenges have impacted communities and individuals in a variety of areas including economic wealth, housing, employment, health, and exacerbated inequalities. They have been felt most keenly by those least able to manage, whether that be due to their challenging circumstances, limited capacity or a lack of support. As a result, communities have been left destabilised, and individuals face an erosion of their socio-economic welfare.
- 2.1.3 The Local Government Act<sup>1</sup> places the ‘promotion of economic, social [and] environmental wellbeing’ as a central tenet of the duties and activities of local government bodies. Therefore, we have a key role to play in supporting our communities to develop resilience against various pressures and support residents and communities to safeguard their own wellbeing.
- 2.1.4 The **Winchester District Thriving and Resilient Communities Strategy** (‘the strategy’) sets out our approach for creating stronger, more resilient communities across the district through to 2030. The strategy establishes how we will work alongside our diverse communities across Winchester city, market towns and rural villages to enhance wellbeing and build resilience.
- 2.1.5 Drawing on the strengths and assets that already exist in communities throughout the Winchester district, we will focus our support where it is needed most. Tackling inequality is a key thread that runs throughout the strategy and highlights the importance of data and intelligence to inform our approaches. Through our Health Priorities work we know health inequalities lead to poor health outcomes for people in certain areas. We have an aging population and an increasing risk of loneliness and social isolation. We have welcomed many Ukrainian nationals who were displaced by war in their country and arrived in Winchester in need of much support with housing, language and employment. We have large new housing developments with fledgling or yet to be established facilities, social networks or sense of community. However, things change, and priorities alter over time. We will monitor and respond to evidence to ensure that we continue to focus our efforts where they are most needed and where they make the greatest difference.

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<sup>1</sup> Local Government Act (2000). Available at: [Local Government Act 2000 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

- 2.1.6 We will seek to foster vibrant, inclusive, and connected communities that can thrive through change and challenge. Winchester district's communities have consistently demonstrated their ability to come together, support their most vulnerable members and create positive change. The strategy builds on these foundations while acknowledging the evolving needs of the overall district.
- 2.1.7 The district of Winchester continues to grow and welcome new communities, for example through major housing developments in strategic development areas or refugees displaced as a result of war or conflict. The strategy provides a framework and principles for ensuring all residents can live healthy and fulfilled lives. In order to achieve this aim, we are committed to understanding and supporting the diverse needs of our communities, be they urban or rural.

## 2.2 Purpose of the strategy

- 2.2.1 The strategy sets out the council's strategic approach to building strong and resilient communities. This will be achieved through both our own place-shaping and capacity building activity, and through the fostering of an environment where communities can grow, evolve and solve their own challenges. In doing so, this will actively help to deliver the Council Plan priorities of Healthy Communities and Thriving Places.
- 2.2.2 The strategy underpins the local and national drivers highlighted in Section 2.8, which rely on strong and vibrant communities to ensure outcomes are achieved. There will be a strong link with the emerging Local Plan (2020-2040) which sets out policies for the creation of new communities through strategic development sites at key sustainable locations across the district. While the Local Plan will ensure the necessary physical infrastructure is delivered, it is the principles of this strategy that will shape the success of the new community. Planning shapes **'the place we live in'**, but this work will define **'how we live in that place'**.
- 2.2.3 Quality of Life's Empowering Healthy Places<sup>2</sup> report highlights the importance of focusing on *"proactive, long-term measures while assessing and addressing immediate key challenges"*. It is important to note that whilst *"long term improvements are vital and may yield the greatest benefits over time, addressing immediate challenges through short-term interventions can also yield significant benefits"*.

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<sup>2</sup> Quality of Life and Local Government Association (2024) Empowering Healthy Places – Unveiling the powers and practices of local councils in fostering healthy neighbourhoods. Available at: [https://www.qolf.org/wp-content/uploads/LGA-Empowering-Healthy-Places-Final-compressed\\_1.pdf](https://www.qolf.org/wp-content/uploads/LGA-Empowering-Healthy-Places-Final-compressed_1.pdf)

## 2.3 Development of the Strategy

- 2.3.1 A comprehensive evidence base underpins the strategy which has adopted Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) principles, ensuring community assets and capabilities are central to its development. This includes:
- Literature and policy review
  - Statistical evidence gathering
  - Engagement with representatives from diverse community groups
- 2.3.2 A 'Community Panel' was established through active stakeholder and community engagement, to support and inform the work. This panel included representatives from diverse community groups, with particular emphasis on traditionally under-represented voices and geographies. Through facilitated workshops, the panel helped define local interpretations of wellbeing and resilience and identify community priorities and assets.
- 2.3.3 The evidence base combines quantitative statistical analysis with qualitative engagement and survey-based research. Statistical analysis examined indicators across multiple geographic levels, from wards and lower super output areas (LSOAs) to national spatial scales. The strategy uses the Local Plan groupings for geography of the district - Winchester Town; Market Towns and Rural Area; and South Hampshire Urban Areas.
- 2.3.4 The qualitative component involved twelve community engagement events using varied methodologies including discussive workshops with local charities and organisations, semi-structured interviews with community members and local councillors and digital surveys.
- 2.3.5 We aim to develop monitoring capabilities, through engaging stakeholders to create a dashboard of indicators, building shared ownership and insight, and enabling ongoing assessment of the strategy's effectiveness. This systematic approach will ensure that the final strategy is both evidence-based and community-owned, with clear mechanisms for implementation and evaluation over the period to 2030.
- 2.3.6 A key measure of success will be that the Strategy's impact will be seen and felt in daily life: more people taking part, more places open and welcoming, stronger neighbourhood identity, and a voluntary sector that is confident, collaborative and equipped for the future.
- 2.3.7 At all stages, the work has ensured that the needs of vulnerable and under-represented groups are reflected, while building on existing community strengths and assets. This balanced approach ensures the strategy addresses immediate needs while building long-term community strength and resilience.



- 2.4.3 Community means different things to different people but, for the purposes of this strategy, we have defined it as follows:

**“A community is a group of people connected by shared place, identity, or interest, who experience a sense of belonging and engage in mutual support or collective action.”**

- 2.4.4 Communities are not fixed — they overlap, evolve, and vary in strength. They change over time, in response to external factors and challenges, but also to evolving relationships and internal dynamics. The purpose of this strategy is to create the conditions in which communities across the district can thrive — socially, economically, culturally and environmentally.
- 2.4.5 A thriving community is inclusive, connected, resilient, and full of opportunities, where people feel they belong, can influence decisions, support one another, enjoy good quality of life and are able to fulfil their potential.

## **2.5 Defining resilience**

- 2.5.1 Community resilience has become increasingly important in the wake of wider societal challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic; international economic shocks; and anxiety about the climate crisis.
- 2.5.2 The WARM<sup>2</sup> framework notes, importantly, that whilst these events may be broad in their scope, their impacts play out at a local or community level. As such, community and individual resilience should take into account Winchester's geographical contexts since enabling infrastructures and social capital are bound by place, context and geography.
- 2.5.3 The council's Emergency Response Plan recognises the important role of communities to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies or other unexpected events. A number of communities within the district have developed community resilience plans, which formalise the ways in which parish councils, voluntary organisations and other community-based resources work alongside statutory public bodies as part of a wider multi-agency response. Increased resilience of our communities helps the speed and effectiveness of the response to and recovery from emergencies such as floods, fires and gas leaks which may require residents to stay in their homes and be unable to get food, water or essential medication for an unknown period of time. Working alongside colleagues who are members of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Local Resilience Forum, a suite of community resilience plans has been created to support communities develop their own Community Emergency Plans and to prepare for resilience in households and communities.

- 2.5.4 There is much literature on community resilience available in various fields such as international development, social psychology and human health. Broadly, resilience can be categorised as being either person focused or variable focused, as per the WARM<sup>2</sup> framework.
- 2.5.5 A person focused assessment of resilience considers the personality traits of individuals who meet set resilience criteria. Alternatively, variable focused approaches to resilience explore how people relate to and interact with family and wider social environments, alongside their individual characteristics.
- 2.5.6 This perspective requires a consideration of social capital – the extent to which social relationships with friends, family or the wider community can serve as support networks and enable individuals to bounce back from shocks or withstand adversity.
- 2.5.7 Critically, a variable focused approach is considered to be more appropriate, given that our role as a local government body includes a broad overall remit to repair and strengthen societal fabric.
- 2.5.8 Given all that has been mentioned above, a proposed definition of resilience in the context of our communities is:

**“Resilience is the capacity for individuals and communities to respond to and overcome shocks or challenges. It is underpinned by personal and community wellbeing, which creates the capacity to transcend challenges”.**

## **2.6 How resilience and wellbeing interact**

- 2.6.1 Resilience and wellbeing are inextricably linked and have a somewhat symbiotic relationship. Drawing on the WARM<sup>2</sup> framework, **Figure 1** demonstrates this:

**Figure 2: How wellbeing and resilience interact at the individual and community level**



2.6.2 There is no universal definition of wellbeing. Several definitions and conceptual approaches exist; this makes arriving at an overview challenging. This is clearly stated in the exemplar Wellbeing and Resilience Measure (WARM)<sup>3</sup> framework developed by the Young Foundation.

2.6.3 For this strategy, wellbeing has been considered in context of issues which are relevant to our council, such as sustainable housing development; reducing health inequalities; and improving access to the natural environment. The importance of our place-based, geographical context has also been considered.

2.6.4 A key distinction is the difference between **objective wellbeing** and **subjective wellbeing**. It is important that this strategy considers both objective and subjective approaches to wellbeing.

- Objective wellbeing is assessed using indicators which are *assumed* to contribute to a person’s experience of wellbeing, such as life expectancy at birth, mean years of schooling and gross national income per capital. The assumption is that these socio-economic indicators are reflective of a person’s experience of wellbeing<sup>4</sup>.
- Subjective drivers of wellbeing are those factors that are private to the individual through their personal lived experiences. This can be assessed through questions such as “is there anyone who you can totally be yourself with?” and “is there anyone you could rely on to help you from you outside your own household, if you were feeling depressed?”<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> Taking the temperature of local communities – The Wellbeing and Resilience Measure (WARM) (2010) The Young Foundation. Available at: [Taking-the-Temperature-of-Local-Communities.pdf \(youngfoundation.org\)](https://www.youngfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/Taking-the-Temperature-of-Local-Communities.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Breaking the gridlock – Reimagining cooperation in a polarized world (2024) United Nations Human Development Programme. Available at: [Human Development Report 2023-24 | Human Development Reports \(undp.org\)](https://www.humandevelopmentreport.org/)

2.6.5 The definition of wellbeing in the context of this strategy incorporates both objective and subjective dimensions:

**“Wellbeing is a positive state of life satisfaction experienced subjectively by individuals and communities, which is supported by objective enabling infrastructures and support networks”.**

## 2.7 Social value

2.7.1 As the definitions for wellbeing and resilience have shown, there are various objective drivers of personal and community wellbeing and resilience. These drivers run across economic, social and environmental plains, and will often overlap. For example, a given level of economic security and affluence might facilitate access to appropriate housing. Similarly, managing public open space to take account of the impact of climate change may improve access, unlocking associated health and wellbeing benefits.

2.7.2 **Social Value** is an approach to measuring the net social, economic and environmental value an organisation or activity brings to society<sup>5</sup>, which is rapidly gaining traction<sup>12</sup>. It has been described as “the enduring systemic change created within communities that leads to improved quality of life for individuals and more just, inclusive and equitable societies”<sup>6</sup>. Health, wellbeing and quality of life at both the personal and community level, are key outcomes and drivers of social value, especially in the context of local communities and placemaking.

2.7.3 **Table 1** below lists the four wellbeing and social value frameworks that have been identified in this report, each with their associated drivers identified in the column beneath:

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<sup>5</sup> Social Value Portal (2022) Social Value 101: A guide to getting started. Available at: [Social Value 101: A getting started guide \(socialvalueportal.com\)](https://socialvalueportal.com)

<sup>6</sup> ARUP (2023) Social Value: A UK White Paper. Available at: [social-value-a-uk-white-paper.pdf \(arup.com\)](https://arup.com)

**Table 1: Drivers of wellbeing in wellbeing and social value\* frameworks**

OECD How's Life?	WARM Framework	WELLBY <sup>7*</sup>	TOM System <sup>8*</sup>
Income and Wealth	Buoyant local economy	Good mental and physical health	More local people in employment
Work and Job Quality	Low crime	Higher and further education	Improved skills for local people
Housing	Effective public services	Work	More opportunities for disadvantaged people
Health	Strong and stable families	Physical Exercise	
Knowledge and Skills	<b>Networks of friends</b>	Faith	
Environment	<b>One-to-one services</b>	Relationships	<b>Increased levels of volunteering</b>
Quality	Wealth	Fresh Air	Creating a healthier community
Subjective Wellbeing	Health	Retirement	Vulnerable people are helped to live independently
Safety	Education	<b>Helping others</b>	
Work-life balance	Life satisfaction		
<b>Social Connections</b>			
Civil Engagement			

2.7.4 Historically, the development of community resilience and wellbeing was centred upon needs-based approaches, through assessing the deficiencies in a community or local area and focus on ‘filling in the gaps’, often making communities disempowered and dependent.

2.7.5 An alternative approach emerged, known as Asset Based Community Development (ABCD)<sup>9</sup>, which **focuses on assets in the community, rather than deficiencies**. These assets might include initiatives such as food banks or community pantries which are deeply embedded in the fabric of places at the community level or the relationships between community leaders and the wider community.

2.7.6 Good practice is acknowledged to show that a strengths-based approach can successfully challenge isolation and fragmentation in communities by strengthening what is already there.

<sup>7</sup> State of Life (2024) WELLBY – Where’s WELLBY? – the big picture and WELLBY Guide. Available at: [WELLBY & TOOLS — State of life](#)

<sup>8</sup> Social Value Portal (2024) Social Value Measurement – Social Value TOM System™. Available at: [Measurement | Social Value TOM System™ | Social Value Portal](#)

<sup>9</sup> Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets. Pg. 1-11. Institute for Policy Research.

## 2.8 Policy, legislation and strategy

2.8.1 This work operates in the context of a framework of statutory duties and national and regional policies relating to resilience and wellbeing.

### **National Legislation**

- The Equality Act (2010)
- The Localism Act (2011)
- The Health and Social Care Act (2022)

### **National Reports**

- Fair Society, Healthy Lives: The Marmot Review (2010)
- Health Equity in England: The Marmot Review 10 Years On (2020)
- Building Health Equity: The Role of the Property Sector in Improving Health (2025)

### **National Policy and Strategy**

- National Planning Policy Framework (revised December 2024)
- Public Health England Strategy (2020 – 2025)
- UK Government Resilience Framework (UKRF) December 2002
- Youth Matters: Your National Youth Strategy (2025–2035)
- Pride in Place Strategy 2025 ([Pride in Place Strategy - GOV.UK](#))

### **Regional Policy and Strategy**

- Hampshire County Council Strategic Plan (2021 – 2025)
- Hampshire and Isle of Wight Integrated Care Board Integrated Care Strategy (2022)
- Hampshire Public Health Strategy 2023 – 2026 (2023)
- Community Resilience in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight – Verudatus report (February 2024)

## 2.9 Winchester City Council's policy and approaches

2.9.1 Many of our policy responsibilities overlap with one another and reinforce strategic policy objectives relating to community resilience. Those of material importance are outlined below:

- Winchester City Council Plan 2025 – 2030 (2025)
- Winchester Community Safety Partnership District Strategic Assessment (2024)
- Winchester District Cultural Strategy (2024)
- Winchester City Council Housing for Winchester - Housing Strategy 2023 – 2028 (2023)

2.9.2 Other policies and strategic documents play a key part in improving health and wellbeing outcomes for people which, in turn, reinforce the ability to respond to and overcome shocks or challenges.

- Winchester City Council Local Plan Joint Core Strategy (2013)
- Winchester City Council Proposed Submission Local Plan (Regulation 19) 2020 – 2040 (2024)
- Winchester City Council Carbon Neutrality Action Plan 2023 – 2030
- City of Winchester Movement Strategy (2019)
- Winchester Green Economic Development Strategy (GEDS) 2021
- Winchester City Council Air Quality Strategy (2024)
- South Downs National Park Authority South Downs Local Plan (2019)

2.9.3 Themes such as health, wellbeing and community cohesion often appear as golden threads which run through different policy and strategy documents, at various spatial levels.

2.9.4 Much of our policy activity and priority aims overlap with one another, in terms of our capacity to drive community resilience and wellbeing. The intention is that this strategy will establish principles that can be applied across all aspects of our work, providing a consistent basis for the relationship between the council and the communities that it serves.

## 2.10 The council's role

2.10.1 The council takes on a variety of different roles, depending on the context, subject matter, and the needs of our communities. The most common roles are set out in table 2 below:

**Table 2: The council's role**

<b>Role</b>	<b>What it means</b>	<b>Key actions</b>	<b>Example</b>
<b>Enabler</b>	The council creates the conditions for community organisations and the voluntary sector to deliver their services or achieve outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing funding or grants</li> <li>• Setting strategic direction or policy frameworks</li> <li>• Removing barriers to community involvement</li> </ul>	Supporting a local charity to run a youth centre by offering a building and funding.
<b>Facilitator</b>	The council brings people and organisations together to collaborate, share resources, and solve problems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hosting forums or partnerships</li> <li>• Mediating between stakeholders</li> <li>• Encouraging co-production of services</li> </ul>	Convening a multi-agency group to tackle social isolation in the area.
<b>Provider (or Actor)</b>	The council directly delivers services to residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Running services and facilities</li> <li>• Employing staff and managing operations</li> </ul>	Operating a council-run activity programme.
<b>Commissioner</b>	The council plans and purchases services from external providers to meet community needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Needs assessment and market shaping</li> <li>• Contracting and performance monitoring</li> </ul>	Commissioning a private operator to run a council-owned leisure centre.
<b>Advocate</b>	The council represents and champions the interests of its residents at regional or national levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lobbying government for funding or policy change</li> <li>• Promoting the area to attract investment</li> </ul>	Campaigning for better transport links or supporting bids for funding from regional or national bodies.
<b>Regulator</b>	The council enforces laws and regulations to protect public interest.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Licensing (e.g. taxis, alcohol)</li> <li>• Environmental health inspections</li> <li>• Planning enforcement</li> </ul>	Inspecting food hygiene standards in community centres.
<b>Steward / Guardian</b>	The council acts as a custodian of public assets and community wellbeing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managing public spaces and heritage</li> <li>• Ensuring long-term sustainability</li> </ul>	Maintaining our parks or public spaces.

### 3 Resilience and Wellbeing in Winchester district

#### 3.1 Key drivers

3.1.1 While resilience and community wellbeing is difficult to define and relates somewhat to the lived experiences of individuals themselves, the same contributing factors often appear.

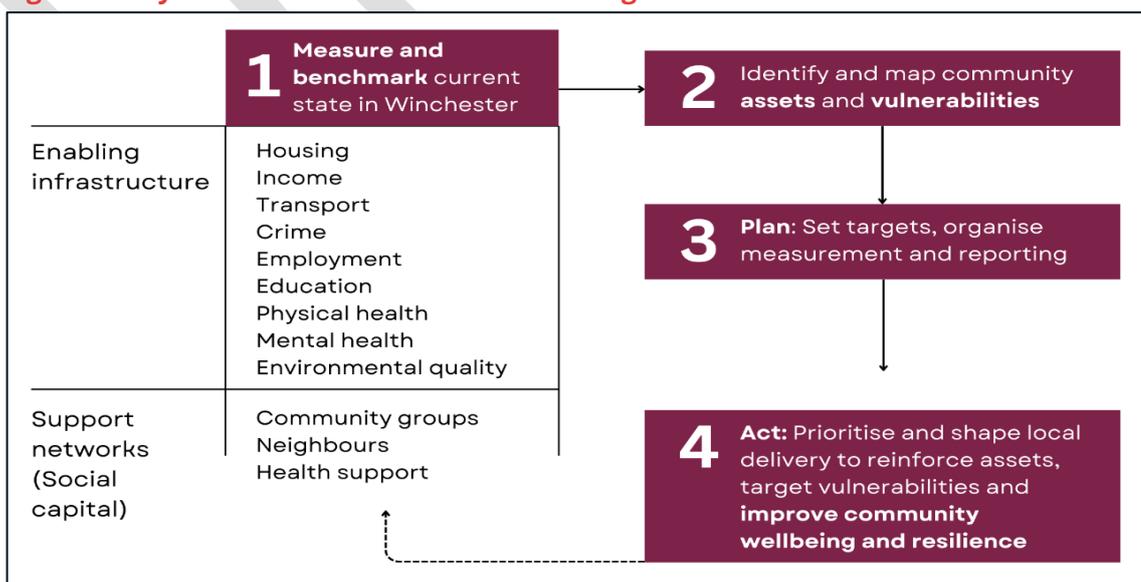
3.1.2 The work to identify the key drivers of resilience and wellbeing has been informed by academic research covering areas such health, wellbeing economics and psychology, social value measurement frameworks such as WELLBY<sup>7</sup> and wellbeing frameworks such as the OECD’s How’s Life?<sup>7</sup> survey and the Young Foundation’s WARM<sup>2</sup> framework. It draws on thematic areas of importance, where consensus can be seen in terms of the relevance of these factors to resilience and wellbeing.

3.1.3 The drivers fall within two main domains of wellbeing and resilience:

- **Enabling infrastructure:** These are evidenced **objective drivers** which support an individual or community’s wellbeing and resilience.
- **Support networks:** Where an individual is currently located across different support networks. This influences their stock of **social capital**, a pertinent driver of wellbeing. This is often **contextual** and **subjective** to the individual.

3.1.4 Within each of these two categories, there are a series of specific drivers. These drivers are outlined in **Figure 2:**

**Figure 3: Key drivers of resilience and wellbeing in Winchester district**



3.1.5 The specific objective drivers of resilience and wellbeing which relate to '**enabling infrastructure**' are:

- **Housing** (access to suitable housing, housing affordability and permanence);
- **Income** (income levels, deprivation levels);
- **Transport** (access to decent and reliable transport systems to 'plug in' to the community);
- **Crime** (feeling safe in your community);
- **Education** (the ability to upskill and gain qualifications to 'open doors');
- **Employment** (decent and meaningful employment);
- **Physical health** (good nutrition, means to exercise);
- **Mental health** (state of self-actualisation, stress management); and
- **Environmental quality** (access to green/blue spaces, quality of spaces)

3.1.6 The specific drivers of embeddedness within '**support networks**' and levels of social capital are:

- **Participation in community groups** (recreational, community, sport or other groups);
- **Access to support from outside your household** (networks of family, friends, colleagues and others); and
- **Neighbourly and community relations** (relationships with those in a geographical proximity).

## 3.2 Evidence gathering

3.2.1 These key drivers have been applied to the context of Winchester district to measure and benchmark the area in terms of its performance and community experiences. This measurement exercise was undertaken in two ways.

3.2.2 **Statistical evidence gathering** for the enabling infrastructure category, desk-based research which comprised of gathering and modelling socio-economic and environmental data, to measure the 'state of play' in Winchester district. This drew on the JSNA and was supplemented by data from a survey using a "community insight" questionnaire, to get a subjective perspective of access and priorities.

3.2.3 **Qualitative evidence gathering** in terms of the support network category, for which the consultants used the following to provide insights into levels of social capital and the existence of support networks for individuals in their communities. They engaged with community members, community leaders, Voluntary,

Charitable and Social Enterprises (VCSEs) and both elected and non-elected councillors from across the district of Winchester.

- A **community panel** was established of representatives from local organisations and charities, as well as residents with professional experience relating to resilience and wellbeing. Initial fact-finding calls with applicants gathered individual perspectives on wellbeing and resilience specific to Winchester. The subsequent panel sessions presented statistical findings and preliminary insights from the fact-finding calls, facilitating structured discussion among participants.
- Targeted **community engagement** was undertaken through organised events at specific locations including The Lifestyle Club, Wickham's Men's Shed, Unit 12 Community Pantry, and the Wellbeing Renew Café. Additional unstructured interviews were conducted at public spaces including Whiteley Shopping Centre, The Arc Library, the University of Winchester Students Union, and Winchester City's high street, ensuring broad community representation.
- **Engagement with councillors** was undertaken to understand constituency-specific challenges and identify systemic gaps in community resilience and wellbeing support. This approach enabled data collection across diverse community segments, providing place-specific qualitative insights to supplement the quantitative analysis.
- An **insight questionnaire** was available online for a period of 5 weeks. Details of how to access the survey were shared via our social media channels, website and newsletters. This enabled residents from a variety of geographical areas within the Winchester district to provide qualitative insights in terms of their subjective experiences of community wellbeing and resilience.

3.2.4 Community engagement has also revealed priority areas for community members in terms of wellbeing and resilience, alongside key assets and needs.

## 4 Enabling infrastructure

The first of the two main domains of wellbeing and resilience is enabling infrastructure and below is a summary of each of the nine drivers that contributes.

**All of these drivers are supported and given strategic direction by existing key policy documents, which are referenced within the summary of each area.**

### 4.1 Housing

- 4.1.1 Winchester district faces acute affordability pressures, with a housing affordability ratio significantly higher than both Hampshire and England/Wales. This challenge extends across both purchase and rental markets. Median house prices in Winchester substantially exceed regional averages and private rental costs are also higher than Hampshire's average. Winchester shows high exposure to housing cost increases associated with remortgaging, payment increases and rising rental costs.
- 4.1.2 Statistical evidence reveals distinct housing challenges across Winchester's Local Plan geographies. Winchester Town demonstrates pronounced internal contrasts, with central wards showing low home ownership and high social housing concentrations, while peripheral areas like Badger Farm have high ownership rates. In contrast, the Market Towns and Rural Area show high ownership rates but limited social housing provision.
- 4.1.3 The Insight Questionnaire found 73% of respondents ranking decent and affordable housing among their top three wellbeing drivers, with 62% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing that such housing is widely available in the district. This quantitative evidence aligns with qualitative findings from community engagement, where housing emerged as a foundational concern affecting multiple aspects of wellbeing.
- 4.1.4 Housing also emerged as a foundational concern that intersected significantly with other wellbeing factors, with those strongly agreeing they have access to decent and affordable housing reporting an average life satisfaction score of 8.00, compared to 7.07 for those strongly disagreeing. Qualitative research revealed particular challenges in urban areas, where dramatically lower home ownership rates suggest concentrated housing challenges for certain community segments. Community perspectives provided context to these statistics, with residents expressing concerns about "astronomical" housing costs and limited affordable options.
- 4.1.5 The impact of housing on community cohesion and identity emerged strongly in discussions with council members, particularly regarding new developments, with

one councillor sharing a resident's experience: "We were told the promised park wouldn't be completed until our primary school child reached secondary school."

- 4.1.6 A representative from Winchester City of Sanctuary emphasised that "safe housing, feeling physically safe" forms the basic foundation of wellbeing, particularly for vulnerable populations. This connection between housing security and broader wellbeing outcomes was particularly evident in areas like St Luke ward, where 45% of housing is social housing and health outcomes show higher rates of poor self-reported health.
- 4.1.7 The council's Housing Strategy (2023–2028) addresses all these issues to ensure that negative impact on resilience and wellbeing is minimised.

## 4.2 Income

- 4.2.1 The district's median weekly resident pay exceeds both the Hampshire average and most neighbouring districts<sup>10</sup>, positioning it as one of the more affluent areas in the region. However, this prosperity is not universally experienced across the district, as evidenced by the dramatic rise in food bank usage at one site in Winnall, which increased by 142% between 2019 and 2023. This suggests significant income inequality within Winchester, where some residents benefit from the high median earnings while others struggle considerably with the district's high housing costs and cost of living, creating substantial pressure on certain household budgets despite the area's overall economic strength.
- 4.2.2 Income patterns vary across the Local Plan geographies. Winchester Town shows internal income disparities, with Indices of Multiple Deprivation Data (IMD) data placing St Luke and St Bartholomew in lower deciles (1-2), indicating relatively high deprivation. The South Hampshire Urban Areas show moderate Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) scores compared to other geographies. The Market Towns and Rural Area presents contrasts, with higher income areas alongside pockets of rural deprivation.
- 4.2.3 These income challenges have important implications for community wellbeing and resilience. The growing disparity between income and housing costs may force some residents to make difficult choices about basic needs, potentially affecting wellbeing dramatically. The concentrated nature of deprivation in specific areas such as Winchester city risks creating two-tier communities, where some areas face multiple challenges across education, health and living environment domains, while others remain relatively insulated from these pressures.

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<sup>10</sup> Where data is most recently available.

- 4.2.4 The council operates a suite of benefit payments, discounts and exemptions that help ensure that negative impacts on resilience and wellbeing resulting from income challenges are minimised.

### 4.3 Transport

- 4.3.1 The research revealed significant transportation challenges across Winchester district, with both quantitative and qualitative data highlighting access issues. The Insight Questionnaire found that 52% of respondents either "Strongly Disagree" or "Disagree" with having access to reliable and accessible transport options, regardless of their location in the district. This statistical evidence aligns with community engagement findings that identified transport as a critical barrier to accessing services and opportunities.
- 4.3.2 Transport challenges manifested differently across Winchester's geography. While city centre residents reported good access with "buses every 10 minutes," rural communities faced limitations. As one resident noted, "public transport options are limited in rural areas. I often have to drive everywhere." Cost emerged as a significant barrier, with evening service limitations another barrier to access, particularly impacting working residents and young people accessing services.
- 4.3.3 The research also highlighted the importance of active travel infrastructure, with residents emphasising that "Safe cycling infrastructures to allow safe commuting and recreation are crucial for wellbeing." This connects to both environmental and health outcomes, though implementation varies across the district. Disabled residents particularly emphasised transport's role in accessing essential services, with one noting, "As a disabled person, being able to get out of the house easily is important, including healthcare access."
- 4.3.4 The research revealed that residents in parishes on the fringe of the district frequently access services in neighbouring towns like Basingstoke and Fareham rather than Winchester City Centre, suggesting that for them transport infrastructure out of the district is more important.
- 4.3.5 These findings suggest that while Winchester has some transport strengths, particularly in the city centre and rail connections to London, significant gaps exist in providing comprehensive, affordable, and reliable transport options across the district. The impact on service access, community participation, and wellbeing highlights transport as a crucial factor in community resilience.
- 4.3.6 The Winchester District Transport Statement, Winchester Movement Strategy and Local Cycling and Walking Implementation Plans address these issues to ensure that negative impact on resilience and wellbeing is minimised.

## 4.4 Crime and Community Safety

- 4.4.1 Winchester's crime statistics present a positive picture for community safety and resilience, with total recorded offences (56.09 per 1,000) substantially below the South East average and showing stability between quarters, and sexual offences having notably decreased<sup>11</sup>. These favourable crime indicators will aid community cohesion by fostering greater trust in public spaces, encouraging more active community participation, and enhancing residents' feelings of safety – all essential elements for building social capital and community resilience in a district that already benefits from relatively high economic prosperity.
- 4.4.2 While crime rates did not emerge as a primary concern in the Insight Questionnaire, we know that safety considerations significantly influence how residents' access and utilise community spaces. The research revealed that perceptions of safety particularly affect vulnerable groups and impact community participation. Survey respondents highlighted the importance of "crime-free neighbourhoods" and "safe streets" as contributors to wellbeing.
- 4.4.3 The qualitative research revealed specific concerns about safety affecting service access, particularly for women and vulnerable groups. As one participant noted, "Women may feel unsafe on their own," highlighting how perceived safety affects utilisation of community assets. University of Winchester representatives noted that young students often struggle with safety due to the lack of good quality lighting on their regular walked routes from university to their accommodation.
- 4.4.4 The research suggests that while Winchester may not face significant crime challenges, perceptions of safety significantly influence community participation and service access. This highlights the importance of considering safety in service design and delivery, particularly for vulnerable groups and in creating accessible community spaces.
- 4.4.5 The council's annual Community Safety Partnership District Strategic Assessment addresses these issues to ensure that negative impact on resilience and wellbeing is minimised.

## 4.5 Employment

- 4.5.1 Employment data reveals significant variations across the district's communities that have important implications for both wellbeing and resilience. The district shows notable urban-rural disparities, with rural areas generally demonstrating higher economic activity rates (>60%) compared to urban areas (<55%).

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<sup>11</sup> [LGA's Inform benchmarking tool](#)

- 4.5.2 Employment patterns across Winchester Town areas vary significantly, with St Paul ward showing high professional occupation rates (34%) while St Luke demonstrates low economic activity (44.6%). The South Hampshire Urban Areas show diverse patterns, with Bishop's Waltham having economic activity rates of 56.9% and Market Towns and Rural Area wards like Central Meon Valley reaching 59.3%. Winchester overall has strong representation in professional and managerial roles, exceeding both regional and national averages, though these roles are not evenly distributed across all wards.
- 4.5.3 Winchester's overall economic inactivity rates are lower than the national average across most categories, including those looking after home/family and those with long-term sickness/disability. This suggests relatively high access to employment opportunities, though the variations between wards indicate that some communities may need targeted support to enhance their access to employment markets and therefore enhance community wellbeing and resilience.
- 4.5.4 The council's Green Economic Development Strategy (GEDS) addresses these issues to ensure that negative impact on resilience and wellbeing is minimised.

## **4.6 Education**

- 4.6.1 The district demonstrates strong formal educational attainment, significantly exceeding the national average, with most schools achieving Good or Outstanding Ofsted ratings.
- 4.6.2 Educational attainment and access show notable variations across Winchester emerging Local Plan geographies. Winchester Town demonstrates high educational attainment (particularly in peripheral wards) with good access to educational institutions, including higher education facilities. The South Hampshire Urban Areas show more moderate educational outcomes but maintain good access to schools. The Market Towns and Rural Area presents generally strong educational attainment but faces challenges in accessing further education and skill development opportunities, with the district's overall attainment rate masking significant geographic variations.
- 4.6.3 Geographic distribution analysis exposes notable urban-rural disparities. Central Winchester benefits from major institutions like Peter Symonds College and the University of Winchester, while rural areas face more limited institutional access with fewer but more evenly distributed schools. This institutional landscape directly impacts service accessibility, as highlighted by one youth worker: "Schools struggle to interact with third party organisations. Barriers seem to be up for children seeking support, schools can't provide everything their students require and in turn they struggle to access services out there."

- 4.6.4 While Winchester's educational infrastructure demonstrates strong formal metrics, the research revealed that educational infrastructure could serve a broader purpose beyond academic outcomes, functioning as vital hubs for their communities, connecting families with available support services.
- 4.6.5 The council has little role in formal education, as this is a statutory responsibility of Hampshire County Council.

## **4.7 Physical Health**

- 4.7.1 Physical health emerges as a fundamental driver of community wellbeing in Winchester, with the Insight Questionnaire identifying it as residents' highest-ranked factor in personal wellbeing. The district demonstrates strong overall health outcomes, with average life expectancy exceeding the national average and 87% of respondents reporting good access to healthy lifestyle enablers, including nutritional diet opportunities.
- 4.7.2 However, there are stark variations when considering Winchester district emerging Local Plan geographies, with a difference in average life expectancy of more than 7 years. Within Winchester Town, there are pronounced inequalities, with St Luke recording the lowest life expectancy and relatively poor self-reported health, while peripheral areas such as St Paul and Badger Farm demonstrating better outcomes. In the South Hampshire Urban Areas, health outcomes are better, but the Market Towns and Rural Area consistently show the most positive health indicators.
- 4.7.3 Childhood obesity rates particularly highlight health inequalities across the district. While Winchester's overall rate compares favourably to the national average, significant ward-level variations exist. These health disparities often align with broader socioeconomic factors, particularly in urban areas, suggesting a complex and multi-layered set of factors that challenge community wellbeing.
- 4.7.4 The importance of preventative approaches and integrated support systems was strongly emphasised in the qualitative research findings. Participants shared positive experiences with social prescribing initiatives and community hubs, while identifying opportunities for expanding these approaches. One healthcare professional noted that "Social prescribing is an incredible source of improving wellbeing but need GPs to drive this more," highlighting both the potential of this approach and current implementation challenges. These preventative health strategies take on particular significance when considered alongside Winchester's documented geographic health disparities.
- 4.7.5 The research identified integrated community hubs as effective delivery mechanisms for preventative health services. These multifunctional spaces combine practical support with health promotion, creating environments where

preventative approaches become embedded in everyday community interactions. The success of prevention-focused initiatives demonstrates the efficacy of community-based health interventions, though financial barriers like participation fees may restrict access to beneficial preventative health services. These findings align with the Framework's focus on building resilient community support structures that can prevent and address wellbeing challenges.

- 4.7.6 While Winchester generally maintains strong health outcomes, significant inequalities could affect community resilience. Urban areas, particularly St Luke, consistently show poorer health outcomes across multiple indicators, highlighting the need for targeted interventions to build health-related resilience in these communities.
- 4.7.7 The council will shortly be developing an Active Wellbeing Strategy, which will address the relationship between physical health and broader socioeconomic factors with a comprehensive approach that considers multiple determinants of wellbeing.

## **4.8 Mental Health and Wellbeing**

- 4.8.1 Mental health in Winchester presents a complex landscape of challenges, with significant variations across areas and demographics but a concerning rise in depression rates between 2016 and 2023. This statistical pattern is reflected in community experiences, with mental health emerging as a critical concern through both quantitative and qualitative research.
- 4.8.2 The Insight Questionnaire revealed clear correlations between mental health support and overall wellbeing, with respondents having access to mental health support outside their household reporting notably higher life satisfaction scores (7.8) compared to those without such support (6.2).
- 4.8.3 Geographic analysis reveals significant disparities, particularly in self-harm admission rates. While Winchester's overall self-harm admission ratio (107.36) sits slightly above the national baseline (100), urban areas show markedly higher rates. St Luke ward records the highest at 180.08 - almost 80% above the national average - while more affluent rural areas like Upper Meon Valley show much lower rates (41.94).
- 4.8.4 Youth mental health emerged as a particular concern, with one mental health youth worker observing that "People tend to be younger in Winchester suffering from Mental health problems, and more likely to present with suicide and self-harm, compared to Portsmouth and Southampton." This observation aligns with the statistical evidence showing elevated self-harm rates in urban wards including St Michael, St Paul, and St Bartholomew.

- 4.8.5 However, the importance of community connections in supporting mental health was consistently emphasised by residents, with one noting "Feeling part of a community, which I do. Volunteering has also improved my mental health."
- 4.8.6 It should be noted that COVID-19 in particular, had adverse impacts on mental health at both national<sup>12</sup> and global<sup>13</sup> scales. These findings suggest that while Winchester district faces significant mental health challenges, particularly in urban areas and among younger populations, there are active community-led responses and preventative wellbeing services. However, access to these services varies across ward demographics, indicating a need for targeted support in areas showing higher vulnerability.
- 4.8.7 The council has a Cultural Strategy and will shortly be developing an Active Wellbeing Strategy, both of which will reflect their roles in supporting and promoting positive mental health.

## 4.9 Access to Green Space

- 4.9.1 Environmental quality and access demonstrate distinct patterns across Local Plan geographies. Winchester Town wards like St Luke and St Paul have smaller private outdoor spaces and Town wards show greater deficits in public open space. Peripheral areas to Winchester Town like Badger Farm and Oliver's Battery maintain larger private spaces and better access to public green space.
- 4.9.2 Within the South Hampshire Urban Areas, there's moderate provision but notable variations - Whiteley and Shedfield demonstrates suburban characteristics with moderate outdoor space sizes, while Denmead shows a notable public space deficit. The Market Towns and Rural Area consistently show the largest private outdoor spaces, though access to public green space varies significantly. What should be noted is that everywhere in the district, even the built-up areas of Winchester town, is within a short travelling distance of countryside.
- 4.9.3 The qualitative research revealed strong engagement with Winchester's green and open spaces, though access and quality vary across the district. The Insight Questionnaire showed that 67% of respondents either "Strongly Agree" or "Agree" they have good access to high-quality green spaces, suggesting generally positive provision of environmental amenities across Winchester.

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<sup>12</sup> Centre for Mental Health (2024) COVID-19 and the Nation's Mental Health. Available at: [Covid-19 and the nation's mental health - Centre for Mental Health](#)

<sup>13</sup> World Health Organization (2022) Mental Health and COVID-19: Early evidence of the pandemic's impact. Available at: [Mental Health and COVID-19: Early evidence of the pandemic's impact: Scientific brief, 2 March 2022](#)

- 4.9.4 Qualitative engagement revealed how these spaces serve multiple functions for community wellbeing. Participants consistently emphasised the value of natural environments for both physical and mental health, with one forest therapy practitioner noting that "nature connectedness" helps people "feel part of something bigger than yourself" and reduces feelings of isolation. The research found that green spaces provide crucial opportunities for exercise, relaxation, and social interaction, contributing to multiple aspects of community wellbeing.
- 4.9.5 However, the research identified important barriers to environmental access. Financial constraints caused by parking charges and safety considerations for certain demographic groups were both highlighted as barriers to access. Comments from residents emphasised the importance of having "access to parks and green spaces" alongside concerns about pollution levels, suggesting environmental quality significantly influences community perceptions of wellbeing.
- 4.9.6 The research revealed geographic variations in access to publicly managed green space, but good access to ample open countryside means that Winchester district is well served.

## **4.10 Conclusions**

- 4.10.1 The council already has a broad and comprehensive set of strategies that direct our work on a number of drivers and address gaps and identify opportunity to ensure that the key enabling infrastructure of wellbeing and resilience is in place.
- 4.10.2 It is important that we remain sighted on the community-level need that sits below these strategic documents. Work with partners such as the police, health agencies and county council help us to achieve this but, most importantly, we must have a basis for constructive engagement with our communities. This will ensure that issues are brought to our attention and that communities have the ability to proactively trigger a community response or action to address challenges and build local resilience from the ground up. Section 6 identifies a series of pathways and principles through which we will seek to make this possible.

## 5 Social capital and support networks

The second of the two main domains of wellbeing and resilience is social capital and support networks. Below is a summary of the three drivers that contribute to this domain.

**However, unlike the enabling infrastructure detailed in section 4, there are no key policy documents to support and give strategic direction to these factors. The remainder of this strategy is therefore focussed on establishing a series of key principles that shape our efforts to protect and enhance social capital and support networks across the district.**

### 5.1 Participation in community groups

- 5.1.1 Participation in social activities has multiple benefits for wellbeing. It reduces feelings of loneliness and isolation, improves self-esteem and confidence, encourages learning and growth, and encourages healthier behaviours. When people from diverse backgrounds come together in social settings, they share experiences, break down stereotypes, express their identity proudly and build trust.
- 5.1.2 Winchester district is blessed with a wealth of community groups, organisations and opportunities to participate. Groups range from large and formal with numerous paid employees, to small and informal based only on volunteer efforts. Some have existed for many years, whereas others have only emerged recently in response to current needs and challenges. In 2023, across the whole of Hampshire, there were more than 10,000 voluntary community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations<sup>14</sup>.
- 5.1.3 One of the great strengths of the VCSE sector in Winchester is its reach across the entire district. It takes different forms in different places, but VCSE organisations are present and active across all Local Plan geographies. They often emerge and develop organically, as a community-led response to a local problem rather than a top-down solution to an identified need.
- 5.1.4 Stakeholder engagement showed community participation with organisations and activities external to individual's households to be strong, with 73% of respondents engaging in community, recreational, or sport group activities at least monthly.
- 5.1.5 However, the research also identified significant challenges in coordinating and communicating about community resources. This suggests that while Winchester

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<sup>14</sup> Action Hampshire (2023) Hampshire's State of the VCSE Sector. Available at: [State-of-the-VCSE-Sector-2022-Final-Version.pdf](#)

possesses significant social capital, barriers to information flow may limit its full utilisation. Multiple stakeholders highlighted fragmented communication channels between service providers, with participants in both the Community Panel and engagement sessions describing instances where parallel initiatives operated without awareness of each other. The Insight Questionnaire further supported this finding, as respondents frequently mentioned discovering essential services through informal networks rather than official channels, indicating systematic gaps in information dissemination that could be addressed through coordinated communication strategies.

## **5.2 Access to support from outside your household**

- 5.2.1 The COVID pandemic had a profound impact on communities. Lockdowns and social distancing disrupted daily life, leading to increased feelings of isolation, especially among the elderly and vulnerable. Many communities saw a rise in mutual aid groups, food banks, and volunteer efforts to support those in need, but access to these services became more challenging. This highlighted the crucial part that support from beyond the household plays in maintaining personal wellbeing for everyone but, in particular, those already experiencing some form of anxiety, depression or stress.
- 5.2.2 The qualitative research revealed strong correlations between social connections and community wellbeing in Winchester, supported by both quantitative and qualitative evidence. The Insight Questionnaire demonstrated that 69% of respondents feel part of supportive networks outside their household, with these individuals reporting notably higher life satisfaction scores compared to the national average.
- 5.2.3 The research with stakeholders revealed particularly strong neighbourhood connections, with 78% of respondents reporting good relationships with neighbours. Those strongly agreeing they had positive neighbourly relations demonstrated higher life satisfaction scores compared to those without such connections.
- 5.2.4 Mental health support through social networks emerged as particularly significant. The data showed that 56% of respondents had someone outside their household they could rely on for mental health support, with these individuals reporting markedly higher life satisfaction compared to those without such support. This quantitative evidence aligns with qualitative findings about the importance of community connections for wellbeing.
- 5.2.5 The research highlighted how informal support networks complement formal services. Participants emphasised the role of local groups, community events, and shared spaces in fostering vital social connections. This suggests the need for

approaches that strengthen both formal service provision and informal community networks simultaneously.

### **5.3 Neighbourly and community relations**

- 5.3.1 A sense of identity and belonging are deeply connected to a person's overall wellbeing. Identity gives people a clear understanding of who they are — their values, beliefs, and purpose – while a sense of belonging helps people feel accepted and valued. These are often expressed as pride in place, a powerful expression which fosters trust, mutual respect, and social cohesion, and encourages active participation.
- 5.3.2 A key focal point for community identity across Winchester are the network of 44 parish and town councils that form the lowest tier of local government, and they play a vital role in representing and serving the interests of their local communities. Parish and town councils vary greatly in their size and activity but, in all cases, they help define the identity of the community they represent.
- 5.3.3 While the South Hampshire Urban Areas and Market Towns and Rural Area have complete coverage of parish and town councils, this tier of local government is missing in Winchester town. Work is currently underway to review this, via a Community Governance Review that will determine the shape of future governance in the town area. In the meantime, the City Council fulfils this role for the town area and several neighbourhood-based community associations and resident forums provide a platform for local people to have a voice and a focal point for community activity.
- 5.3.4 Another key focal point for community activity are the community buildings that exist in all but the smallest of settlements across the district. Community centres and village halls are supplemented by scout huts, sports clubs and church halls to provide a network of facilities that host a huge variety of activities and services that meet all needs. Most are run by volunteers, with local people best placed to understand and respond effectively to local needs and challenges.
- 5.3.5 Churches and other faith-based organisations also play a particularly important role. They provide not only a physical space to bring people together, but social and support networks that represent a community in their own right. The role of churches and other faith-based organisations can be particularly important in larger settlements, such as Winchester town, where sense of place can be weaker.
- 5.3.6 The qualitative research revealed innovative approaches to building social capital, exemplified by initiatives like The Carroll Centre's 'peg it forward' system. This program demonstrates how community spaces can strengthen social bonds while supporting wellbeing through practical support mechanisms. As one participant

noted, "Support systems are important to enable us to bounce back," highlighting the connection between social capital and community resilience.

- 5.3.7 The infrastructure supporting social connections emerged as a critical concern. The research identified two parallel challenges: delays in delivering community infrastructure in new developments, which inhibits social network formation, and deterioration of existing facilities, which threatens established community bonds. As one councillor illustrated: "We were told the promised park wouldn't be completed until our primary school child reached secondary school." This sequencing approach systematically undermines community cohesion in developing areas.
- 5.3.8 Geographic variations in social connection emerged as important, particularly in southern parishes where residents often access services in neighbouring districts. This pattern suggests social networks may develop along practical access routes rather than administrative boundaries, highlighting the need for flexible approaches to supporting community connections and for collaboration with neighbouring areas.
- 5.3.9 Social capital plays a crucial role in enhancing a community's ability to respond effectively to unexpected events—such as natural disasters, public health crises, or economic shocks. This local capacity reduces the reliance on formal services by enabling faster mobilisation of local volunteers and resources, providing local intelligence and supporting recovery through community solidarity. Community-led self-help, mutual aid and informal care networks are key components of a rapid and effective response to public emergencies.

## 5.4 Conclusions

- 5.4.1 These findings demonstrate that while Winchester has strong foundations of social capital, strategic support is needed to ensure these networks effectively serve evolving community needs and remain accessible to all residents.
- 5.4.2 The clear correlation between social connections and life satisfaction suggests investing in community networks could significantly enhance community wellbeing and resilience. This requires supporting social network formation in new developments and maintaining existing community facilities, particularly in areas with economic challenges where such spaces serve as hubs for social connection.
- 5.4.3 We have data that tells us where inequality is the greatest and health outcomes for people are worse. The same areas often show weaker social networks, less volunteering and fewer community groups and activities. This gives us a clear steer as to the areas where we should focus and prioritise our support and will help inform the sort of programmes and activities we enable, commission or deliver.

## 6 Pathways and principles

6.1.1 The council has identified five pathways to build social capital and create stronger, more resilient communities across the district. These pathways have strong links to the Council Plan and each is supported by some guiding principles, which will always be at the heart of the council’s work and which will help our communities to thrive and succeed.

**Figure 4: Pathways to create stronger, more resilient communities**



### **Pathway 1: Social connection, inclusion and belonging**

6.1.2 We want residents to experience stronger social ties, reduced isolation, and a greater sense of belonging to their neighbourhoods. This pathway strengthens the connections between people, and with the place in which they live. It reflects the important physical elements that contribute to resilient communities and all the things that make a place special. The council’s role as Local Planning Authority gives us a unique opportunity to seamlessly integrate the development of physical and social infrastructure.

6.1.3 The principles that support this are:

- **Promote and celebrate local identity and pride in place....** through the creation of new communities at our major development sites; empowering and working collaboratively with a network of effective parish and town councils; reviewing the effectiveness of local governance and making improvements through the Community Governance Review process; and by encouraging communities to take ownership of and resolves the issues of importance to them.
- **Celebrate diversity and promote inclusion....** by supporting the *City of Sanctuary* principles and making the district a welcoming place for everyone; informing and involving all sections of the community, but particularly disadvantaged and excluded groups; promoting the benefits of intergenerational activity; and through a wide range of events, festivals, celebrations, creative and cultural activities.
- **Secure, protect, support and promote the use of key community assets....** to ensure a thriving network of community centres and village halls in settlements across the district; by securing new, modern facilities on our major development sites; through the *Community Right to Bid* process that protects Assets of Community Value; using Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding to invest in and improve infrastructure; and through the continued use of community buildings as polling stations to encourage greater participation in the democratic process.

## Pathway 2: Community capacity and local leadership

6.1.4 We want communities to feel confident, skilled and supported to lead local activity, shape decisions, and mobilise resources. Public trust and social cohesion are built on the foundations of democracy, local leadership and representation. This was highly visible during recent events such as the COVID pandemic and cost-of-living crisis, when local communities were responsive and agile in finding solutions that best served the people that lived there.

6.1.5 The principles that support this are:

- **An effective network of parish and town councils....** with devolved responsibility for managing local assets; that takes ownership of local issues and finding solutions; shaped by public opinion through regular elections and the use of Community Governance Reviews; and with clear and effective lines of communication to the council and other statutory bodies.
- **Voluntary sector representation as a strategic partner....** through overarching community and voluntary sector (CVS) infrastructure

organisations to represent the wider sectoral voice; and opportunities for CVS organisations to influence strategic decisions or policy direction.

- **Local involvement in emergency response....** underpinned by community resilience plans; utilising local knowledge and experience to ensure the best outcomes for local people; and supporting the formal emergency planning responses of the local authorities when dealing with unplanned and unexpected events.

### Pathway 3: Access to community assets, services and opportunities

6.1.6 We want people to easily engage in activities that support their wellbeing, culture, skills and social participation. This pathway recognises the value that the voluntary sector adds to society - moving at pace and adapting as circumstances change. It fills gaps in services where statutory services are limited or absent. It can drive innovation by testing new ideas and piloting innovative approaches to social issues, unconstrained by public sector bureaucracy. If sufficiently empowered, the sector can build capacity and unlock untapped resources.

6.1.7 The principles that support this are:

- **Grant funding and other support....** including annual core funding for strategic partner organisations that provide essential services; smaller one-off project and innovation funding to test new ideas, introduce new services and encourage seldom-heard groups; discretionary rate relief for organisations with their own premises; endorsement and encouragement for organisations seeking external funding to bring value into the district; and sharing of skills, expertise and knowledge.
- **Promotion and encouragement for volunteering....** through support for the organisations that recruit volunteers; recognising and celebrating volunteers and the value of their work; collaboration with public and private sector partners to create an environment where volunteering thrives; and promoting the principle of workplace volunteering.
- **Collaboration between agencies to simplify ....** reducing bureaucracy, aligning funding and priorities; bringing consistency to reporting mechanisms; avoiding conflicting policies; and removing barriers for people who access services in neighbouring districts.
- **Recognise the social contribution of all public spaces, such as schools, churches and cafés, for wider community interaction....** To make activity more inclusive, increase capacity and avoid duplication of effort; recognise their important roles as 'anchors' within their communities; and strengthen connections and joined-up thinking.

#### Pathway 4: Supporting people facing the toughest circumstances

6.1.8 We want individuals and families with long-term vulnerabilities to feel supported, connected and able to participate in community life. This pathway acknowledges that some parts of our community need more support than others. Many people have a strong support network of family, friends or neighbours - communities blessed with strong leadership, powerful voice, willing helpers and responsive support groups. But other people and communities are less able to make their voice heard, so tackling disadvantage, addressing isolation, building community cohesion where it is lacking and supporting those in need is essential to create a future where everyone has the same opportunity.

6.1.9 The principles that support this are:

- **React and respond to changing circumstances....** through swift introduction of intensive support such as the COVID or cost-of-living programmes; by long-term planning and focussed investment in new communities on major development sites; and by embracing new groups and involving them in shaping the support they receive, as we did with displaced Ukrainian nationals.
- **Target effort to maximise impact...** by acknowledging that some areas need more help than others; prioritising effort and funding where it can make the most difference; and building social capital to help people to help themselves.
- **Show compassion...** by working with people, not on them; offering options wherever possible; focussing on strengths, not deficiencies; and embracing lived experience.

#### Pathway 5: Strong community networks and partnerships

6.1.10 We want a well-connected voluntary, community and social enterprise ecosystem that collaborates effectively and shares resources. This pathway recognises the diverse and responsive nature of our communities and the vast wealth of skills, knowledge and experience they contain. It is important that good practice is shared, knowledge passed on and efforts joined up. The council and other public services also hold information that could be powerful in helping communities to identify and develop solutions, especially if made accessible in digital, interactive formats.

6.1.11 The principles that support this are:

- **Networking and collaboration....** via the Social Inclusion Partnership and other multi-agency partnerships and networks; collaborative working to

avoid duplication of effort; identification of mutual aims and objectives to align efforts and strengthen alliances; and by sharing and celebrating each other's successes.

- **Sharing of information, data and intelligence....** such as Census, surveys, research, open mapping (GIS); by listening to stakeholders; embracing local intelligence for emergency planning activity; and by using our leadership role to facilitate a culture of openness.
- **Measuring and demonstrating the impact of community initiatives....** by being data-led; and using social determinants of health and social value models to demonstrate progress; utilising case studies to celebrate success and show the qualitative impact of our work; and disaggregating evidence to smaller geographical areas to enable targeted intervention and strategic decision-making.

6.1.12 Success will be evidenced by measurable growth in community-led action, deeper participation, stronger local networks, increased access to local opportunities, and improved wellbeing — particularly for those facing the toughest circumstances. Over time, communities will become more confident, better connected and more self-sustaining, reducing dependency on reactive support and enabling a shared culture of collective responsibility, pride and everyday resilience.

## 7 Conclusion

- 7.1.1 The strategy identifies a series of pathways through which the council can cultivate more resilient and thriving communities through to 2030 and beyond. By embracing a collaborative, community-centric approach that builds on existing engagement structures and partnerships, we can make significant strides in strengthening communities and enhancing wellbeing across the district. Through continued engagement with diverse community voices, including traditionally underrepresented groups, we will ensure that local stakeholders play a full part in delivering the strategy's objectives.
- 7.1.2 Following recent national developments, the strategy will be deployed amidst local government reorganisation and the establishment of a Mayoral Combined County Authority for Hampshire and the Solent. For Winchester district, whilst the structure of the public bodies who have the ability to deliver services in support of these drivers will shift and change over the coming years, the role of communities has never been more important.
- 7.1.3 The strategy is built on a foundation of evidence gathering, combining in-depth statistical analysis with qualitative insights from community engagement events, interviews, and surveys. This mixed-methods approach has enabled us to develop a nuanced understanding of community needs and aspirations, identifying existing strengths and opportunities for targeted interventions. It will be crucial that we continue to collect and use solid evidence to shape our work and ensure that it remains targeted and focused as time passes and things change around us.
- 7.1.4 The strategy's emphasis on Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) principles ensures that community capabilities are central to its development and implementation. This focus on leveraging existing assets empowers communities to take ownership of their resilience-building efforts.
- 7.1.5 The pathways set out in the strategy to build social capital and create stronger, more resilient communities require long-term commitment to yield the greatest benefits. However, we will continue to address immediate challenges through short-term interventions that will also yield significant benefits.
- 7.1.6 A key measure of success will be that the Strategy's impact will be seen and felt in daily life: more people taking part, more places open and welcoming, stronger neighbourhood identity, and a voluntary sector that is confident, collaborative and equipped for the future.
- 7.1.7 Through the strategy, we have established a clear framework for co-producing improved community resilience across the district. By working together with our communities, we can build a more vibrant, inclusive, and resilient Winchester district for all.

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2026 - 2030

# Winchester District Thriving and Resilient Communities Strategy





# Opening words from **Councillor Kathleen Becker**

Cabinet Member for Healthy Communities



I am delighted to introduce the Winchester District Thriving and Resilient Communities Strategy 2026–2030. This strategy marks an important step in our commitment to supporting the wellbeing of all who live, work and volunteer across our district. It sets out how we will work alongside communities—large and small, urban and rural—to build places where people feel connected, confident and able to thrive.

Despite the challenges of COVID-19, ongoing cost-of-living pressures, growing inequalities, and the effects of a changing climate, the people of Winchester district have continually demonstrated compassion, creativity and resilience. From neighbourhood support groups and volunteer-led services to faith organisations, charities, community centres, and informal networks — our communities are rich with strength and determination. This strategy builds on those foundations.

We recognise the diverse nature of our district — its market towns, rural villages, new developments, and the historic city — and the different pressures each faces. By listening to local voices and focusing on areas where inequalities are greatest, this strategy provides a shared framework for action that responds to these challenge and real need.

We have sets out five pathways that will guide our work. These pathways reflect what residents, community organisations and partners told us they value most, and where the council can play a meaningful role. Our ambition is to support communities, so they feel empowered to lead local solutions, build strong networks and take advantage of opportunities as they arise.

By 2030, we want to see communities that are more connected, more confident and more resilient — places where people feel a sense of belonging, where local assets flourish, and where residents can live healthier, happier and more fulfilling lives.

I would like to thank everyone who contributed their experiences, insights and expertise to help shape this strategy. Your voices have made it stronger.

Our vision is the together, we can build a more vibrant, inclusive and resilient Winchester district for all.

# Why this **strategy** is important

Our goal is to build local capacity, enhance belonging, and enable residents and community groups to lead the activity that matters most to them. We will do this by drawing on the strengths and assets of our existing communities, and new communities, for example through major housing developments or refugees displaced because of war or conflict.

We know our residents and communities have faced unprecedented challenges in recent years, including the COVID-19 pandemic, a cost-of-living crisis and an accelerating climate crisis.

By fostering an environment where communities can grow, evolve and solve their own challenges, greater resilience will be achieved. Through both place-shaping and capacity building activity, our efforts will help to deliver the council's priorities for Healthy Communities and Thriving Places.

This Thriving and Resilient Communities Strategy sets out our approach for creating stronger, more resilient communities across the district through to 2030 working alongside our diverse communities. By delivering this strategy, we aim to create the conditions in which our local places and people can thrive — socially, economically, culturally and environmentally.





# What do we mean by **community**

We asked a range of stakeholders **“what ‘community’ means to me”**

Community Friendly Connectivity  
Volunteering Connect Strong  
Welcome Belonging Inclusion Cohesion  
Social Support Identity People  
Friendship Engagement Collaboration

Community means different things to different people but, for the purposes of this strategy, we have defined it as follows:

*“A group of people connected by shared place, identity, or interest, who experience a sense of belonging and engage in mutual support or collective action.”*

Communities are resilient and able to thrive when they are inclusive, connected, resilient, and full of opportunities, where people feel they belong, can influence decisions, support one another, enjoy good quality of life and are able to fulfil their potential.

We have defined resilience, in the context of our communities, as:

*“The capacity of individuals and communities to respond to and overcome shocks or challenges, underpinned by personal and community wellbeing”.*

Winchester district’s communities have consistently demonstrated their ability to come together, support their most vulnerable members and create positive change. The strategy builds on these foundations and explores how we can support the community structures and social relationships with friends, family or the wider community that can serve as support networks.

# What helps **communities thrive** and **be resilient**

No one community is the same and we are blessed with diverse places and people across the district; from urban to rural, historic to new, small to large.

However, whatever the form and nature of our communities, there are factors common to all that enable them to thrive and be resilient. These factors fall within two main areas:

## Enabling infrastructure

- Housing
- Income
- Transport
- Crime
- Employment
- Education
- Physical health
- Mental health and wellbeing
- Environment quality and access to green space

## Support networks

- Participation in community groups:
  - recreational, community, sport or other groups
- Access to support from outside your household:
  - networks of family, friends, colleagues and others; and
- Neighbourly and community relations:
  - relationships with those in a geographical proximity.

The data tells us that, where there is the greatest inequality, the health outcomes for people are worse. The same areas often show weaker social networks, less volunteering and fewer community groups and activities.

This gives us a clear steer as to the areas where we should focus and prioritise our support and will help inform the sort of programmes and activities we enable, commission or deliver.



<b>FACTOR</b>	<b>FOCUS – PLACES AND PEOPLE MOST IN NEED</b>
<b>Housing</b>	<p>Housing affordability ratio significantly higher than both Hampshire and England/Wales.</p> <p>Most obvious in areas with high levels of social housing and higher rates of poor self-reported health e.g. St Luke ward.</p>
<b>Income</b>	<p>Median weekly resident pay exceeds both the Hampshire average and most neighbouring districts.</p> <p>Data shows St Luke and St Bartholomew wards as most challenged areas.</p> <p>The South Hampshire Urban Areas show moderate Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index scores compared to other geographies.</p>
<b>Transport</b>	<p>Significant gaps exist in transport options across the district, particularly in the rural areas.</p> <p>Disabled residents particularly emphasised transport’s role in accessing essential services.</p>
<b>Crime and Community Safety</b>	<p>Total recorded offences (56.09 per 1,000) substantially below the Southeast average.</p> <p>Specific concerns about safety affecting service access, particularly for women and vulnerable groups.</p> <p>Young students express safety fears when walking between university to their accommodation after dark.</p>
<b>Employment</b>	<p>Overall economic inactivity rates are lower than the national average.</p> <p>Economic activity rates are generally lower in the urban areas.</p>
<b>Education</b>	<p>Strong formal educational attainment, significantly exceeding the national average, with most schools achieving Good or Outstanding Ofsted ratings.</p> <p>The Market Towns and Rural Area face challenges in accessing further education and skill development opportunities.</p>
<b>Physical Health</b>	<p>Average life expectancy exceeds the national average.</p> <p>Pronounced inequalities within Winchester Town, with St Luke ward recording the lowest life expectancy.</p>
<b>Mental Health and Wellbeing</b>	<p>Mental health of young people emerged as a particular concern - evidence showing elevated self-harm rates in urban wards including St Michael, St Paul, and St Bartholomew.</p>
<b>Environmental quality and access to green space</b>	<p>Winchester Town wards like St Luke and St Paul have smaller private outdoor spaces and Town wards show greater deficits in public open space.</p> <p>Denmead shows a notable public space deficit.</p>

# Our work to date

We have a long history of working with and supporting our communities across the district. This includes for example supporting the City of Sanctuary movement and our programme to create Places of Sanctuary, a partner to the Armed Forces Covenant, our Social Inclusion Partnership, the Health & Wellbeing Partnership, Stanmore Network and many more projects and partnerships.

We also seek to positively contribute to place making through our policies and strategies. Many of these relate directly to addressing deficits in the infrastructure factors that affect communities.

## Council Strategy

- Winchester District Local Plan
- Housing Strategy (2023–2028)
- Green Economic Development Strategy (GEDS)
- The Winchester District Transport Statement
- Winchester Movement Strategy
- Local Cycling and Walking Implementation Plans
- Community Safety Partnership District Strategic Assessment
- Playing Pitch Strategy
- Health Priorities Statement
- Cultural Strategy
- Open Spaces Assessment
- Nature Improvement Plan



# Our focus and commitment

With the clear link between social connections and life satisfaction we believe that investment in local community networks will have a significant impact on improving the ability of communities to be resilient and to thrive. Forms of investment can range from supporting new social networks to form in new developments to maintaining existing community facilities, especially in the places where they serve as important local hubs for people to come together and connect.

To guide and give focus to our work in supporting social networks we will use a series of pathways and principles.





Strong  
community  
networks and  
partnerships

Social  
connection,  
inclusion and  
belonging

## **THRIVING AND RESILIENT COMMUNITIES**

Supporting  
people facing  
the toughest  
circumstances

Community  
capacity  
and local  
leadership

Access to community  
assets, services and  
opportunities

## Social connection, inclusion and belonging

We want residents to experience stronger social ties, reduced isolation, and a greater sense of belonging to their neighbourhoods.

We will help them to...

- Promote and celebrate local identity and pride in place
- Celebrate diversity and promote inclusion
- Secure, protect, support and promote the use of key community assets

## Community capacity and local leadership

We want communities to feel confident, skilled and supported to lead local activity, shape decisions, and mobilise resources.

For example, through...

- An effective network of parish and town councils
- Voluntary sector representation as a strategic partner
- Local involvement in emergency response
- Working with communities to build skills and participation in local projects

## Strong community networks and partnerships

We want to see a well-connected voluntary, community and social enterprise ecosystem that collaborates effectively and shares resources.

To bring this about, we will encourage...

- Networking and collaboration
- Sharing of information, data and intelligence
- Measuring and demonstrating the impact of community initiatives

## Access to community assets, services and opportunities

We want people to easily engage in activities that support their wellbeing, culture, skills and social participation.

To achieve this, we recognise the importance of...

- Grant funding and other support
- Promotion and encouragement for volunteering
- Collaboration with other stakeholders
- activating and utilising under-used public spaces, such as schools or churches, for wider community activity

## Supporting people facing the toughest circumstances

We want individuals and families with long-term vulnerabilities to feel supported, connected and able to participate in community life.

To make this possible, we will...

- React and respond to changing circumstances
- Target effort to maximise impact
- Show compassion

# How we will **work alongside our communities**

The council takes on a variety of different roles, depending on the context and the needs of our communities.



## Enabler

We create the conditions for community organisations and the voluntary sector to succeed.



## Facilitator

We bring people and organisations together to collaborate, share resources, and solve problems.



## Provider

We directly deliver services to residents, or purchase services from external providers to meet community needs.



## Advocate

We represent the interests of residents at regional or national levels.



## Guardian

We look after public assets and community wellbeing.



# Key actions include



**Providing funding or grants** and supporting a local charities and community organisations to provide services and facilities. Using Community Infrastructure Levy funding to invest in new and improved local community, health and travel infrastructure.



**Delivering council-run cultural, health and sport activity programmes** for example, commissioning operators to run our facilities, sports and leisure centres. Encouraging the co-production of services.



**Removing barriers** to community involvement, hosting forums or partnerships meeting, bring stakeholders together and convening a multi-agency group to tackle issues in an area.



**Managing public spaces and heritage**, ensuring long-term environmental sustainability, maintaining our parks or public spaces.



**Campaigning for action and improvements**, or supporting bids for funding, from regional or national bodies.



# Our Partners

We recognise that it will take the effort, commitment, and action of a wide group of individuals, groups and organisations to achieve the outcomes this strategy is seeking. We will work alongside and with these partners to maximise the resources and opportunities they provide. They include but are certainly not limited to:

- Statutory partners such as the police, health, education.
- Providers of key services such public health, adult and social care, children services.
- Voluntary sector support organisations and agencies like Citizens Advice, Youth Options, Home Start.
- Parish Councils, community centres and local groups servicing their local communities.
- Partnerships that come together to address and positively contribute to making better certain areas of interest or concern for example older people, dementia, inclusion, climate, culture.
- Advocates and individuals who are local leaders and champions for change in their community.

This is at the heart of our vision and values as a council. We will listen to and work alongside the people of Winchester district in tackling the challenges we face.





## How we will **measure success**

Our success will be evidenced by measurable growth in community-led action, deeper participation, stronger local networks, increased access to local opportunities, and improved wellbeing — particularly for those facing the toughest circumstances. Over time, communities will become more confident, better connected and more self-sustaining, reducing dependency on reactive support and enabling a shared culture of collective responsibility, pride and everyday resilience.

The impact of this strategy will be seen and felt in daily life: more people taking part, more places open and welcoming, stronger neighbourhood identity, and a voluntary sector that is confident, collaborative and equipped for the future.

For more information and detail, please see our full technical report.



**Winchester**  
City Council

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Winchester City Council

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)



Section 1 - Data Checklist

When undertaking an EqIA for your policy or project, it is important that you take into consideration everything which is associated with the policy or project that is being assessed.

The checklist below is to help you sense check your policy or project before you move to Section 2.

		Yes/No	Please provide details
1	Have there been any complaints data related to the policy or project you are looking to implement?	No	N/A
2	Have all officers who will be responsible for implementing the policy or project been consulted, and given the opportunity to raise concerns about the way the policy or function has or will be implemented?	Yes	Community team has been heavily involved in the creation and drafting of the strategy. Colleagues from other teams whose work is informed or influenced by the strategy have also been consulted, including Housing and Policy teams.
3	Have previous consultations highlighted any concerns about the policy or project from an equality impact perspective?	No	N/A
4	Do you have any concerns regarding the implementation of this policy or project?  <i>(i.e. Have you completed a self-assessment and action plan for the implementation of your policy or project?)</i>	No	This strategy makes explicit reference to celebrating diversity and promoting inclusion as a guiding principle of the work.

**CAB3549 Appendix 3. Winchester District Thriving and Resilient Communities Strategy**

		Yes/No	Please provide details
5	Does any accessible data regarding the area which your work will address identify any areas of concern or potential problems which may impact on your policy or project?	No	N/A
6	Do you have any past experience delivering similar policies or projects which may inform the implementation of your scheme from an equality impact point of view?	Yes	This strategy reflects the type of community work that the council has been successfully undertaking for many years. It links into the council's EDI framework, with officers involved in this work playing an active role in the EDI working group and contributors to the EDI action plan.
7	Are there any other issues that you think will be relevant?	No	N/A

## Section 2 - Your EqIA form

<b>Directorate:</b> Place	<b>Your Service Area:</b> Economy & Community	<b>Team:</b> Community & Wellbeing	<b>Officer responsible for this assessment:</b> Steve Lincoln	<b>Date of assessment:</b> 13 February 2026
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	<b>Question</b>	<b>Please provide details</b>
1	What is the name of the policy or project that is being assessed?	Winchester District Thriving and Resilient Communities Strategy
2	Is this a new or existing policy?	New
3	Briefly describe the aim and purpose of this work.	This strategy sets out the council's approach to building strong and resilient communities.
4	What are the associated objectives of this work?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social connection, inclusion and belonging</li> <li>• Community capacity and local leadership</li> <li>• Access to community assets, services and opportunities</li> <li>• Supporting people facing the toughest circumstances</li> <li>• Strong community networks and partnerships</li> </ul>
5	Who is intended to benefit from this work and in what way?	All communities and residents of Winchester district.
6	What are the outcomes sought from this work?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More people taking part</li> <li>• More places open and welcoming</li> <li>• Stronger neighbourhood identity</li> <li>• A voluntary sector that is confident, collaborative and equipped for the future.</li> </ul>

**CAB3549 Appendix 3. Winchester District Thriving and Resilient Communities Strategy**

	<b>Question</b>	<b>Please provide details</b>		
7	What factors/forces could contribute or detract from the outcomes?	There are endless external factors that could influence the degree of success in achieving the desired outcomes. Our enabling role is to help communities cope with these external influences and still thrive.		
8	Who are the key individuals and organisations responsible for the implementation of this work?	The council's community team leads on this work.		
9	Who implements the policy or project and who or what is responsible for it?	As above		
10a	Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of race differently in a negative way?	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>	If we viewed communities only on a geographic basis, then those communities who come together due to shared race may feel alienated, with no support or their issues not considered.
10b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	11.9% of the Winchester district population is not white British (2021 Census).		
11a	Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of sex differently in a negative way?	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>	N/A
11b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?			
12a	Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of disability differently in a negative way?  <i>you may wish to consider:</i>	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>	The importance of community facilities is promoted through this strategy so it is important that they have accessible facilities to enable full use by everyone.

**CAB3549 Appendix 3. Winchester District Thriving and Resilient Communities Strategy**

	<b>Question</b>	<b>Please provide details</b>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Physical access</i></li> <li>• <i>Format of information</i></li> <li>• <i>Time of interview or consultation event</i></li> <li>• <i>Personal assistance</i></li> <li>• <i>Interpreter</i></li> <li>• <i>Induction loop system</i></li> <li>• <i>Independent living equipment</i></li> <li>• <i>Content of interview)</i></li> </ul>			
12b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	14.9% of the Winchester district population self-reported as having some form of disability (ONS, 2025).		
13a	Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of sexual orientation differently in a negative way?	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>	If we viewed communities only on a geographic basis, then the LGBTQ+ community may feel alienated, with no support or their issues not considered.
13b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	3.3% of the Winchester district population identified as LGBTQ+ / Non-heterosexual and a significant additional number did not answer the question (2021 Census).		
14a	Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals on the basis of age differently in a negative way?	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>	Age is one of the most common factors in social isolation, one of the issues that this strategy aims to help address.
14b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	20.8% of the Winchester district population is aged 65 or over (2021 Census).  The age profile of the district is getting older.		

**CAB3549 Appendix 3. Winchester District Thriving and Resilient Communities Strategy**

	<b>Question</b>	<b>Please provide details</b>		
15a	Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of religious belief differently in a negative way?	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>	If we viewed communities only on a geographic basis, then those communities who come together due to shared religious belief may feel alienated, with no support or their issues not considered.
15b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	2.92% of the Winchester district population has a religion other than Christian, with a significant 42.2% having no religion (2021 Census).		
16a	Could this policy or project have the potential to affect individuals on the basis of gender reassignment differently in a negative way?	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>	If we viewed communities only on a geographic basis, then the LGBTQ community may feel alienated, with no support or their issues not considered.
16b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?			
17a	Could this policy or project have the potential to affect individuals on the basis of marriage and civil partnership differently in a negative way?	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>	N/A
17b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?			
18a	Could this policy or project have the potential to affect individuals on the basis of pregnancy and maternity differently in a negative way?	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>	N/A
18b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?			

**CAB3549 Appendix 3. Winchester District Thriving and Resilient Communities Strategy**

Question		Please provide details											
19	Could any negative impacts that you identified in questions 10a to 15b create the potential for the policy to discriminate against certain groups on the basis of protected characteristics?	<u>Y</u>	<b>N</b>	<p>This strategy actively promotes equality, diversity and inclusion, explicitly listing this as one of its underlying principles. This is achieved by supporting the City of Sanctuary principles and making the district a welcoming place for everyone; informing and involving all sections of the community, but particularly disadvantaged and excluded groups; promoting the benefits of intergenerational activity; and through a wide range of events, festivals, celebrations, creative and cultural activities.</p> <p>It also promotes support for those people facing the toughest circumstances - acknowledging that some parts of our community need more support than others.</p>									
20	Can this negative impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for certain groups on the basis of protected characteristics? Please provide your answer opposite against the relevant protected characteristic.	Y	N	<table border="1"> <tr><td>Race: N/A</td></tr> <tr><td>Sex: N/A</td></tr> <tr><td>Disability: N/A</td></tr> <tr><td>Sexual orientation: N/A</td></tr> <tr><td>Age: N/A</td></tr> <tr><td>Gender reassignment: N/A</td></tr> <tr><td>Pregnancy and maternity: N/A</td></tr> <tr><td>Marriage and civil partnership: N/A</td></tr> <tr><td>Religious belief: N/A</td></tr> </table>	Race: N/A	Sex: N/A	Disability: N/A	Sexual orientation: N/A	Age: N/A	Gender reassignment: N/A	Pregnancy and maternity: N/A	Marriage and civil partnership: N/A	Religious belief: N/A
Race: N/A													
Sex: N/A													
Disability: N/A													
Sexual orientation: N/A													
Age: N/A													
Gender reassignment: N/A													
Pregnancy and maternity: N/A													
Marriage and civil partnership: N/A													
Religious belief: N/A													
21	How will you mitigate any potential discrimination that may be brought about by your policy or project that you have identified above?	N/A											

**CAB3549 Appendix 3. Winchester District Thriving and Resilient Communities Strategy**

	<b>Question</b>	<b>Please provide details</b>		
22	Do any negative impacts that you have identified above impact on your service plan?	Y	N	N/A

Signed by completing officer	Steve Lincoln, Service Lead Community and Wellbeing
Signed by Service Lead or Corporate Head of Service	Susan Robbins, Corporate head of Economy and Community

CAB3457  
CABINET

REPORT TITLE: COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) FUNDING ALLOCATIONS

12 MARCH 2026

REPORT OF CABINET MEMBER: Councillor Jackie Porter, Cabinet Member for Place and Local Plan

Contact Officer: Corinne Phillips Tel No: 07980 732178 Email [cphillips@winchester.gov.uk](mailto:cphillips@winchester.gov.uk)

WARD(S): ALRESFORD & ITCHEN VALLEY, BADGER FARM & OLIVERS BATTERY, BISHOPS WALTHAM, CENTRAL MEON VALLEY, COLDEN COMMON & TWYFORD, SOUTHWICK & WICKHAM, ST BARNABAS, ST BARTHOLOMEW, ST LUKE, ST MICHAEL, THE WORTHYS, UPPER MEON VALLEY, WHITELEY & SHEDFIELD

PURPOSE

This paper provides an update on the CIL funding programme including the amount of CIL collected and the current value of the CIL funds available to support infrastructure delivery. It considers the levels of demand for different types of projects and recommends changes to the approved arrangements for ring-fencing of funds that will ensure funds remain available to support infrastructure schemes and maximise effective delivery over the coming years.

It presents CIL bids for community projects that were received between 1st September and 30th November 2025 as well as bids for schemes directly delivered by the council and county council which can be applied for throughout the year.

Subject to this funding being approved by Cabinet, the projects detailed in this report will become part of the rolling programme of schemes, wholly or partly funded by CIL.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1) That the Strategic Procedural Overview for CIL allocation and spending which apportions percentages of the CIL retained by the city council be revised to reflect 40% for community / health / active travel / transport schemes and 60% for strategic district schemes, as detailed in appendix 1.
- 2) Note the ongoing commitment to the joint Movement Strategy with Hampshire County Council, supporting the coordinated delivery of transport and active travel infrastructure that helps address the impacts of development on local communities.
- 3) Approve a funding allocation of £1,088,638 from Winchester City Council CIL income receipts and approve the expenditure under Financial Procedure rule 7.4, using the existing CIL funded community grants budget, for the following community-led projects:
  - a) Chesil Theatre, Winchester - extension and refurbishment: £200,000
  - b) Wickham pavilion: £150,000
  - c) Theatre Royal, Winchester - boilers and lighting: £78,000
  - d) Colden Common - skatepark and MUGA: £30,000
  - e) Kings Worthy – allotments: £35,525
  - f) The Gurkha Museum - reconfiguration, ramps and toilets: £64,707
  - g) Winchester City Museum - exhibition upgrade and remodelling: £200,000
  - h) Trinity, Winchester - new heating system: £32,000
  - i) Christ Church, Winchester - lifts and toilets: £92,300
  - j) Colden Common Bowls Club - ramp and safety barrier: £10,000
  - k) The Carroll Centre, Winchester - toilets and kitchen: £102,251
  - l) Knowle MUGA: £30,000
  - m) Durley Village Hall - kitchen: £22,905
  - n) Boarhunt pavilion: £40,950
- 4) Note that four applications were refused.
- 5) Note that one application was referred to Winchester Town Forum for consideration to be funded from Winchester Town CIL.
- 6) Note that £110,000 previously allocated to three community schemes that are no longer going ahead - Otterbourne pedestrian crossing, Twyford cycle route and Knowle pump track - can be released back to the fund for future allocation.

- 7) Approve a capital budget and funding allocation of £359,695 in 2026/27 from Winchester City Council CIL income receipts ring-fenced to support transport and active travel projects and approve the expenditure under Financial Procedure rule 7.4, for the following Hampshire County Council projects:
  - a) Swanmore to Bishops Waltham - footpath/cycleway: £300,000
  - b) Itchen Valley - path improvements: £59,695
- 8) Approve a CIL allocation of £331,000 to the following council-led projects, subject to approval of a full business case:
  - a) Winchester Cathedral - solar PV installation: £107,000
  - b) Winchester Science Centre - solar PV installation: £224,000
- 9) Approve an increase of £30,000, funded by CIL, to the existing capital budget of £60,000 for solar PV at Meadowside Leisure Centre and approve its expenditure, bringing the total budget approved for expenditure to £90,000.
- 10) Approve a capital budget of £110,000 in 2026/27 (subject to approval of by Winchester Town Forum report WFT343) allocated from Neighbourhood (Town) CIL income receipts and approve the expenditure under Financial Procedure rule 7.4 for the Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) improvement at St Matthews Field, Weeke.
- 11) Approve a CIL allocation of £4.5m to the Central Winchester Regeneration scheme, previously earmarked for this purpose in CAB3484.
- 12) Delegate authority to the Strategic Director responsible for CIL to approve funding allocations from Winchester City Council CIL income receipts to community, health, active travel and transport fund projects.
- 13) Delegate authority to the S151 officer to approve capital budget and expenditure up to £500k for community, health, active travel and transport fund projects.

IMPLICATIONS:1 COUNCIL PLAN OUTCOME

- 1.1 Community groups and organisations seeking to provide new or improved infrastructure in their local communities for the benefit of district residents can bid each year for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding to help deliver their projects. The ability to facilitate this local investment directly supports our vision, as stated in the Council Plan, that we will make a real difference to the lives of our residents, the strength of our business and the quality of our environment. The infrastructure projects that are recommended for funding in this round contribute to the Council Plan priorities in the following ways.
- 1.2 Greener Faster
- 1.3 Addressing the climate and nature emergencies is the main priority for the council. CIL can fund projects that result in energy saving and carbon reduction, such as such as building insulation, energy efficient lighting or local carbon heating, to help meet the aim to be a carbon neutral district by 2030. Schemes may help mitigate or reduce the negative effects of climate change for example, property adaptations or flood defences etc.
- 1.4 Thriving Places
- 1.5 Ensuring that the district has sustained and improved facilities in local centres that reduce the need for travel within 20 minutes of people's homes, enables places to thrive. CIL investment can be for projects that improve educational facilities, cultural and heritage assets.
- 1.6 Healthy Communities
- 1.7 The council wishes to give the district's residents the opportunities to improve their physical and mental health and encourage community involvement, cohesion and well-being throughout the district. This could be through provision of attractive and well-maintained public facilities, green and natural spaces with space to play and gather for all ages; new or improved leisure, recreation and community facilities and informal public spaces. Projects that can be funded by CIL need to demonstrate they provide new or improved facilities that improve health, promote community cohesion, encourage active travel and make facilities more inclusive and accessible for all.
- 1.8 Good Homes for All
- 1.9 N/A
- 1.10 Efficient and Effective
- 1.11 The proposed procedural improvements to the CIL funding process will make the process more effective, efficient and as straight forward as possible for applicants. By utilising alternative decision routes, we can significantly reduce

the time taken to reach a decision for external grants to community organisations and introduce a second bidding window to increase the frequency of awards.

- 1.12 Listening and Learning
- 1.13 Applicants for CIL funding must demonstrate that the proposed scheme has received public support via local consultation and that local views have been taken into account in the project design. This includes engagement with ward members.
- 1.14 The use of CIL to support community projects has helped embed effective partnerships, by working with Parish Councils and other community groups which represent residents, to bring forward much needed community projects and local facilities.

## 2 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1 At the end of March 2025, the council had collected nearly £26m of CIL receipts since adopting CIL in April 2014. Deductions have been made for regulatory allocations of up to 5% of the CIL collected to administer the fund and 15% of CIL collected to the parish council for the area (rising to 25% where a parish council has an adopted neighbourhood plan). A sum of just over £1.5m was paid to HCC in 2018 to deliver transport infrastructure works, meaning the total retained by the council for allocation since the scheme began was £19,097,827.
- 2.2 Of the CIL retained by the council to the end of March 2025, £15,599,746 had been allocated to support infrastructure schemes in the town and wider district, leaving £3,498,081 remaining to be allocated.

Total CIL Collected (April 2014 to 31st March 2025)		£25,936,868
Less:		
Admin (up to 5%)	£1,296,843	
Parish council share (15/25%)	£3,983,250	
HCC allocation prior to SEP 2018	£1,558,948	
	<u>£6,839,041</u>	
CIL retained by WCC		<u>£19,097,827</u>
Of which:		
CIL previously allocated to projects		£15,599,746
CIL remaining to be allocated		<u>£3,498,081</u>
		<u>£19,097,827</u>

- 2.3 The total value of CIL previously allocated to projects includes £4.5m earmarked in March 2025 for the Central Winchester Regeneration (CWR) scheme. A detailed application has since been received, which accords with the original outline proposal and provides further information to demonstrate CIL eligibility. Therefore, it is recommended that the earmarked £4.5m now is allocated in the CIL programme for this scheme. The creation of a budget

and subsequent release of funding will be subject to approval of a full business case for the scheme, which is expected later this year.

- 2.4 Allocations approved by Cabinet during 2025 have committed a net additional £321,393, leaving £3,176,688 remaining for allocation at this time.
- 2.5 The sum remaining for allocation is currently split into three funds, but the level of demand for each of the funds is inconsistent with the 60:30:10 split. Therefore, this report recommends changes to the division of the funds to better reflect the demand. Financial details of each fund are summarised in appendix 2.
- 2.6 The recommendations contained in this report would allocate the following:

<b>Fund</b>	<b>Grant allocations</b>	<b>Remaining Fund</b>
Health / community / transport / active travel	£1,088,638 in community grants £359,695 to HCC for active travel projects	£1,036,526
District / strategic projects	£361,000 towards solar PV projects £4.5m to Central Winchester Regeneration (already accounted for)	£131,740

- 2.7 The following capital budgets were approved in the capital programme (CAB3539 in February 2026) and are sufficient for the allocations recommended in this report:
- a) £1.3M for CIL funded community projects for the community grant allocations with estimated profiled expenditure of £650,000 in 26/27 and £650,000 in 27/28.
  - b) £500,000 for Energy Management Projects in 26/27 for projects such as the proposed solar PV on Winchester Cathedral outbuildings and Winchester Science Centre.
- 2.8 The following additional capital budgets are required for the allocations recommended in this report:
- a) £360,000 in 2026/27 for CIL funded Hampshire County Council active travel projects.
  - b) An increase of £30,000 to the existing capital budget of £60,000 for solar PV at Meadowside Leisure Centre, bringing the total budget approved for expenditure to £90,000.
- 2.9 Three community projects with previous funding allocations are no longer going ahead, so have been removed from the CIL programme and £110,000 released for future allocation:

- a) £50,000 Otterbourne pedestrian crossing (2019) has been completed using CIL already allocated to HCC in 2018.
  - b) £50,000 Twyford cycle route (2019) now forms part of a much larger HCC cycle scheme.
  - c) £10,000 Knowle pump track (2022) is no longer progressing.
- 2.10 CIL receipts have continued to be collected during 2025/26 but are not reconciled until the end of the financial year. These are reflected in appendix 2 to give a truer representation of the funds that will remain for allocation in 2026 and beyond. The remaining funds (net of these approvals) currently total a combined £2,156,678.
- 2.11 As of April 2025, the Neighbourhood (Town) CIL balance of unallocated funds was £224,000. The allocation of CIL of £110,000 to the MUGA scheme leaves £114,000 remaining to be allocated to future projects.

### 3 LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The Community Infrastructure Levy (Amendment) (England) (No.2) Regulations 2019 allow charging authorities to collect funding from qualifying developments in their area, which must be used to support or mitigate the effects of development. It can be used flexibly to fund any infrastructure as defined within the regulations.
- 3.2 To ensure transparency and accountability, a mechanism to identify and prioritise schemes on which spending is required to support development in the district was agreed by Cabinet in June 2016 (CAB2807). This spending protocol was updated in September 2018 (CAB3071) and again in March 2021 (CAB3292) to reflect the updated CIL Regulations and Government guidance. A further review of CIL was conducted in 2023, which resulted in a recommendation to ring-fence the district CIL into three distinct funds reflecting the priorities of the Council Plan.
- 3.3 Approved council-led schemes will be procured in accordance with the council's Contract Procedure Rules and the Procurement Act 2023 (PA23) with guidance from Procurement, Finance and Legal as required.
- 3.4 The CIL funding which is allocated to other entities such as with community schemes constitutes a capital grant and as such is not subject to the council's Contract Procedure Rules or PA23.

### 4 WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The collection and implementation of CIL receipts is funded using the 5% of CIL that can be used to administer the scheme under the CIL Regulations. Two posts are currently funded through the CIL administration provision, with the CIL Officer identifying CIL liability and collection of funds and the CIL Implementation Officer monitoring the CIL project programme and the bidding

process, liaising with Members regarding funding priorities and updating the annual Infrastructure Funding Statement. Other officers who spend significant time working on CIL can recharge the Levy for their time.

- 4.2 The 5% can only be applied for one financial year, with any surplus retained to fund infrastructure. However, if CIL receipts are low in any particular year and 5% is insufficient to cover the administration costs, this shortfall has to be met from the General Fund.

## 5 PROPERTY AND ASSET IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The improved MUGA project (Recommendation 10) will have ongoing maintenance and inspection costs which are estimated to be £1500 per annum. This cost will be met from budget allocated by the Town Forum to the Landscape and Open Space programme budget.
- 5.2 Recommendations 9 and 11 relate to council-owned properties and assets, but implications of those projects will be addressed through the full business case before any expenditure is approved.

## 6 CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

- 6.1 The bidding window was advertised on the council website, in Parish Connect and on social media in advance of opening. Additionally in 2025 there were grant workshops for external organisations to raise awareness of the different grants that were available to, including CIL. The CIL application scheme has been over-subscribed for a number of years now, with the value of applications regularly exceeding the amount of CIL available to fund community projects.
- 6.2 Bidders are required to seek the support of elected members for a ward or parish area and to include confirmation of this in their bid.
- 6.3 Bidders are also required to confirm whether there has been wider public consultation for a particular project, which helps to gauge the support and wider benefits of the project when assessing the bids for funding.
- 6.4 All 24 bids were considered by the CIL Informal Panel in a meeting held on the 23 January 2026, attended by three Cabinet Members and one director. The panel discussed the officer assessment of each application, the sums recommended and the impact of the recommendations on overall CIL fund.

## 7 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 The CIL criteria associated with the bidding process align with the priorities of the Council Plan, particularly in relation to carbon reduction and tackling climate change. Projects which can demonstrate a beneficial impact on the reduction of carbon emissions, a mitigating impact on the effects of climate change or improved energy efficiency are favourably considered within the process of CIL allocation.

## 8 PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

- 8.1 The councils' duty under the Human Rights Act 1988 and the Equalities Act 2010 is considered and an equality impact assessment has been completed. There is no identified adverse impact through the allocation of CIL funding to anyone with protected characteristics under the Equalities Act 2010, or with regards to human rights (See appendix 3).
- 8.2 Many projects allocated CIL funding seek to improve accessibility to facilities and improved infrastructure for all. These will have a positive impact upon the council's duties under the Human Rights Act 1088 and the Equalities Act 2010. Future funding priorities will continue to provide improved facilities at both a local and district wide level to enable more inclusive communities and better health and well-being for all.

## 9 DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 9.1 The information supplied by the applicants can sometimes contain personal information, but the application forms are not publicly available and all information is deleted/destroyed in accordance with the council's document retention schedule.

## 10 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 10.1 Current risks are assessed as follows.

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>
<u>Financial Exposure</u> Schemes allocated CIL funding are not complete or exceed the amount requested.	A fixed amount of CIL is allocated and is not paid until the scheme is complete or substantially complete.  CIL Grant Agreements will include the right of the council to withdraw a funding offer for projects that fail to be implemented in the time agreed for completion of delivery.	Assessment criteria incentivise applicants to lever in funding from other sources.
<u>Exposure to challenge</u> The schemes prioritised for CIL funding do not provide the infrastructure	Projects are assessed against approved criteria that reflect CIL	

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>
required to support development or do not meet the CIL Regulations or Government Guidance.	<p>Regulations and Government Guidance and scored using a scoring matrix.</p> <p>Larger council-led schemes will require a business case to be agreed by Cabinet to proceed with a bid for CIL funding.</p> <p>Legal advice is sought if required.</p>	
<p><u>Reputation</u> Failure to deliver appropriate schemes using CIL income.</p>	<p>The deliverability of schemes is scrutinised when assessing bids received.</p> <p>The CIL programme is monitored to review the progress of schemes allocated funding.</p>	
<p><u>Achievement of outcome</u> Projects to be funded by CIL are not delivered.</p>	<p>The deliverability of schemes is scrutinised when assessing bids received.</p> <p>The CIL programme is monitored to review the progress of schemes allocated funding.</p> <p>Funding agreements include a clause for withdrawal of the offer if schemes do not progress/</p>	<p>Funding is reallocated to enable schemes with a higher degree of deliverability.</p>
<p><u>Property</u> There may be insufficient funding available to</p>	<p>Fund are ring-fenced to ensure adequate funding</p>	<p>Investment in community-owned assets reduces</p>

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>
ensure that council-owned assets have the capacity to cope with the increased pressure from new developments.	is retained for council-led schemes.	pressure and demand on council-owned assets.
<u>Community Support</u> The community do not support the schemes which are allocated funding.	Funding is allocated for community facilities in areas which have been impacted by significant development so both new and existing residents will benefit.  Bidders need to confirm that ward member support has been sought and detail any consultation with the local community that evidences local demand.	
<u>Timescales</u> Projects are not delivered within a reasonable timescale	The deliverability of schemes is scrutinised when assessing bids received.  Funding can be withdrawn from projects which do not show progress within a reasonable timescale.  Council-led schemes are built into service plans to ensure sufficient capacity.	Once withdrawn, a funding offer can be reallocated to a more deliverable scheme.
<u>Project capacity</u> Lack of resources could hinder the use of CIL funds to support the funding of infrastructure projects.	CIL Regulations allow up to 5% of the CIL collected to be used to support the administration of CIL.	

Risk	Mitigation	Opportunities
<p><u>Local Government Reorganisation</u> Delivery of CIL programme is cut short by structural change order.</p> <p>Change of funding priorities by new UA.</p>	<p>Legal opinion is being sought for clarity.</p> <p>Projects with high level of deliverability prior to LGR are prioritised through the assessment process.</p>	<p>Increased focus on short-term delivery of projects to ensure spend ahead of LGR.</p> <p>Increase awareness of funding amongst potential bidders to accelerate allocation of CIL funding.</p>

## 11 SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

- 11.1 The CIL is a mechanism available for local authorities to raise money from new qualifying development to fund new or improved infrastructure needed to support new development or mitigate the effect of development on existing communities. It can be used to fund a wide range of infrastructure, including flood defences, transport schemes, health and social care facilities, education facilities, community, cultural and sporting facilities and parks and open spaces.
- 11.2 Local authorities must spend CIL on infrastructure needed to support development in their area and it is intended to provide new or substantially improved facilities, rather than to remedy pre-existing deficiencies, unless made more severe by development. For this reason, it is difficult to support infrastructure improvements in areas where there has been little or no development, unless directly impacted by significant development in a neighbouring area.
- 11.3 On 18 July 2023, Cabinet approved a spending protocol for CIL that established ring-fencing of available CIL as follows:
- a) 10% to support community and health infrastructure projects
  - b) 30% to support Hampshire County Council led infrastructure projects
  - c) 60% to support WCC led infrastructure projects
- 11.4 Since this spending protocol was introduced, the demand for funding of community and health infrastructure projects has exceeded the predicted level. Conversely, the demand for funding of Hampshire County Council led infrastructure projects has been below the predicted level. This has resulted in the ring-fenced funds for Hampshire County Council led infrastructure

projects growing to a significant size while the fund for community and health infrastructure projects has reduced to a level where it is no longer sufficient to meet the demand that exists.

- 11.5 The number of community bids has been increasing, as has the size of bids and, in this round of applications, a number of bids were for sums in excess of £100,000. The £1,375,235 requested far exceeds the amount ring-fenced for community projects, which currently stands at £556,092, and limits the ability to fund all projects that are assessed as suitable.
- 11.6 The fund for Hampshire County Council led infrastructure projects has seen limited demand since the ring-fenced funds were agreed in July 2023. The county council has had projects at various stages of development, but has been faced with challenges such as rising costs, failure of other funding bids, and technical design issues. These challenges have thwarted many schemes at an early stage, and those that have been allocated funding have subsequently stalled. A small number of community projects for active travel infrastructure have been allocated from this fund but there is currently £1,936,767 in the ring-fenced fund.
- 11.7 We are keen to continue supporting high quality projects that can deliver necessary infrastructure across the district, so recommend that the following ring-fenced funds are amalgamated:
- 10% to support community and health infrastructure projects
  - 30% to support Hampshire County Council led infrastructure projects

The new fund would receive 40% of available CIL to support community / health / active travel / transport, including those delivered in collaboration with Hampshire County Council. Delivery of active travel and transport schemes remains a high priority, particularly where they align with the joint Winchester and county council Movement Strategy, and will continue to be supported via this newly amalgamated fund. Council officers have been working with colleagues at Hampshire County Council to identify the barriers to bringing forward of schemes with the aim of accelerating progress during 2026.

- 11.8 The combined value of the new fund would be £2,494,859, prior to the allocations recommended in this report. This would create sufficient headroom to fund more projects, with the flexibility to direct the funding where it can make the most difference. Appendix 1 shows how the procedure for CIL allocation and spending would look if this proposal is adopted.

## 12 FUNDING BIDS

### Community and health fund: Community bids for approval

- 12.1 This year's community CIL bids were all submitted via the council's online grant system. Projects which deliver benefits for the following corporate priorities were considered favourably – climate adaptation and mitigation;

active travel; healthy, active lives; and community cohesion. Underpinning the assessments of all projects is the link to recent development. A copy of the fund criteria can be found at appendix 4.

- 12.2 There were 18 community bids received for a variety of infrastructure projects across the district and one bid received from a project within East Hampshire district. One further bid (making 20 in total) was received which was not a bid for infrastructure costs, so was rejected prior to the assessment process.
- 12.3 The total CIL requested for community projects was £1,375,235, which represented a significant increase on the value of bids in previous years. A summary of the bids received, the scoring assessment and the recommended grant awards are found in appendix 2 to this report.
- 12.4 Following consultation with the CIL Informal Panel, the following 14 CIL allocations are recommended from the combined Community and Active Travel fund, at a total cost of £1,088,638.

Table 1 – Community projects recommended for funding

Applicant	Project and description	Recommended allocation	Anticipated completion
Winchester Dramatic Society	Extension and refurbishment of Chesil Theatre, including new changing facilities for performers, accessible toilets, lift access to the upper floors, enhanced foyer, bar and café.	£200,000	2027/28
Wickham and Knowle Parish Council	A new pavilion at Wickham Recreation Ground to replace the current 70 year old pavilion (match funded with s106 funding).	£150,000	2026/27
Play to the Crowd	Energy efficiency measures at Theatre Royal, Winchester - New heating system and boilers as well as LED lighting improvements to the auditorium and stage.	£78,000	2026/27
Colden Common Parish Council	A complete renewal of the skatepark to accommodate younger children and a new MUGA.	£30,000	2026/27
Kings Worthy	Additional allotments at Lovedon Lane, including the	£35,525	2026/27

<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Project and description</b>	<b>Recommended allocation</b>	<b>Anticipated completion</b>
Parish Council	provision of a community garden.		
The Gurkha Museum Trust	Remodelling and refurbishment of the Grade 2 listed building to provide new lifts, ramps and accessible toilets with a redesign of the museum galleries.	£64,707	2026/27
Hampshire Cultural Trust	Remodelling and refurbishment of the middle floor of the City Museum in Winchester to incorporate the 878AD interactive exhibition.	£200,000	2026/27
Trinity Winchester	A new heating system for the day centre which would be more sustainable and reduce carbon emissions.	£32,000	2026/27
Christ Church Winchester	A new lift to the upper floors to improve accessibility and upgrade of the toilets to make them disabled compliant.	£92,300	2026/27
Colden Common Bowls Club	Removal of a steep grass bank and replacement with a ramp and safety barrier to increase safety and improve accessibility.	£10,000	2026/27
The Carroll Centre, Winchester	Significant upgrade of the kitchen and the toilets.	£102,251	Unknown
Wickham and Knowle Parish Council	Improved surfacing and re-lining of the MUGA in Knowle village.	£30,000	2026/27
Durley Parish Council	Improved kitchen facilities at Durley Village Hall to make better use of the hall for hirers including an older persons' lunch club.	£22,905	2026/27

Applicant	Project and description	Recommended allocation	Anticipated completion
Boarhunt Parish Council	Renovate the outdated and underused pavilion to create a community hub.	£40,950	2026/27

- 12.5 Four applications for funding are recommended for refusal on the grounds of not sufficiently satisfying the assessment criteria.
- 12.6 One application is considered to be more suitable for Winchester Town CIL funding, so has been directed to Winchester Town Forum for consideration.

Transport and active travel fund: HCC bids for approval

- 12.7 There were two bids received from Hampshire County Council Countryside Services, for projects that deliver active travel infrastructure and which link to the District Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). Both projects would encourage sustainable travel routes as well as providing a network for recreational opportunities.
- 12.8 Following consultation with the CIL Informal Panel, the following two CIL allocations are recommended from the combined Community and Active Travel fund, at a total cost of £359,695.

Table 2 – Active Travel projects recommended for funding

Applicant	Project and description	Recommended allocation	Anticipated completion
Hampshire County Council Countryside Service	<p>The upgrade of a mile-long muddy off-road footpath between Swanmore and Bishops Waltham to provide a wider, hard surface to be used by walkers and cyclists in all weathers.</p> <p>This project has been in development for many years, involving detailed discussions with landowners, and would provide a valuable route for students accessing Swanmore Technology College from Bishops Waltham.</p>	£300,000	2026/27

Hampshire County Council Countryside Service	The upgrade of two riverside footpaths to link Kings Worthy, Headbourne Worthy and Winchester to routes into the South Downs National Park and long-distance walking routes along the Itchen Valley.	£59,695	2027/28
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### 13 WCC FUNDING ALLOCATIONS

- 13.1 Three council-led projects totalling £360,000 have been assessed and endorsed by the PAC Board and are recommended for funding via CIL to enable delivery this year.

Project	Description	Recommended allocation	Anticipated completion
Winchester Cathedral - Solar PV installation	This project will provide solar PV panels on four publicly accessible buildings that form part of the Winchester Cathedral estate – not the cathedral building itself. 132 solar panels will avoid around 9.6 tonnes of CO <sub>2</sub> emissions.	£107,000	2026/27
Winchester Science Centre – Solar PV installation	This project will provide solar PV panels on the landmark Winchester Science Centre building at Morn Hill. 332 panels will avoid 19.7 tonnes of CO <sub>2</sub> emissions.	£224,000	2026/27
Meadowside Leisure Centre, Whiteley – Solar PV installation	This project will provide solar panels for the council's Meadowside Leisure Centre in Whiteley.  The 25kWp solar array of 62 panels will avoid around 4.6 tonnes of CO <sub>2</sub> emissions annually. The array is forecast to generate in the region of	£30,000	2026/27

Project	Description	Recommended allocation	Anticipated completion
	26,000kWh of electricity annually, reducing the grid electricity use of the leisure centre. The lower grid electricity usage will give an annual energy cost saving in the region of £5,200.		

- 13.2 Outline business cases for the cathedral and science centre projects have been assessed and endorsed by the PAC Board and were included in the capital strategy report to Cabinet in February for inclusion within the capital programme for 2026/27 as part of the energy management projects budget. The release of CIL funding for these schemes would be subject to subsequent approval of the full business case.
- 13.3 The Meadowside Leisure Centre scheme was approved for expenditure via an officer decision record some time ago and was allocated £60,000 of CIL funding in October 2023. However, the tender process has resulted in higher-than-expected costs, and it has not been possible to reduce them without compromising the scheme, so a further £30,000 is required to enable to project to proceed.
- 13.4 All three projects were considered by the CIL Informal Panel on 23 January 2026, which supported the proposal to allocate CIL funding from the District Strategic Projects Fund, as an alternative to other funding sources, such as borrowing, to fund the schemes.
- 14 NEIGHBOURHOOD (TOWN) CIL
- 14.1 An application for Neighbourhood (Town) CIL funding has been completed and assessed by officers and Informal CIL Panel with the project meeting the eligibility and quality requirements. Winchester Town Forum will consider the allocation of £110,000 capital and £6,000 revenue of Town CIL at its the 9 March 2026 meeting (WTF343). Approval of capital budget and expenditure will enable the project to proceed in 2026/27.

Project	Description	Allocation subject to TF approval	Anticipated completion
Improved Multi-use Games Area at St Matthews Field	<p>The proposed Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) improvement will replace a small area of hardstanding and single hoop. (capital)</p> <p>The final specification of the new provision will be determined through a targeted engagement and consultation exercise with young people and those facing barriers to participation (revenue)</p>	<p>£110,000 capital</p> <p>Plus</p> <p>£6,000 revenue</p>	2026/27

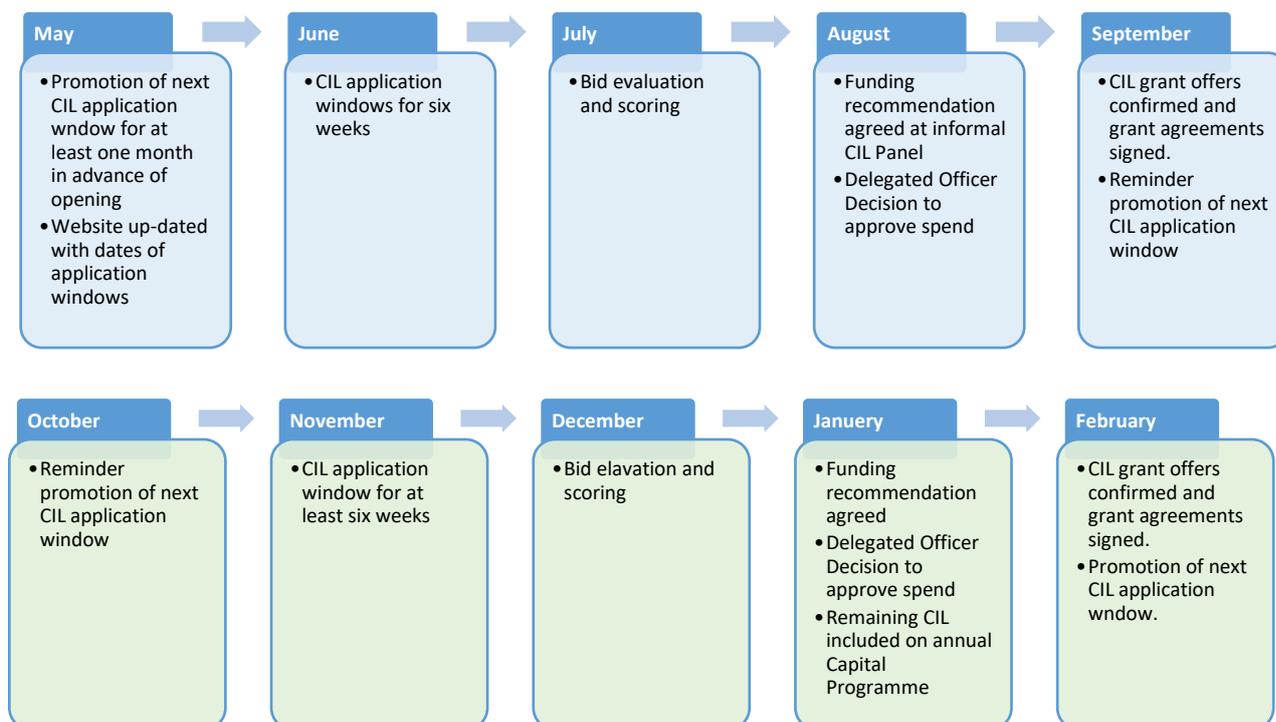
## 15 PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE CIL PROCESS

- 15.1 CIL funding is a powerful way to reinvest in the places we live, work, and enjoy. It allows us to deliver projects that enhance quality of life, celebrate local identity, and ensure that new development is matched by the right infrastructure. By using CIL creatively and responsibly, we can deliver projects that not only meet today's needs but also inspire future generations — building stronger, more connected, and more resilient communities.
- 15.2 We are continually seeking ways to improve how we manage and allocate CIL funds to projects, so that it is effective, efficient and as straight forward as possible for applicants.
- 15.3 Our current approach for applications, evaluation and approvals can take up to seven months from the time the window for bids opens to the decision to award the funds. This is a lengthy process for applicants and results in there being only one application window each year, between September and November. By streamlining the process and using alternative decision routes available to us, we have identified that this could be significantly reduced for external grants to community organisations.
- 15.4 It is recommended that, from 2026 onwards, we adapt a revised application, evaluation and approval process for the Community, Health, Active Travel and Transport fund, as follows:
- a) The full balance of retained CIL apportioned to the Community, Health, Active Travel and Transport fund is included in the annual Capital Investment Programme agreed by Council in February.

- b) Applicants to the Community, Health, Active Travel and Transport fund can apply twice a year (where funding allows).
- c) The approval route is as follows:

<b>Recommended for CIL allocation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competitive applications evaluated and scored by officers</li> <li>• Funding recommendation agreed in consultation with Informal CIL Panel</li> </ul>
<b>Allocation of CIL</b>	Strategic Director responsible for CIL
<b>Approval of new capital budgets for CIL (FPR 8.2)</b>	<p>&lt;£500k = S151 Officer</p> <p>&gt;£500k = Cabinet</p>
<b>Approval of capital expenditure (FPR 7.4) *</b>	<p>&lt;£500k = S151 Officer</p> <p>&gt;£500k = Cabinet</p>

15.5 The introduction of the delegated officer decision to approve expenditure for funding awards of up to £500k significantly reduces the length of the award process. This provides maximum flexibility and speed of decision making, whilst still identifying impactful projects that meet the CIL regulations for eligible expenditure with the necessary governance and transparency. This further enables two windows to be opened for competitive community, health and active travel bids. Below is the proposed timeline for 2026 onwards.



- 15.6 This accelerated programme will require promotion of the application windows well in advance and for at the least one month before the window opens. The application window will be for six weeks and information on the key dates and support available will be published on the council website. This will help prospective applicants to plan and prepare their projects for submission for funding.
- 15.7 District CIL (allocated to council projects) will continue with the existing governance under the Financial Procedure Rules (FPR) for the allocation, approval and expenditure of budgets. This reflects the wider financial and non-financial implications arising from these projects.

<b>Recommended for CIL allocation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Competitive applications evaluated and scored by officers</li> <li>Funding recommendation agreed in consultation with informal CIL Panel</li> </ul>
<b>Allocation of CIL</b>	Cabinet
<b>Approval of capital budgets (FPR 8.2):</b>	<p>&lt;£100k = S151 Officer</p> <p>&gt;£100k but &lt;£500k = Cabinet</p> <p>&gt;£500k = Full Council</p>
<b>Approval of capital expenditure (FPR 7.4)</b>	<p>&lt;£250k = S151 Officer</p> <p>&gt;£250k but &lt;£2m = Cabinet Member at Decision Day</p> <p>&gt;£2m = Cabinet</p>

## 16 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 16.1 Retaining the current ringfencing of available CIL funds in three pots has been discounted, as demand on two of the pots far exceeds demand for the third pot for transport and active travel. If the ringfences were retained in their current form, then community and WCC projects would remain unfunded, while pot for transport and active travel projects continues to grow.
- 16.2 Various options were considered for the allocation of grant funds to applicants. All applications were assessed against the approved scheme criteria and the recommendations represent the best balance of maximising support for projects while retaining a sufficient level of reserves to maintain a programme of CIL allocations through to LGR in 2028.
- 16.3 The council's 'Solar for Business' schemes at Winchester Cathedral and Winchester Science Centre could be funded through other sources such as prudential borrowing, but utilising CIL funds to deliver these schemes would

provide significant revenue benefits over the 25-year life of the panels as well as mitigate against the risk of falling electricity prices in the future.

- 16.4 Leaving the CIL application, evaluation and approval process unchanged would limit us to one bidding round per year. This would reduce opportunities for investment in infrastructure and risk good projects being delayed or unable to access the necessary funding.

#### BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:-

##### Previous Committee Reports:-

CAB3518 - Community Infrastructure Levy Funding Allocations – 10 September 2025

CAB3484 – Central Winchester Regeneration Delivery Plan - 13 March 2025

CAB3498 - Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Funding Allocations for 2024 Bids – 13 March 2025

CAB3385 - Community Infrastructure Levy – 18 July 2023

CAB3292 - Community Infrastructure Levy Future Funding Priorities and Monitoring Update – 10 March 2021

CAB3071 - Community Infrastructure Levy Operational Review - 19 September 2018

CAB2807 - Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Spending Protocol – 8 June 2016

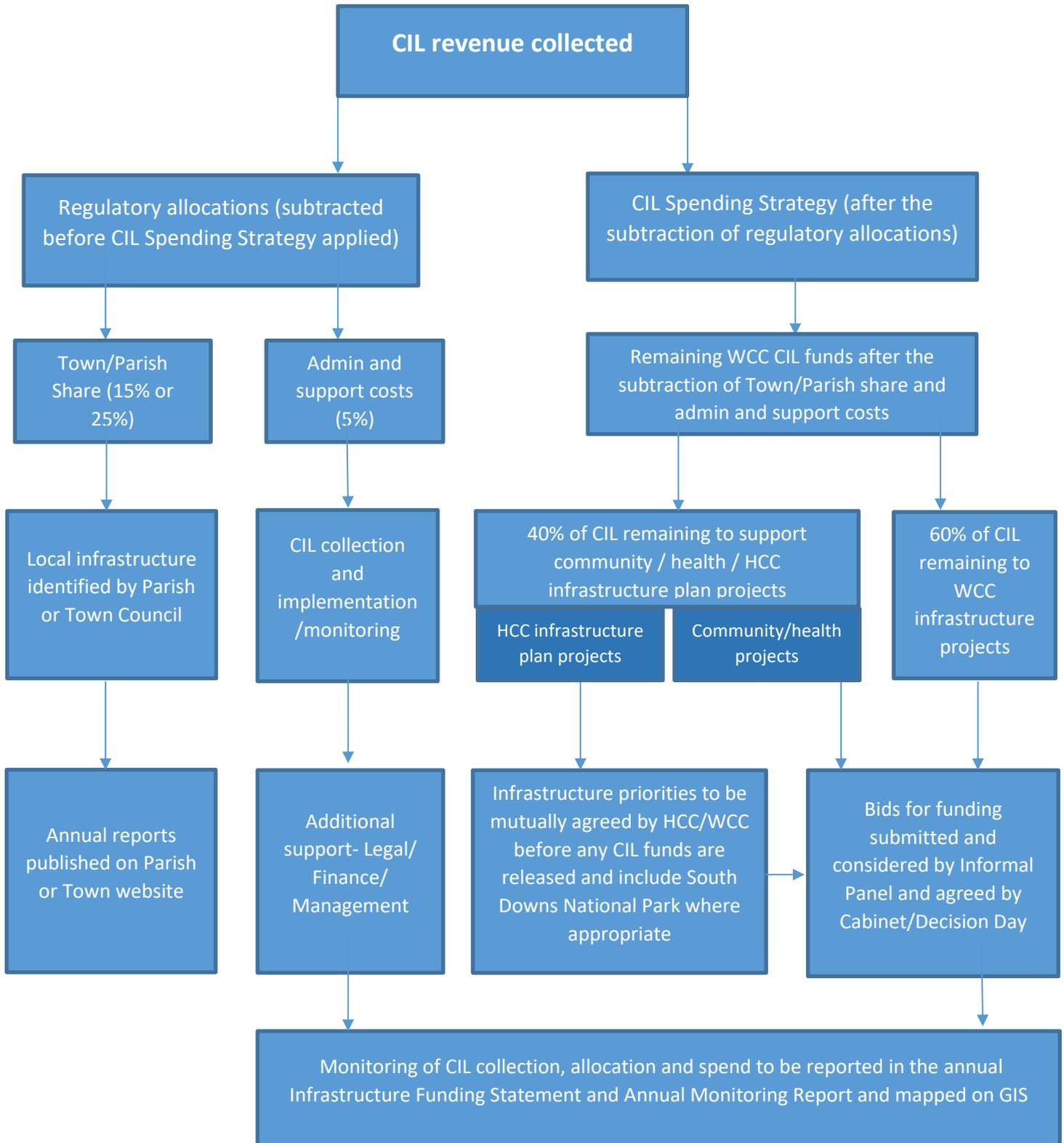
##### Other Background Documents:-

[Infrastructure Funding Statement \(2024\) for Winchester City Council](#)

#### APPENDICES:

1. Strategic Procedural Overview for CIL allocation and spending
2. Summary of bids received, scoring assessment and recommended grant award
3. Equality impact assessment
4. Assessment criteria

**Strategic Procedural Overview for CIL allocation and spending  
(March 2026)**



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**Recommended CIL awards**

Applicant	Score (out of 100)	Request	Recommendations		Declined
			Health / community / transport fund	District / strategic projects fund	
<b>Community bids</b>					
Winchester Dramatic Society - Chesil Theatre	78	£200,000	£200,000		£0
Wickham & Knowle Parish Council - Wickham Recreation Pavilion	74	£150,000	£150,000		£0
Play to the Crowd - Theatre Royal	72	£78,000	£78,000		£0
Colden Common Parish Council - skate park and MUGA	72	£30,000	£30,000		£0
Winchester Town Forum - St Matthew's Field MUGA	70	£110,000			£110,000
Kings Worthy Parish Council - allotments	68	£35,525	£35,525		£0
The Gurkha Museum Trust - refurbishment	68	£64,707	£64,707		£0
Hampshire Cultural Trust - City Museum	68	£200,000	£200,000		£0
Trinity Winchester - heating	66	£32,000	£32,000		£0
Christ Church Winchester	62	£92,300	£92,300		£0
Colden Common Bowls Club	58	£10,000	£10,000		£0
The Carroll Centre	54	£183,026	£102,251		£80,775
Wickham & Knowle Parish Council - Knowle MUGA	54	£30,000	£30,000		£0
Durley Parish Council - Durley Village Hall	52	£25,450	£22,905		£2,545
Boarhunt Parish Council - Boarhunt pavilion	42	£40,950	£40,950		£0
Ropley Primary School - outdoor play	42	£20,000			£20,000
Bighton Parish Council - Bighton Village Hall kitchen	40	£32,060			£32,060
Bighton Parish Council - Bighton Village Hall acoustics and induction loop	38	£10,275			£10,275
Hursley Parish Council - playground	30	£30,942			£30,942
<b>Sub total</b>		<b>£1,375,235</b>	<b>£1,088,638</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£286,597</b>
<b>HCC transport &amp; active travel bids</b>					
Swanmore to Bishops Waltham footpath/cycleway	68	£300,000	£300,000		£0
Itchen Valley path improvements	66	£59,695	£59,695		£0
<b>Sub total</b>		<b>£359,695</b>	<b>£359,695</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>
<b>WCC capital projects</b>					
Solar PV installation - Winchester Cathedral	PAC	£107,000		£107,000	£0
Solar PV installation - Winchester Science Centre	PAC	£224,000		£224,000	£0
Solar PV installation - Meadowside Leisure Centre	PAC	£30,000		£30,000	£0
<b>Sub total</b>		<b>£361,000</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£361,000</b>	<b>£0</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>£2,095,930</b>	<b>£1,448,333</b>	<b>£361,000</b>	<b>£286,597</b>

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**Programme summary:**

Actual CIL funds remaining to be allocated	£2,494,859	£672,740	<b>Total</b> £3,167,599
Less recommended CIL allocations	<b>-£1,448,333</b>	<b>-£361,000</b>	
Plus withdrawal of allocations for Otterbourne pedestrian crossing, Twyford cycle route and Knowle pump track	£110,000		
Less CIL liabilities	<b>-£120,000</b>	<b>-£180,000</b>	
Provisional CIL funds remaining to be allocated	£1,036,526	£131,740	
Plus CIL collected to date during 2025/26	£395,365	£593,047	
Forecast CIL funds to carry forward for allocation in 2026/27	£1,431,891	£724,787	£2,156,678

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## Winchester City Council



### Equality Impact Assessment Template (EqIA)

#### Section 1 - Data Checklist

When undertaking an EqIA for your policy or project, it is important that you take into consideration everything which is associated with the policy or project that is being assessed.

The checklist below is to help you sense check your policy or project before you move to Section 2.

		Yes/No	Please provide details
1	Have there been any complaints data related to the policy or project you are looking to implement?	No	
2	Have all officers who will be responsible for implementing the policy or project been consulted, and given the opportunity to raise concerns about the way the policy or function has or will be implemented?	Yes	The policy will be implemented by the Community Infrastructure Levy Implementation Officer and overseen by the Service Lead: Community and Wellbeing, both of whom have been involved with the consultation and formulation of the policy.
3	Have previous consultations highlighted any concerns about the policy or project from an equality impact perspective?	No	
4	Do you have any concerns regarding the implementation of this policy or project?  <i>(i.e. Have you completed a self-assessment and action plan for the implementation of your policy or project?)</i>	No	

		Yes/No	Please provide details
5	Does any accessible data regarding the area which your work will address identify any areas of concern or potential problems which may impact on your policy or project?	No	
6	Do you have any past experience delivering similar policies or projects which may inform the implementation of your scheme from an equality impact point of view?	Yes	The spending protocol has always included projects which were required to maximise equality, accessibility and inclusion.
7	Are there any other issues that you think will be relevant?	No	

## Section 2 - Your EqIA form

<b>Directorate:</b> Place	<b>Your Service Area:</b> Economy and Community	<b>Team:</b> Community & Wellbeing	<b>Officer responsible for this assessment:</b> Steve Lincoln	<b>Date of assessment:</b> 3 February 2026
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	<b>Question</b>	<b>Please provide details</b>
1	What is the name of the policy or project that is being assessed?	Community Infrastructure Levy Spending Protocol
2	Is this a new or existing policy?	This is an existing policy, with the criteria for assessing CIL bids having been reviewed with the involvement of a cross-party working group in 2023.
3	Briefly describe the aim and purpose of this work.	To ensure that the CIL funding collected is allocated to projects in line with legislation and which align with Council priorities.
4	What are the associated objectives of this work?	To provide infrastructure required to support or mitigate development.
5	Who is intended to benefit from this work and in what way?	All current and future residents of Winchester district.
6	What are the outcomes sought from this work?	To provide required infrastructure to meet the needs of an increased resident population. This both supports growth, reduces pressure on existing provision, and improves quality of life in local communities.
7	What factors/forces could contribute or detract from the outcomes?	Pace of development contributes to the outcomes. A slower pace of new development reduces the amount of CIL collected

	Question	Please provide details		
		which can be used on the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure.		
8	Who are the key individuals and organisations responsible for the implementation of this work?	Community Infrastructure Levy Implementation Officer and Service Lead: Community & Wellbeing within Winchester City Council. Also parish councils, community groups and other agencies such as Hampshire County Council through funding awarded to them.		
9	Who implements the policy or project and who or what is responsible for it?	Community Infrastructure Levy Implementation Officer, Service Lead: Community & Wellbeing, Cabinet Member for Place and Local Plan.		
10a	Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of race differently in a negative way?	Y	N	People who don't speak English (or for whom English is not their first language) may have difficulty accessing funding.
10b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Census data from 2021 showed that 3.4% of the district population did not speak English as a first language.</li> </ul>		
11a	Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of sex differently in a negative way?	Y	N	There is no indication that there would be disproportionate impacts on individuals with this protected characteristic.
11b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	N/A		
12a	Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of disability differently in a negative way?			Certain forms of funded infrastructure project have the potential to be inaccessible for people on the basis of disability, if not designed with those issues in mind.

	Question	Please provide details		
	<p><i>you may wish to consider:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Physical access</i></li> <li>• <i>Format of information</i></li> <li>• <i>Time of interview or consultation event</i></li> <li>• <i>Personal assistance</i></li> <li>• <i>Interpreter</i></li> <li>• <i>Induction loop system</i></li> <li>• <i>Independent living equipment</i></li> <li>• <i>Content of interview)</i></li> </ul>	Y	N	
12b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Census data from 2021 showed that 15.4% of the district population identify as disabled under the Equality Act.</li> <li>• Many applicants include accessibility measures within the scope of their projects.</li> </ul>		
13a	Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of sexual orientation differently in a negative way?	Y	N	There is no indication that there would be disproportionate impacts on individuals with this protected characteristic.
13b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	N/A		
14a	Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals on the basis of age differently in a negative way?	Y	N	Some infrastructure funded via CIL is for specific age groups (such as playground or skate parks) but this does not specifically exclude other age groups.
14b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	N/A		

	<b>Question</b>	<b>Please provide details</b>		
15a	Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of religious belief differently in a negative way?	¥	<b>N</b>	CIL can be spent on community and cultural facilities which could be provided by / at a faith-based organisation. This may deter people from different faiths accessing that facility.
15b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	N/A		
16a	Could this policy or project have the potential to affect individuals on the basis of gender reassignment differently in a negative way?	¥	<b>N</b>	There is no indication that there would be disproportionate negative impacts on individuals with this protected characteristic.
16b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	N/A		
17a	Could this policy or project have the potential to affect individuals on the basis of marriage and civil partnership differently in a negative way?	¥	<b>N</b>	There is no indication that there would be disproportionate impacts on individuals with this protected characteristic.
17b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	N/A		
18a	Could this policy or project have the potential to affect individuals on the basis of pregnancy and maternity differently in a negative way?	¥	<b>N</b>	There is no indication that there would be disproportionate impacts on individuals with this protected characteristic.
18b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	N/A		

	Question	Please provide details									
19	Could any negative impacts that you identified in questions 10a to 15b create the potential for the policy to discriminate against certain groups on the basis of protected characteristics?	Y	<p>There is potential for the policy to discriminate in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inability of people who don't speak English (or for whom English is not their first language) to understand the policy and apply for funding.</li> <li>• People with disabilities may not be able to access facilities funded through this programme.</li> <li>• Some age groups may be excluded from some forms of infrastructure specifically design for certain other age groups.</li> <li>• Some community and cultural facilities may be provided at / by faith-based organisations.</li> </ul>								
20	Can this negative impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for certain groups on the basis of protected characteristics? Please provide your answer opposite against the relevant protected characteristic.	Y	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Race: NA</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sex: NA</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Disability: No</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sexual orientation:</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Age: Yes – certain age groups will have access to facilities that are designed specifically for them to increase their access to such infrastructure and the benefits to be gained by doing so.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Gender reassignment: NA</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pregnancy and maternity: NA</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Marriage and civil partnership: NA</td> </tr> </table>	Race: NA	Sex: NA	Disability: No	Sexual orientation:	Age: Yes – certain age groups will have access to facilities that are designed specifically for them to increase their access to such infrastructure and the benefits to be gained by doing so.	Gender reassignment: NA	Pregnancy and maternity: NA	Marriage and civil partnership: NA
Race: NA											
Sex: NA											
Disability: No											
Sexual orientation:											
Age: Yes – certain age groups will have access to facilities that are designed specifically for them to increase their access to such infrastructure and the benefits to be gained by doing so.											
Gender reassignment: NA											
Pregnancy and maternity: NA											
Marriage and civil partnership: NA											

	Question	Please provide details		
				Religious belief: - Yes - certain facilities may be provided by faith-based organisations to service a specific local community, however the facility should be open to all.
21	How will you mitigate any potential discrimination that may be brought about by your policy or project that you have identified above?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to information on the CIL funding scheme can be made available in a variety of formats on request, to ensure accessibility.</li> <li>• Information about CIL funding is published on the council website and people are encouraged to contact the team if they require assistance in making an application. Contact details are provided.</li> <li>• Applicants are required to explain how they ensure their activities and services are open and inclusive when they apply for funding and (where appropriate) include a copy of the specification.</li> </ul>		
22	Do any negative impacts that you have identified above impact on your service plan?	Y	N	

Signed by completing officer	Steve Lincoln, Service Lead: Community & Wellbeing
Signed by Service Lead or Corporate Head of Service	Susan Robbins, Corporate Head of Economy and Community

## COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY ASSESSMENT APPLICATION CRITERIA

Criteria description	Detail to be provided by applicant. Application form section	Maximum score available
<b>Alignment with local need</b>	<b>Part 2</b>	<b>16%</b>
<p><b>Relates to significant local development.</b> The proposal contributes to providing facilities in an area where significant development has occurred.</p> <p><u>OR</u> The proposal contributes to facilities in an area that is affected by significant development in a neighbouring area or mitigates the impact of this development.</p>	<p>The need for the scheme and how it supports growth in the area needs to be explained.</p> <p>Identify the development which is impacting on the need for additional or improved infrastructure.</p>	4
<b>Local Engagement and Support</b>	<b>Part 2</b>	<b>12%</b>
<p><b>Councillor support</b> The project has ward member support.</p>	The applicant must specify whether support has been gained from WCC ward members for the area in which the project is based, and which ward members have given support.	1
<p><b>Local support</b> The proposal has been subject to consultation and has local support.</p>	<p>A scheme which has been subject to some consultation and has received public support will be considered favourably.</p> <p>Specify who was consulted, what the outcome was and how these have been taken account of in the project design.</p>	2
<b>Impacts and Outcomes</b>	<b>Part 3</b>	<b>44%</b>
<p><b>Beneficiaries</b> The proposal offers wider as well as local benefits.</p>	<p>Who is going to benefit from the environmental, social, cultural and economic infrastructure the project will deliver in relation to the needs of the district's residents.</p> <p>Clearly set out who the proposal will be used by and benefit from, and to what extent, for example specific groups, ages, or gender etc.</p>	4

Criteria description	Detail to be provided by applicant. Application form section	Maximum score available
<p><b>Council priorities</b> How well do the project benefits align to the four priority areas?</p>	<p><b>1. Climate adaption and mitigation</b> - The project demonstrates a benefit towards a more climate resilient and lower carbon district. The project delivers energy efficiency or reduces carbon emissions.</p> <p><b>2. Provides for, or improves, active travel</b> - The proposal improves infrastructure which facilitates sustainable travel, by bike, on foot or using public transport. The proposal helps promote active travel and seeks to reduce the use of private motor vehicles.</p> <p><b>3. Healthy, active lives</b> - The project improves or provides facilities to encourage healthy living. The project provides or improves existing sporting facilities or encourages physical exercise or healthy outdoor pursuits and/or the project provides leisure and informal public spaces, inclusive and accessible for all.</p> <p><b>4. Supports and improves community cohesion</b> - The project improves and enhances the natural or built environment. The project improves access to outdoor or indoor community and cultural facilities to provide social interaction, participation or activities.</p>	7
<p><b>Value for Money &amp; Deliverability</b></p>	<p><b>Part 4</b></p>	28%
<p><b>Funding need and value for money</b> The proposal levers in other funds that would not otherwise be available.</p>	<p>CIL should not be used to fund entire projects but should be used as a 'top up'. Schemes which have a higher proportion of funding in place will receive a higher score. Provide an estimated percentage of funding to be met from CIL.</p>	<p>CIL share of total project cost 4 = &lt;25% 0 = 100%</p>
<p><b>Deliverability</b> There is a need to clarify expected timescales and relevant information regarding the delivery of the scheme.</p>	<p>Provide delivery schedule including dates for expected commencement, key milestones, and completion. Provide delivery schedule including dates for expected commencement, key milestones, and completion. Include whether planning permission is required or has been sought/obtained and whether any other consents are needed. Schemes that can be delivered or commenced within the next 12 months will attract a higher score.</p>	3
<p><b>TOTAL</b></p>		34

CAB3546  
CABINET

REPORT TITLE: FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS FOR DEVELOPMENT  
MANAGEMENT IN THE SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK FOR THE PERIOD 1<sup>ST</sup>  
OCTOBER 2026 TO 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2032

12TH MARCH 2026

REPORT OF CABINET MEMBER: Cllr Jackie Porter, Cabinet Member for Place and  
Local Plan

Contact Officer: Julie Pinnock Tel No: 01962 848439 Email  
[jpinnock@winchester.gov.uk](mailto:jpinnock@winchester.gov.uk)

WARD(S): ALL WARDS WITHIN THE SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK

## PURPOSE

In April 2011, the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) became the local planning authority for the part of the district which lies within the park boundary.

The Council has since that time delivered the development management service (includes enforcement) on behalf of the SDNPA. The agreement is secured through S101 of the Local Government Act 1972.

The current arrangements began on 1st October 2022 until 30th September 2024, with an option to extend for a further 2 years. That option was exercised and the current arrangement is due to terminate on the 30th September 2026.

Both parties agree to entering into a new agreement to continue to deliver the development management service, and on 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2025 the SDNPA wrote to the Council with an offer to continue with the arrangement, under a new agreement.

The offer is provided at officer level at this time to deliver the development management service from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2026 to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2032. This offer is to be taken to the SDNPA Committee for their Member approval on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2026. Terms have been negotiated with an offer of 8% uplift over the current terms.

Subject to that offer being ratified by the SDNPA Committee it is recommended that we enter a new contract. A 5.5-year contract ensures decision making is retained at the most local level for the 40% of the district inside the park.

A new agreement running to March 2032 provides certainty for the development management service during the transition to a unitary authority with the subsequent

unitary authority continuing to deliver the development management service in accordance with the agreement.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Cabinet authorises the Corporate Head of Planning and Regulatory Services and Director (legal) to enter into a new agreement for the delivery of development management services (including planning enforcement) on behalf of the South Downs National Park Authority for the period 1<sup>st</sup> October 2026 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2032. Subject to the South Downs National Park Authority Member approval on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2026.

IMPLICATIONS:1 COUNCIL PLAN OUTCOME

## 1.1 Greener Faster

1.2 Development Management has an important role to play in ensuring that development permitted in the district of which 40% lies in the national park are as sustainable as possible and will be assessed in line with national planning guidelines/legislation and the SDNPA's adopted local plan.

## 1.3 Thriving Places

1.4 Development Management decisions help to support the creation of new employment opportunities as well as existing business based in this part of the district that are in accordance with national planning guidelines/legislation and the SDNPA's adopted local plan.

## 1.5 Healthy Communities

1.6 The park is a fantastic leisure and recreational resource which provides a range of opportunities for residents of the district and visitors to the area. Planning decisions support these activities by allowing new facilities which improve opportunities whilst protecting the landscape and other qualities of the park in accordance with national park purposes.

## 1.7 Good Homes for All

1.8 Planning decisions support the delivery of new homes, and improvements to existing accommodation, to help meet the needs of the population living within the park.

## 1.9 Efficient and Effective

1.10 Provides residents, Parish Councils and Ward Councillors access to SDNPA development management service at the most local level.

## 1.11 Listening and Learning

1.12 Planning decisions taken on SDNPA planning applications will be taken at the local level by officers based in Winchesters planning service.

2 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

2.1 Under the current arrangement with the SDNPA the council has set a budget of £400,000 (income). The income is made up of a fixed payment for enforcement with development management cases and most appeals charged to the SDNPA agreed rates. This means there will be variations in the payment received from one year to the next with the amount determined by the volume and type of applications and appeal which are dealt with.

- 2.2 The SDNPA propose an 8% increase in the rates for the planning application case work and appeals managed by the council and an 8% increase in the fixed enforcement payment.
- 2.3 The Council considers that the partnership working with the South Downs National Park Authority provides wider organisational and place-based value beyond the purely financial position. The SDNPA offer includes a single uplift at the outset of the agreement; however, operating costs — particularly staffing — are expected to rise annually by approximately 2.5%–3%.
- 2.4 Current forecasts indicate total costs of approximately £2.65m over the contract period compared with anticipated income of £2.25m. While this sits below the Council's usual cost-recovery position, the income is expected to meet the direct delivery costs and provides a stronger financial outcome than the short- to medium-term cashable savings.
- 2.5 The current S101 agreement sets out performance standards relating to speed of validation and decision making on applications with financial penalties for performance falling below the standards. This provision exists at present and is considered reasonable, with the council to date performing at levels which would meet or exceed these revised standards.
- 2.6 The exact cost of delivering the service varies from one year to the next depending on the work undertaken. There are fixed staffing costs for development management and enforcement as well as other staff costs and internal consultees that provide advice on planning case work, as well as an allowance for overheads.
- 2.7 If the service were recovered by the SDNPA there would be savings from staff resources to reflect the reduction in work, but overhead costs would remain unchanged such as office accommodation. Income in the last two years has been just under £400,000 and an 8% increase could see an increase of just under £32,000 although it should be noted that this will vary depending on the volume of work received on planning applications and appeals.

### 3 LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The current arrangements began on 1st October 2022 until 30th September 2024, with an option to extend for a further 2 years. That option was exercised and the current arrangement is due to end on the 30th September 2026.
- 3.2 The officer offer to continue the service for a further 5.5 years from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2026 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2032 requires SDNPA Committee approval at its Committee on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2026. Subject to that agreement it is recommended that we enter into a new agency agreement to deliver the development management service which is provided for in Section 101 of Local Government Act 1972.

#### 4 WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The agreement has operated since 2011, the staff responsible for delivering the service are employed by the Council. Entering into a new agreement gives certainty for the service both with the public, Parish Councils and Ward Councillors as well as our existing staff. If a decision was taken not to continue with the agreement, then Transfer of Undertakings Protection of Employment (TUPE) or redundancy situation may arise and there would be a statutory process to follow.

#### 5 PROPERTY AND ASSET

- 5.1 None

#### 6 CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

- 6.1 Cabinet Member for Place and Local Plan has been consulted and is supportive of the council continuing to deliver the agency agreement which puts the planning service and decision making at the most local level.

#### 7 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 Ensure that activities that contribute to the conservation and enhancement of the SDNPA within Winchester's district is conserved and enhanced which follows the statutory duty imposed on national parks to seek to foster the social and economic wellbeing of local communities.
- 7.2 A new contract will support the national park purposes which are to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage and to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by the public.

#### 8 PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

- 8.1 None.

#### 9 DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 9.1 None required.

#### 10 RISK MANAGEMENT

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>
<u>Financial Exposure</u> If we did not enter into a new agreement to deliver the development management service, it would result in a loss of income which it would not	Enter into a new agreement which secures the service and income with an 8% uplift in the current payments which is achieved by entering into a	

be feasible to achieve equivalent savings.	5.5-year agreement until 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2032.	
<u>Exposure to challenge</u> No risk identified.		
<u>Innovation</u> - The standard of delivering the service is determined by the SDNPA and set out in the agreement		
<u>Reputation</u> Poor performance or service delivery could affect reputation	Ensure that the planning team is resourced to deliver the SDNPA service and continue to provide a good quality development management service	
<u>Achievement of outcome</u> Success will be measured by the terms set out in the agreement.	We have a strong track record of service delivery which is reflected in the offer of a 5.5-year contract with an 8% uplift. We have an excellent relationship with the SDNPA.	
<u>Property</u>	N/A	
<u>Community Support</u>	N/A	
<u>Timescales</u> The current agreement ends on 30 <sup>th</sup> September 2026.	It is proposed to enter into a new agreement for 5.5 years until March 2032	
<u>Project capacity</u> None		
<u>Local Government Reorganisation</u>	A new agreement running to March 2032 provides certainty for the development management service during the transition to a unitary authority with the subsequent unitary authority continuing to deliver the development management service in accordance with the agreement.	
<u>Other</u> None		

## 11 SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

### 11.1 Background

11.2 The council has been delivering a development management service successfully for the SDNPA since they became the Local Planning Authority on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011. There have been a series of agreements put in place during this time setting out the financial and operational arrangements for service delivery.

11.3 The current arrangement was agreed by Cabinet on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2021 (CAB 3314). This was for a 2-year period, with an option to extend for a further two years. The option was exercised and the current agreement if not renewed will end on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2026.

### 11.4 SDNPA offer

11.5 The SDNPA wrote in December 2025 offering the council an opportunity to enter into a new agreement for a 5.5-year period, to run from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2026 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2032.

11.6 The offer thanks us for the work we have done on behalf of the SDNPA and the proactive and strong relationships we have. The offer based on a 5.5-year contract leads to an 8% uplift on the current terms, which means the income per case of planning applications and appeals has increased by 8%, and the fixed rate for enforcement will also increase by 8%.

11.7 The contract will remain on similar terms to those currently in place with performance standards relating to speed of validation and decision making with financial penalties for performance failing below these standards. This is reasonable and we already meet and, in some cases, exceed the standards.

### 11.8 Conclusion

11.9 Continuing the arrangements with a new contract has the benefit of retaining decision making at the most local level, reinforcing local democracy. The extended time gives certainty to the council, our customers, and staff as well as a future unitary authority during a period of transition through local government review.

11.10 In financial and democratic terms, it is considered that the best option is to enter into a new agreement with the SDNPA to continue to provide the development management service on their behalf until March 2032.

## 12 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

12.1 The council is under no obligation to provide a development management for the SDNPA. If we decided not to continue to deliver the service, we would have to give notice and staff that deliver the development management service would be subject to TUPE.

12.2 The partnership has worked well for both authorities and as explained above, it is considered financially favourable to the council to continue with the arrangement as well as ensuring decision making remains at the most local level providing those who use the SDNPA development management service.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:-

Previous Committee Reports:-

CAB 3314 – Future arrangements for development management in the South Downs National Park - 15<sup>th</sup> September 2021

CAB 2948 – Continued arrangements for the delivery of development functions in the South Downs National Park – 5<sup>th</sup> July 2017

CAB 2504 – Future arrangements for the delivery of the development management functions in the South downs National Park – 11<sup>th</sup> September 2013

CAB 2024 – South Downs National Park Delegation of planning decisions to local authorities 9<sup>th</sup> July 2010

APPENDICES:

None

CAB3548  
CABINET

REPORT TITLE: ANNUAL REVIEW OF RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY 2026/27

12 MARCH 2026

REPORT OF CABINET MEMBER: Cllr Cutler – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation

Contact Officer: Gareth John Tel No: 01962 848 135 Email  
GJohn@winchester.gov.uk

WARD(S): ALL

## PURPOSE

This report presents the annual review of the council's Risk Management Policy and Risk Appetite 2026/27.

These define the council's arrangements for identifying and managing risks and its integration with corporate governance and performance management.

There have been updates and amends to the key strategic risks that appear on the Corporate Risk Register over the course of 2025/26, resulting from the quarterly reviews by ELB and Audit and Governance Committee and these have been reported in the quarterly Governance Monitoring report.

This report seeks consideration and approval of the reviewed Risk Management Policy and Risk Appetite Statement for 2026/27.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That Cabinet approve the Risk Management Policy for 2026/27, the Risk Appetite Statement for 2026/27 and the current Corporate Risk Register.

## IMPLICATIONS:

### 1 COUNCIL PLAN OUTCOME

- 1.1 Effective use of risk management supports the council's management of threats and opportunities to achieve the priorities included in the Council Plan 2025-30.
- 1.2 Included in the Risk Management Policy is the Risk Appetite Statement for the council which supports members and officers in decision making by setting out where the council is comfortable taking different levels of risk by Council Plan Priority, and which levels are not normally acceptable

### 2 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1 None directly because of this report. However, where there is a potential increase in risk likelihood or impact identified, additional spend may be required to manage those risks properly and adequately. Budget approval would be subject to the processes set out in the council's Financial Procedure Rules.

### 3 LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The council's Risk Management Policy is an important element of the overarching governance framework ensuring that the council has a robust process for evaluating and managing risks as part of the decision-making process.
- 3.2 There are no direct legal or procurement issues arising from this report

### 4 WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Management of risk is an integral part of service delivery. Corporate Heads of Service are required to review operational risks with their management teams regularly and in addition ensure project risk registers are established, monitored and maintained throughout the project lifecycle.

### 5 PROPERTY AND ASSET IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None.

### 6 CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

- 6.1 Consultation on the content of the report has been undertaken with Cabinet and in particular the Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance. Consultation has also taken place with the Executive Leadership Board (ELB).
- 6.2 The council's Audit and Governance Committee reviewed the draft Risk Management Policy 2026/27 at their meeting on 5 March 2026, and their comments were noted by the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation.

## 7 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 None directly because of this report. However, where there is an expected increase in environmental risk likelihood or impact, additional measures to manage and mitigate those risks would be identified in the relevant business case before being approved

## 8 PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

- 8.1 None.

## 9 DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 9.1 None.

## 10 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 10.1 Local Government Reorganisation creates a unique environment where change, uncertainty and operational pressures coexist. Managing risk effectively during the two-year period requires balancing strategic transformation and implementation activities with the need to sustain business as usual by providing day to day services.
- 10.2 During the transition period the council will take a disciplined and proactive approach to risk management that balances the demands of organisational transformation with the need to maintain stable, safe and resilient business as usual services and activities. The council's priority is to develop and support colleagues and deliver the Council Plan priorities over the next two years, ensuring service stability and driving continuous improvement. We will prepare out systems, process and services for a smooth transition towards Vesting Day and beyond.
- 10.3 We will manage risk through strong governance, transparent decision-making, robust performance management and clear communications, ensuring that change is delivered at pace without compromising service quality or public confidence. By maintaining a dual focus on transition risks and operational risks, we will ensure a smooth transition towards the new Unitary Authority.

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>
Financial Exposure	Consideration of financial exposure is one of the five key areas of risk that are considered before decisions are made and specifically the affordability of losses and VfM for the council.	Taking financial decisions in a measured and controlled way can lead to financial reward.

Exposure to challenge	None	None
Innovation – not realised	The Risk Management Appetite Statement provides a clear and robust set of levels of acceptable risk which support decision making.	The Risk Management Appetite Statement sets the levels of risk the council is prepared to take and supports decision making when considering opportunities for innovation.
Reputation – ensuring the council has in place and embedded into the organisation arrangements to manage its risks	This report sets out the principles and arrangements for the council to manage its risks effectively.	A robust Risk Management Policy supports the council to identify, assess and manage its risks in a consistent way which could have a positive effect on the council's reputation.
Achievement of outcome	Identification and assessment of risk to consider the likelihood of delivering planned benefits before taking decisions.	Measured risk can lead to greater benefits to the council.
Property	None	None
Community Support	None	None
Timescales	None	None
Project capacity	None	None
Local Government Reorganisation – failure to identify, assess and manage risks in a consistent and timely manner throughout the transition period leading to the new Unitary Authority	Having a robust Risk Management Policy and Risk Appetite Statement provides the framework and tools to manage risks fundamental to the smooth transition to a Unitary Council	Early identification of relevant risks enables intervention and steps to avoid risk escalation.
Other	None	None

## 11 SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

- 11.1 This report presents the updated Risk Management Policy for 2025/65 (Appendix 1) which sets out the council's approach to risk management, the Risk Appetite and details the arrangements for managing risk. The Policy

forms part of the governance and performance management arrangements at the council.

- 11.2 The Policy sets out the framework for identifying the significant risks (Corporate risks) that are relevant to the achievement of the council's strategic and operational objectives; evaluating their potential consequences; and implementing the most effective way of managing and monitoring them.
- 11.3 In-line with best practice, the council evaluates its risks using a four-point scale for the likelihood or probability of the risk occurring and the impact caused should the risk occur. These are rated between low and significant. A score for each risk is then calculated using a four-by-four matrix with the lowest score being one and the highest sixteen.
- 11.4 Included as an appendix to the Policy is the council's Corporate Risk Register which includes the risks that are of greatest significance to the council in the context of the aims and objectives that are set out in the Council Plan 2025-30. These risks are owned by members of Executive Leadership Board (ELB).
- 11.5 ELB reviews quarterly the Corporate Risk Register, report AG182 (elsewhere on this Committee meeting agenda) provides brief details from the most recent review which took place on 4 February 2026 and the updates to the register. The current Corporate Risks are:
- Capacity to deliver services
  - Ensuring decisions are made based on a strong evidence base, customer insight and engagement
  - The need to ensure effective business continuity plans
  - The need to maintain effective strategic partnerships
  - The need to ensure financial resilience
  - A focus on strategic planning for housing
  - Protection against digital attacks through effective cyber security
  - Responding to the Climate Emergency
  - Responding to events caused by climate change
- 11.6 During quarterly reviews, ELB considered the rapidly emerging risks (and opportunities) arising from the Devolution agenda and Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) timetable. It was agreed that the risks arising from LGR would continue to be captured as a cause that might impact existing corporate risks, specifically CR001 (Capacity to deliver services) and CR007 (Ability to achieve a balanced budget). ELB noted that until the announcement by government in the Spring, it was too early to fully understand the extent of the risks. In response to the evolving nature of these issues, the council continues to closely monitor developments, ensuring that any emerging risks or opportunities are promptly identified and managed. A comprehensive risk management strategy specifically addressing LGR has been developed and is

regularly reviewed ensuring that the council remains well-prepared to manage any potential changes and their impact on governance, service delivery, and resources leading to a smooth transition to a new Unitary Council.

- 11.7 The Risk Management Policy reflects best practice and there have been no significant updates, amends or additions as a result of this annual review.

The main changes are summarised below:

Change Description	Reason
<p><b>Section 8</b> - change to Risk Appetite for Thriving Places Council Plan priority from 'Moderate' to 'Open'. The overall risk appetite has not changed and remains 'Moderate'.</p>	<p>Cabinet members considered the council's overall risk appetite and agreed to keep it as 'moderate', however for delivery of activities that support the Thriving Places Council Plan priority it was agreed to move the appetite to 'open' allowing for all delivery options to be considered when making decisions to improve run down areas before selecting the one with the highest probability of productivity outcomes, even when there are elevated levels of associated risk.</p>
<p><b>Section 12</b> - under responsibilities, change from Head of Programme – Transformation to Senior Policy &amp; Programme Manager</p>	<p>Change in lead officer responsible for risk management across the council.</p>

- 11.8 Regular updates on the Corporate Risk Register and management actions and controls in place to manage and/or mitigate the risks are reported to Audit and Governance Committee throughout the municipal year
- 11.8 The Policy also includes the council's risk appetite statements (Section 8), which sets out the level of risk the council is prepared to take whilst also making the most of opportunities and innovation when they arise. These have been reviewed and the previous risk appetite, defined overall as 'moderate,' is still considered to be appropriate. The council continues to tend towards exposure to only modest levels of risk to achieve acceptable outcomes. Risk appetite is not a single, fixed concept and therefore each Council Plan priority has its own risk appetite for the coming year. There has been one change from the previous year and that is to move the risk appetite for Thriving Plans from 'Moderate' to 'Open' enabling the council to consider all delivery options when taking decisions to and select those the with the highest productivity outcomes, even when there are elevated levels of associated risk.

12 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

12.1 None.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:-

Previous Committee Reports:-

CAB3500

Other Background Documents:-

None.

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 – Risk Management Policy 2026/27



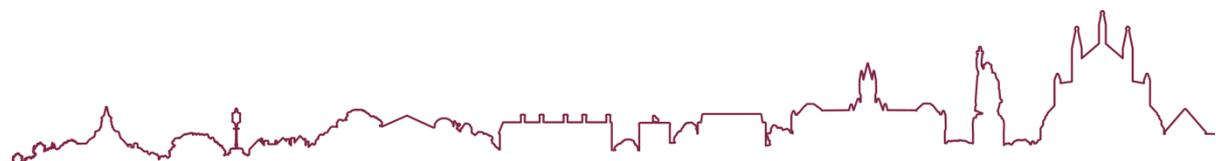
## Risk Management Policy

### 2026/27

Version Control – Risk Management Policy 2026/27			
Version	1.1	Approved by	Cabinet
Date last amended	18/02/2026	Approval date	12/03/2026
Lead officer	Gareth John, Director Legal	Review date	01/04/2027

Version History			
Date	Version Number	Summary of Changes	Author
29/01/2025	1.0	Annual review and refresh in-line with best practice	Amy Tranah – Head of Programme – Transformation and Digital
18/02/2026	1.1	Annual review and refresh in-line with best practice	Simon Howson – Senior Policy & Programme Manager

Please contact the author of this document if you require it in an alternative format, such as large print or a coloured background.



## 1. Introduction

As part of Winchester City Council's (the council) arrangements to ensure good governance, the purpose of effective risk management is to provide assurance and demonstrate that the council is 'risk aware.' This entails being able to identify risks, evaluate their potential consequences and determine the most effective methods of controlling or responding to them.

The council believes that risk needs to be managed rather than avoided and that consideration of risk should not stifle innovation and creativity.

This policy outlines the approach the council takes with regard to its responsibility to manage risks and opportunities using a structured, focused and proportionate methodology. Risk management is integral to all policy and project planning and operational management throughout the council and integrates with our corporate governance and performance management.

This approach to risk management actively supports the achievement of the agreed actions, projects and programmes included as set out in the Council Plan 2025-30.

**Risk can be defined as 'the effect of uncertainty on objectives' ('ISO 31000:2018, clause 3.1).**

Good risk management is about identifying what might go wrong, assessing our level of tolerance towards that and then putting in place measures to prevent the worst from happening, or to manage the situation if something does go wrong. It is also about assessing what must be done to support achievement of the council's objectives and acting in a way that makes this more likely to happen.

## 2. Our corporate approach to risk management

Risk management is about providing assurance by being 'risk aware.' Risk is ever present in everything that we do and some risk taking is inevitable if the council is to achieve its objectives. Risk management is about making the most of opportunities when they arise and achieving objectives once those decisions are made. By being 'risk aware' the council is better placed to avoid threats and take advantage of opportunities.

The aim of our Risk Management Policy is to be fit for purpose, reflect our size and the nature of our various operations, and use our resources, skills and capabilities to the full. Risk management is most effective as an enabling tool, so we need a consistent, communicated and formalised process across the council.

<sup>1</sup>ISO 31000:2018 - Risk management Guidelines

The council is a corporate member of ALARM, a not-for-profit professional membership association that has supported risk and insurance professionals in Public Service Organisations in the UK for over 30 years and this policy has been developed in-line with best practice.

Robust project management processes and principles will enable identification of potential risks early in the process and set out how these can be managed. Staff training in project management and risk management principles is essential to embed good practices.

By embedding a culture of risk management into the council, members and officers are able to make effective decisions about services and the use of financial resources to ensure that the council's objectives are met.

An effective corporate approach to risk management will:

- Make it more likely that the council's priorities will be achieved
- Safeguard the organisation and provide assurance to members and officers
- Become part of every manager's competency framework, job description and performance appraisal
- Provide support to the overall governance of the organisation
- Improve decision making
- Identify issues early on
- Provide a greater risk awareness and reduce surprises or unexpected events
- Develop a framework for structured thinking
- Ensure best use of finances and resources as risks are identified and managed and exposure to risk is minimised
- Facilitate achievement of long-term objectives
- Ensure a consistent understanding of and approach to risks

### **3. Our risk management framework**

Risk management is the process of identifying significant risks relevant to the achievement of the council's strategic and operational objectives, evaluating their potential consequences and implementing the most effective way of managing and monitoring them.

The framework and process arrangements supporting risk management at the council involve:

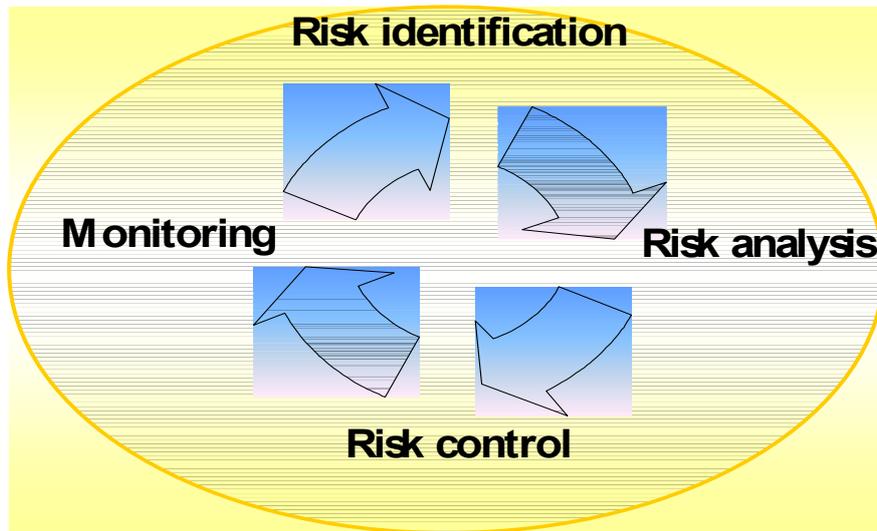
- A Risk Assessment Tool (section 4)
- Details of how risk management supports corporate planning and operational management (section 5)
- Risk appetite statement (section 8)
- Monitoring and review arrangements (section 10)
- A timetable linked to the corporate governance programme (section 11)

## 4. Risk Assessment Tool

### The Principles

The council generally manages risk effectively within the course of its normal operations through its management structure and governance arrangements.

### Risk Assessment Tool



When identifying risks, it can be helpful to use the following sources of risk as prompts to ensure that all areas of risk are considered:

Sources of Risk	Risk Examples
<b>Property, Infrastructure and Assets:</b>	Functioning of transport, communications and utilities infrastructure. The impact of storms, floods and pollution.  Security and safety of property, plant equipment and infrastructure
<b>Political, Legal and Regulatory:</b>	Effects of change of government policy, UK legislation (where applicable), national or local political or control, meeting the Council Plan outcomes. Issues of timing. Following the organisation's stated/agreed policy. Legality of operations
Professional judgement & activities	Risks inherent in professional work such as assessing clients' welfare or planning or response to the Equalities Act.
Reputation	Affecting the public standing or perception of the council, partnerships, or individuals (affecting the council). Management of issues that may be contentious with the public or the media.

Sources of Risk	Risk Examples
<b>Technological</b>	Capacity to deal with obsolescence and innovation, product reliability, development and adaptability or ability to use technology to address changing demands.  Business continuity – ability to continue operations / service delivery if unable to access systems, property or with limited staff (e.g. pandemic).
<b>Commercial:</b>  Competition & markets  Contracts & partnerships	Affecting the competitiveness (cost and quality) of the service and/or ability to deliver value for money and general market effectiveness.  Dependency on or failure of contractors to deliver services or products to the agreed cost and specification. Procurement contract and relationship management. Overall partnership arrangements, e.g. for pooled budgets or community safety. PFI, and regeneration.
<b>People:</b>  Customer & Stakeholder – related  People management & human resources	Satisfaction of citizens, users, central and regional government and other stakeholders. Managing expectations – consulting & communication on difficult issues.  Managing changes to services that may affect staff and/or ways of working. Resourcing the implementation of the option. Employment issues (TUPE etc.), Maintaining effective health & safety of staff and users.
<b>Financial:</b>	Risk of loss of capital or investment; or of committing the organisation to budgeted increased future costs.  Risk of fraud or non-compliance with tax regulations.
<b>Sustainability:</b>  Environmental  Social Factors  Financial (Economic)	Environmental consequences arising from option (e.g. in terms of energy efficiency, pollution, recycling emissions etc.)  Effects of changes in demographic, residential and social trends on ability to deliver objectives.  Costs, long term financial sustainability/ reliance on finite or vulnerable funding streams. Financial control, fraud and corruption.

Note: Failure to manage risks in any of the above categories may lead to financial, reputational, legal, regulatory, safety, security, environmental, employee, citizen and operational consequences.

It is important to maintain a sense of proportionality with day-to-day risk and the following principles will be applied:

- Managers have a good understanding of their services and service developments and are able to adequately identify the risks involved.
- Managers understand the limits that the organisation places on the action that can be taken by any individual officer. There is a general awareness of what management action is appropriate and where further consultation and approvals are required with colleagues and more senior managers. The organisation therefore recognises its risk appetite in relation to the decisions it takes.
- There is a good level of understanding of what level of risk is acceptable to take during the normal course of work and the organisation recognises its risk appetite in relation to its ongoing activities.
- Unnecessary bureaucracy should be avoided, in particular by preparing documentation solely to demonstrate (rather than support or enhance) effective management. The cost (in terms of the time involved) relative to the benefit gained by defining every possible risk in detail and assigning impact and likelihood scores to each risk associated with every planned or current activity is deemed too great to be generally worthwhile. However, where there are known concentrations of risk, such as in new service developments or relating to our programme of tier 1 projects, managers understand that they must document, monitor and manage these risks using the council's scoring framework. Similarly, the senior leadership team (or whoever is appropriate) should seek to identify, assess and manage those risks that seem likely to cause problems or bring benefits at a corporate level.
- The internal audit team at the Southern Internal Audit Partnership (SIAP) work with the responsible Strategic Director and Executive Leadership Board (ELB) to consider the council's assurance needs and makes its own assessment of the internal audit work required to provide this assurance.
- Managers are encouraged and supported to consider the potential threats and opportunities involved in any new service developments and improvements, and to monitor ongoing performance. Documentation of risks, related controls and mitigating action plans should be considered where this is helpful and appropriate and, where this is the case, risk registers should be prepared. This is likely to be appropriate for specific service development projects when project risk registers must be monitored closely by the lead project manager and sponsor.
- It is the responsibility of all staff to assess risks associated with their work and projects and to escalate any potential existing or emerging risks which they feel cannot be managed within sensible parameters to ELB.

- The Programme Management and Capital Strategy (PAC) Board regularly review the risks of all major projects (Tier 1 and 2) and capital programme schemes.

### **Identification of risks**

ELB regularly reviews the Corporate Risk Register and decides if any risks need to be escalated, if there are any emerging risks to be added or any risks that should be removed. Risk owners for corporate risks are generally a member of ELB. The Risk Register records a Risk Description, Risk Owner and details of potential causes, consequences and controls. The inherent risk should be assessed and recorded (the original level of risk before treatment measures have been taken into consideration) and also the residual risk (the remaining level of risk after risk mitigation and control measures have been taken into consideration.) ELB also review the current controls and decide if any further are needed or whether the residual risk is accepted.

The Corporate Risk Register is included as an appendix to the Risk Management Policy and formally agreed each year by cabinet. Audit and Governance Committee reviews the risks and policy to make comments to cabinet on the efficacy of the arrangements for managing risk at the council.

Service or operational risks are reviewed by the relevant Corporate Head of Service (CHOS) on an ongoing basis and significant risks added to the relevant statement of assurance during the spring of each year.

Increases to the ratings of Operational Risks are reported to ELB who review the current controls and assess whether further mitigation measures are required.

ELB also review the high-risk Operational Risks to identify if any are linked to current Strategic Risks so that impact can be assessed and considered in the whole.

The council's project management methodology follows best practice frameworks including PRINCE2 and the Association of Project Management (APM). Incorporated within this methodology is a robust process for the management and reporting of project risks. Project managers are responsible for assessing risks and creating a risk register for each new project they lead and regularly reviewing the risks and updating the risk register throughout the project lifecycle.

Overarching project risks (for example, failure to deliver on a specific project) may be escalated to the corporate risk register if they are of sufficient importance at this level and/or the risks would have a significant impact on delivery of one or more Council Plan priorities. Tier 1 and Tier 2 projects are reviewed regularly by the PAC Board.

The Annual Governance Statement is also a key part of risk management and plays an important role in the identification, assessment and escalation of risks. The statement is produced annually following a review of the council's governance arrangements including how the council delivers good governance. Underpinning the statement are the individual statements of assurance which are completed by each

Service Lead and include details of significant risks for their service area and actions to be undertaken to mitigate the risks. Risks which have additional corporate significance are escalated into the Annual Governance Statement which reads across into the Corporate Risk Register.

It is important for Service Leads to refer to this Policy when completing their statement of assurance and providing details of risks affecting the pursuit of team objectives and delivery of the priorities included in the Council Plan (although this is not the only time risks will be considered).

## **5. How risk management feeds into corporate planning and operational management**

By embedding risk management into existing policy and business planning processes, members and officers can make informed decisions, for example about the appropriateness of adopting a policy or service delivery option.

The information resulting from the risk management approach acts as one of the key pieces of information incorporated into the development of corporate, business and service plans. Risk management is an essential element in establishing policy, developing plans and enhancing operational management.

In order to formalise and structure risk management at the council, it is recognised that there are obvious and clear links between risk management and strategic objectives; financial planning; policy making & review and performance management. The linkages are as follows:

a) The Council Plan reflects the desired outcomes for the district, informed by consultation with residents and stakeholders and sets out the priority outcomes for the council and identifies the important issues that will be addressed over the life of the Plan through the work of the council and its partners. During the lifetime of the Plan there will be direct and indirect threats to the achievement of the outcomes, and these are risks that must be effectively managed.

b) As part of the annual planning process each team considers the key actions to be taken and targets for performance and Corporate Heads of Service prepare strategic service plans for their areas. An assessment of the risks form part of this planning which is an identification and prioritisation of the most significant risks faced in delivering the key priorities for the year, with actions identified to mitigate and manage these. These actions are then managed as part of the normal business of the team.

c) All staff have an annual appraisal which monitors progress being made and sets objectives for the coming year required to deliver service plan actions and achieve. As part of this, risk management is cascaded down to risk owners as an objective which aims to gain their support and awareness to ensure effective management of

risk within the council. Risk Owners are required to review and update their risks quarterly. This process is managed via the council's Risk Management software with Risk Owners being prompted to update risks in accordance with the policy. This ensures corporate visibility of new, escalated and de-escalated risks for reporting as appropriate.

d) Measurement of performance against the Council Plan outcomes, performance indicators and key tasks is achieved in a number of ways:

- In addition to day-to-day management, teams carry out a regular review of progress in their area, which includes assessment of progress against Council Plan actions, performance trends and risks. Where appropriate, exceptions are reported to ELB for consideration and agreement of corrective action, if required.
- ELB also keep an overview of financial plans, with service performance and emerging risks with corporate risks being reviewed quarterly. If a risk materialises and becomes a live 'issue' the response to this and owner of the issue is agreed by ELB.
- The Scrutiny Committee receives quarterly reports that provides an update on the progress achieved against Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) which reflect actions included in the Council Plan and any significant issues are raised with cabinet.
- PAC Board consider risks for major projects and capital programme schemes.

## **6. How do we evaluate risks?**

The council evaluates its identified risks on a four-point scale on the likelihood or probability of the risk occurring and the impact caused should the risk occur being rated between low and significant.

RAG (Red-Amber-Green) ratings, also commonly known as 'traffic lighting,' are used to summarise risks (original and residual). At a basic level Green means low-risk or likelihood and that any risk is being well managed; while Amber and Red indicate progressively more significant or likely risks that require more action to manage down to a tolerable level.

The council has chosen to divide the rating into RAG bands as shown on the risk map below:

		IMPACT			
		Low (1)	Moderate (2)	Major (3)	Significant (4)
LIKELIHOOD	Highly Likely (4)				
	Likely (3)				
	Unlikely (2)				
	Highly Unlikely (1)				

## Impact Rating

The following table provides the definitions which should be used when determining whether a risk would have a Low, Moderate, Major or Significant impact.

Impact is defined as the impact to the organisation should the risk materialise.

Each potential risk area should be considered, and the highest impact scored should be the score (1-4) that is used to define the overall impact score.

	Low (1)	Moderate (2)	Major (3)	Significant (4)
Financial	Less than £20k	£20k or over and less than £250k	£250k or over and less than-£2m	£2m plus
Service Provision	No effect	Slightly Reduced	Service Suspended Short Term / reduced	Service Suspended Long Term Statutory duties not delivered
Health & Safety	Sticking Plaster / first aider	Broken bones/illness Lost time, accident or occupational ill health	Loss of Life/Major illness – Major injury incl broken limbs/hospital admittance. Major ill health	Major loss of life/Large scale major illness
Morale	No effect	Some hostile relationship and minor non cooperation	Industrial action	Mass staff leaving/Unable to attract staff
Reputation	No media attention / minor letters	Adverse Local media	Adverse National publicity	Remembered for years
Govt relations	One off single complaint	Poor Assessment(s)	Service taken over temporarily	Service taken over permanently

## Likelihood Rating

Likelihood is the chance of a risk materialising.

It is unlikely that in many cases the probability of a risk occurring can be calculated in a statistically robust fashion as we do not have the data to do so. However, as an indicator, the likelihood is defined by the following probability of a risk occurring:

Likelihood	Probability
Highly Unlikely (1)	1% to 25% chance in 5 years
Unlikely (2)	26% to 50% chance in 5 years
Likely (3)	51% to 75% chance in 5 years
Highly Likely (4)	76% to 100% chance in 5 years

## 7 How we respond to risks

Once a risk has been identified, the council need to decide and agree what it is going to do about it. The recognised approaches to controlling risks are described as the five key elements or 5 T's; Tolerate, Treat, Transfer, Terminate and Take the opportunity. These are described in more detail below. It is generally accepted that where a risk can be reduced through some form of treatment or mitigation in a cost-effective fashion then it is good to do so.

As a general principal, once a risk has been identified, consideration must be given to the five T's and that the chosen approach is seen as being cost-effective so that the control of the risk is not disproportionate to the expected benefits.

The five T's are:

**Treatment** By far the greatest number of risks will be addressed in this way by using appropriate control counter measures to constrain the risk or reduce the impact or likelihood to acceptable levels. Examples include strategy, process, people or systems improvement.

**Transfer** For some risks the best response may be to transfer them, and this might be done by transferring the risk to another party to bear or share the risk, e.g. through insurance, contracting or entering into a partnership. Reputation risk can never be transferred.

**Tolerate** Where it is not possible to transfer or treat the risk, consideration needs to be given to how the consequences are managed should they occur. This may require having contingency plans in place, for example, Business Continuity Plan which creates capacity to tolerate risk to a certain degree.

**Terminate** Some risks will only be treatable, or containable to acceptable levels by terminating the activity that created them. It should be noted that the

option of termination of activities may be severely limited in government when compared to the private sector; a number of activities are conducted in the government sector because the associated risks are so great that there is no other way in which the output or outcome, which is required for the public benefit, can be achieved. This option can be particularly important in project management if it becomes clear that the projected cost / benefit relationship is in jeopardy.

### **Take the**

**Opportunity** This option is not an alternative to those above; rather it is an option which should be considered whenever tolerating, transferring or treating a risk. There are two aspects to this. The first is whether or not at the same time as mitigating threats; an opportunity arises to exploit positive impact. For example, if a large sum of capital funding is to be put at risk in a major project, are the relevant controls judged to be good enough to justify increasing the sum of money at stake to gain even greater advantages? The second is whether or not circumstances arise which, whilst not generating threats, offer positive opportunities. For example, a drop in the cost of goods or services frees up resources which can be re-deployed.

## **8. Risk Appetite**

ALARM defines risk appetite as *“The amount of risk to the organisation, or subset of it, it is willing to accept.”* (Source: ALARM Risk Management Toolkit 2021).

A clearly understood and articulated risk appetite statement assists with the risk awareness for the council and supports decision making in pursuit of its priority outcomes and objectives.

The council’s Risk Appetite Statement is an integral part of its Risk Management Policy and ensures that the opportunities the council is willing to take to achieve its strategic outcomes and objectives are measured, consistent and compatible with the capacity to accept and manage risk and do not expose the council to unknown, unmanaged or unacceptable risks.

This statement will be reviewed and approved by cabinet annually. The approved statement will be included as an appendix to the Risk Management Policy. The council may decide to move the appetite up or down based on a number of influencing factors including financial and capacity, and the council may have a higher ‘aspirational’ risk appetite once sufficient assurance is gained and processes put in place to manage the higher levels of risk.

Risk management is about being ‘risk aware.’ Risk is ever present in everything that we do and some risk taking is inevitable if the council is to achieve its objectives. Risk management is about making the most of opportunities when they arise and achieving objectives once those decisions are made. By being ‘risk aware’ the

council is better placed to avoid unforeseen problems and take advantage of opportunities that arise.

We recognise risk management as a vital activity that underpins and forms part of our vision, values and strategic objectives, (including operating effectively and efficiently), as well as providing confidence to our community.

## The council's Risk Appetite 2026/27

The council will take fair, measured and targeted levels of risk to achieve the priority objectives included in the Council Plan. There will be opportunities for the council to be innovative or work differently and any identified risks will need to be considered against the anticipated cost and efficiency benefits.

When analysing the risk associated with decisions, the council considers the parameters around five key areas of risk, illustrated in the following diagram.



The Risk Appetite Statement supports members and officers in decision making by setting out where Cabinet is comfortable accepting different levels of risk, and which levels of risk are potentially unacceptable. The council's risk appetite should be considered in conjunction with the risk section of all committee reports when decisions are made.

The council's current overall risk appetite is defined as MODERATE (see table below for definitions). This means the council remains open to innovative ways of working and to pursue options that offer potentially substantial rewards, despite also having greater level of risks. However, the council's preference is for safe delivery options which have a lower degree of risk, especially for those services required by statute.

Risk Appetite Definitions	
Avoid	No appetite. Not prepared to take risk.
Averse	Prepared to accept only the very lowest levels of risk, with the preference being for ultra-safe delivery options, while recognising that these will have little or no potential for reward/return.
Cautious	Willing to accept some low risks, while maintaining an overall preference for safe delivery options despite the probability of these having mostly restricted potential for reward/return.
Moderate	Tending always towards exposure to only modest levels of risk in order to achieve acceptable outcomes.
Open	Prepared to consider all delivery options and select those with the highest probability of productive outcomes, even when there are elevated levels of associated risk.
Hungry	Eager to seek original/creative/pioneering delivery options and to accept the associated substantial risk levels in order to secure successful outcomes and meaningful reward/return.

Risk appetite is not a single, fixed concept and there will be a range of appetites for different risks which may vary over time. The council's risk appetite by corporate priority and guiding principles are set out below:

Council Plan Priority	Risk Appetite	
Greener Faster	Open	Reflecting the urgency of the climate crisis we will consider options with elevated levels of risk if they deliver required outcomes faster.
Good homes for all	Open	We will choose innovative solutions which may bring elevated levels of risk in order to provide homes that are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affordable</li> <li>• safe</li> <li>• sustainable</li> <li>• with low energy usage and low bills</li> <li>• built in the right areas for our changing communities.</li> </ul>
Healthy Communities	Moderate	We will continue to facilitate and deliver solutions, often working with partners, that produce positive outcomes for all our residents. We will usually take moderate to low-risk options.
Thriving Places	Open	We will consider all delivery options when taking decisions to improve run down areas by selecting those with the highest probability of productive and positive outcomes.
Efficient and Effective	Moderate	We will, in order to ensure resilience, enhance our services and make the best use of our resources and explore alternative delivery models and digital solutions. We will tend towards moderate risk exposure to deliver good levels of service.

## Assessing Risk against Risk Appetite

Effective risk management should support informed decision-making. A key consideration in balancing risks and opportunities to support informed decision-making and preparing tailored responses is the conscious and dynamic application of the organisation's risk appetite.

To give guidance to Officer's in terms of assessing project and decision risk against the council's risk appetite, the below table maps the risk appetite definitions above to the impact and likelihood set out in Section 6:

		I M P A C T			
		Low (1)	Moderate (2)	Major (3)	Significant (4)
L I K E L I H O O D	Highly Likely (4)	<b>Cautious</b>	<b>Open</b>	<b>Hungry</b>	<b>Hungry</b>
	Likely (3)	<b>Cautious</b>	<b>Open</b>	<b>Hungry</b>	<b>Hungry</b>
	Unlikely (2)	<b>Averse</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>Open</b>	<b>Open</b>
	Highly Unlikely (1)	<b>Averse</b>	<b>Cautious</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>Open</b>

## 9. Risk Registers

Individuals view risk in different ways, based on past experiences, personal beliefs and outlook, which impact risk perception. Having a structure and process improves consistency and alignment, ensuring a clear consensus on the prioritised risks facing an organisation, recorded in a risk register.

Risk registers are reference documents that summarise the different risks that might occur and record the potential impact to the council. Just because a risk is included on the risk register does not mean that the council thinks it will happen, but it does mean that the council thinks it is worth seeking to manage. The risk score is, therefore, based on a 'reasonable worst-case scenario.' The methodology for the scoring of risks is included in section 6 above.

The council maintains several risk registers, and these are:

- Corporate Risk Register – this register records the most significant risks for the council or those risks which may prevent the council from achieving its strategic objectives as set out in the Council Plan. Corporate Risks are managed by ELB.
- Operational Risk Register – includes risks that might affect the delivery of individual services but would not in isolation threaten the council's overall objectives. Operational risks are managed by the Corporate Heads of Service.
- Project and Programme Risk Registers – provides a register of the risks that if they occur have a positive or negative effect on the achievement of the project's and programme objectives. Project or Programme Managers manage project and programme risks.

## **10. How we monitor and report risk**

Risk management must be embedded into decision making, business planning and performance management arrangements so that it is central to the way the council works. It contributes to the concept of 'no surprises,' 'Getting it right first time' and 'Having a Plan' which will be useful should the unexpected happen.

The framework of monitoring and reporting has been developed using the council's performance management software; Pentana, which is able to record the risks onto the system with the relevant risk owner having access so that monitoring and updating can take place.

This requires:

- ELB monitors and reviews progress against corporate risks as part of its quarterly monitoring meeting, making a judgement on any risks referred for escalation and identifying any risks that can be moved to operational risk registers. Results of these reviews will form part of the regular monitoring report submitted to the Audit and Governance Committee and reported to Cabinet if decisions on any procedure or policy changes are needed.
- The Audit and Governance Committee receives regular monitoring reports that provide assurance that the risks identified on the Corporate Risk Register are being adequately managed. The Audit and Governance Committee may decide to receive in-depth reports for the most significant risks on the register or risks that are causing concern.

If at any time a risk other than those on the Corporate Risk Register (for example an operational risk) is scored 'red' full details will be presented to the quarterly ELB meeting for further consideration and approval of appropriate mitigation action and controls if required. This may include escalation to the Corporate Risk Register. ELB also receive notification of any other escalated or new Operational Risks for review quarterly.

All council committee reports include a section titled “Risk Management.” The purpose of this section is for the author to demonstrate and provide evidence that the risks associated with the content of the report have been properly identified, assessed and evaluated. The table in this section is split into categories of potential risk sources. Consideration should also be given to the council’s Risk Appetite to support decision making. This sets out the amount and type of risk that the council is prepared to seek, accept or tolerate.

## 11. Timetable

Risk management is an integral part of corporate governance, and in particular is closely linked with performance management. Therefore, the cyclical timetable for risk management follows that of the performance management framework:

When	Who?	What?
Winter / Spring	Executive Leadership Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quarterly review of Corporate Risk Register</li> <li>Budget and Business Plan risks considered</li> <li>Reviews and comments on the draft Risk Management Policy and Risk Appetite Statement and for the coming year</li> </ul>
	Audit and Governance Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review the Corporate Risk Register and monitoring report</li> <li>Reviews and comments on the draft Risk Management Policy and Risk Management Appetite for the coming year</li> </ul>
	Cabinet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approval of updated Risk Policy for the forthcoming year</li> <li>Approval of Risk Appetite for forthcoming year</li> <li>Approval of Corporate Risk Register</li> </ul>
Summer	Executive Leadership Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quarterly review of Corporate Risk Register and any escalated or new Operational Risks</li> </ul>
	Audit and Governance Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review the Corporate Risk Register and monitoring report</li> <li>In-depth update for significant corporate risks as requested</li> </ul>
Autumn	Executive Leadership Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quarterly review of Corporate Risk Register and any escalated or new Operational Risks</li> </ul>

When	Who?	What?
	Audit and Governance Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review the Corporate Risk Register and monitoring report</li> <li>In-depth update for significant corporate risks as requested</li> </ul>

## 12. Risk Management roles and responsibilities

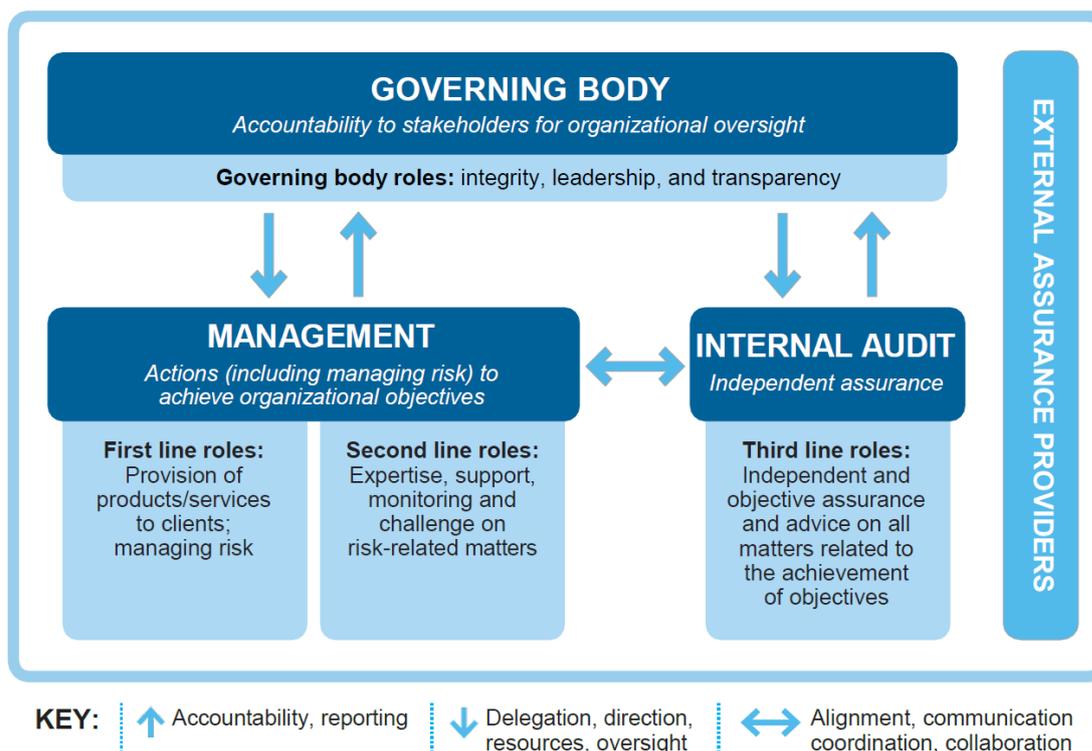
Assurance can come from many sources within an organisation. A concept for helping to identify and understand the different contributions the various sources can provide is the Three Lines of Defence model. By defining the sources of assurance in three broad categories, it helps to understand how each contributes to the overall level of assurance provided and how best they can be integrated and mutually supportive

This concept is widely known among the insurance, audit and banking sectors as a risk governance framework. The concept can be used as the primary means to demonstrate and structure roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for decision making, risk and control to achieve effective risk management, governance and assurance.

The following table is an example of the three lines of defence concept.

Example: Three line of defence model from the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA)

### The IIA's Three Lines Model



### **First line of defence:**

As the first line of defence, Service Leads or Service Managers own and manage risks within their service area. They are also responsible for implementing appropriate corrective action to address, process and control weaknesses.

Service Leads are also responsible for maintaining effective internal controls and managing risk on a day-to-day basis. They identify, assess, control and manage risks ensuring that their services are delivered in accordance with the council's aims and objectives.

### **Second line of defence:**

The second line of defence relates to the strategic direction managed by ELB and the council's oversight functions (e.g. Finance, Legal Services, Procurement and HR) which are responsible for defining policies, setting direction, ensuring compliance and providing assurance.

Included within the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy is the council's Whistleblowing Policy which encourages staff to report concerns which may expose the council to risk.

### **Third line of defence:**

Internal Audit is an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve the organisations operations. It helps the council accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes.

The aim of internal audit's work programme is to provide assurance to management, in relation to the business activities, systems or processes under review that the framework of internal control, risk management and governance is appropriate and operating effectively; and risks to the achievement of the council's objectives are identified, assessed and managed to a defined acceptable level.

Such risks are identified through senior management liaison and internal audits own assessment of risk. External audit, inspectors and regulators also provide assurance on the management of risk and delivery of objectives.

### **S151 Officer:**

In addition to the three main lines of defence, there is the role of the S151 Officer. CIPFA outlines one element of the role as, "demonstrates integrity by being based on robust systems for identifying, profiling, controlling and monitoring all significant strategic and operational risks"

## Other Specific Responsibilities

Who	What
<b>Members</b>	Elected members are responsible for governing the delivery of services to the local community. Members have a responsibility to understand the strategic objectives and risks that the council faces and will be made aware of how these risks are being managed.
<b>Cabinet</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure that effective arrangements are in place throughout the council, and these are kept up to date,</li> <li>• Approving the council's Risk Management Policy and Risk Appetite,</li> <li>• Monitoring the council's risk management and internal control arrangements via an exception reporting process,</li> <li>• Ensuring that Cabinet decisions made are cognisant of the council's Risk Appetite.</li> </ul>
<b>Audit and Governance Committee</b>	The Audit and Governance Committee's role is to provide independent assurance on the adequacy of the risk management framework, the internal control environment and the integrity of the financial reporting and annual governance, and to monitor the effective development and operation of risk management and corporate governance in the council.
<b>Executive Leadership Board (ELB)</b>	<p>ELB is pivotal in promoting effective risk management and ensuring that it is embedded in the culture of the council.</p> <p>The key responsibilities for the Chief Executive, S151 officer and ELB are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting the implementation of the council's risk management arrangements on a corporate basis</li> <li>• Supporting and promoting the benefits of effective risk management throughout the council</li> <li>• Supporting the identification and assessment of risk on an ongoing basis</li> <li>• Annually review the Corporate Risks to be presented to Cabinet</li> <li>• Managing the Corporate Risks</li> </ul>
<b>Programme and Capital (PAC) Board</b>	Regularly review the progress of the council's major projects and capital programme schemes. Includes review of risk registers, oversight of programme management and budget management
<b>Corporate Heads of Service, Heads of Programme, Service</b>	Senior managers have responsibility for minimising and managing risk within their teams. They will demonstrate their commitment to risk management through:

Who	What
<b>Leads and Senior Managers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being actively involved in the identification and assessment of risks</li> <li>• Developing relevant action plans for the key risks and establishing relevant performance indicators to measure their performance through the performance management framework</li> <li>• Incorporating the risk management process into business/service planning processes</li> <li>• Monitoring the Teams' risks regularly and on no less than a quarterly basis</li> <li>• Encouraging staff to be open and honest in identifying risks or potential opportunities</li> <li>• Ensuring that the risk management process is part of all major projects and change management initiatives</li> <li>• Ensuring that the risk management process is part of all major procurements and contract management activity</li> <li>• Monitoring and reviewing action plans regularly to effectively treat risks</li> </ul>
<b>Risk and Insurance Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate and support the procurement of the council's insurance programme and the management of claims.</li> <li>• Support managers in understanding where risk can be transferred by the use of insurance mechanisms</li> </ul>
<b>Senior Policy &amp; Programme Manager</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide risk management leadership and support across the council,</li> <li>• Provide assistance with and prepare management reports.</li> <li>• Support the Executive Leadership Board and senior managers on risk related issues.</li> </ul>
<b>All staff</b>	<p>All staff have the responsibility for council risks and must understand their role in the council's risk management arrangements including the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy which includes the Whistleblowing Policy. Training and support is provided at the staff induction and periodically.</p> <p>All staff are expected to know how to recognise, assess and evaluate risk, when to accept risk and to recognise that risks can create opportunities for the council.</p>
<b>Southern Internal Audit Partnership</b>	<p>The role of the Southern Internal Audit Partnership who act as the council's Internal Auditors is that of an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve the organisation's operations. It helps an organisation accomplish its</p>

Who	What
	objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes. It will be responsible for undertaking an assessment of the council's risk management and internal control mechanisms as part of the review of corporate governance arrangements.

Everyone involved in risk management has a responsibility to identify learning from risks and their management.

**Corporate Risk Register**

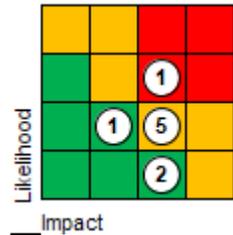
Significant strategic risks have been reviewed by ELB and below is the current Corporate Risk Register 2026/27.

# Corporate Risk Register 2026/27



As of 4 February 2026

Residual Risk Summary:



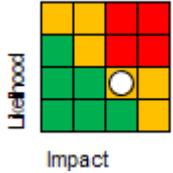
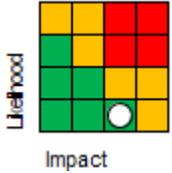
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Code	Risk Description	Risk Owner	What might go wrong? (cause)	What will happen? (consequence)	Original Risk Rating	Current Controls	Residual Risk
CR001	Given competing demands and multiple complex priorities, the risk is that the council does not maintain capacity to deliver services	Chief Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ambitious council plan with multiple strands of activity</li> <li>• Staff resources are lean, and teams are working at capacity to deliver services at current levels of demand</li> <li>• Outbreak of a pandemic that increases the pressure to continue to provide critical services as well as respond to the needs of residents and businesses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If decision making is slow, delays occur, and potentially available resources are redeployed or become unavailable if they are externally sourced</li> <li>• Implementation of business continuity plan to target work in critical areas in cases of staff shortage</li> <li>• If staff lack political awareness, middle managers will be slow to redeploy resource to current priorities</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council Plan is distilled into key priorities by service. If capacity becomes an issue, prioritisation of activity is in place</li> <li>• Critical activities are reviewed with Cabinet alongside a refreshed Council Plan approved in January'23</li> <li>• Proactive approach to communications internal and external</li> <li>• 50/50 hybrid working policy agreed</li> </ul>	

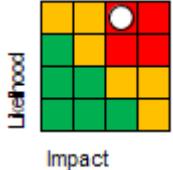
Code	Risk Description	Risk Owner	What might go wrong? (cause)	What will happen? (consequence)	Original Risk Rating	Current Controls	Residual Risk
			<p>affected by the pandemic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competition from the private sector for key staff roles e.g. planning, project management</li> <li>• Decision making can be slow</li> <li>• Tension between day-to-day and strategic priorities</li> <li>• Key skills not in the right place</li> <li>• Budget uncertainty</li> <li>• Preparing for Local Government Reorganisation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If staff are diverted, then can't deliver on other lower-level priorities or day-to-day work</li> <li>• Reputation is damaged as the council is not seen to be able to deliver projects</li> <li>• Local members are not always kept informed of activity in their area</li> <li>• Unable to deliver key council services</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintaining communication</li> <li>• Annual business planning, with actions and projects aligned to Council Plan priorities</li> <li>• Regular meetings with relevant cabinet members</li> <li>• Positive use of fixed term contracts to aid flexible resourcing</li> <li>• Targeted use of external resource</li> <li>• Reallocation of human and financial resources across and within the organisation as required</li> <li>• PAC Board regularly reviews resources available to deliver projects</li> <li>• Substantial assurance opinion following internal audit review of corporate planning and performance monitoring.</li> <li>• Close monitoring of the impacts of LGR on council capacity</li> </ul>	

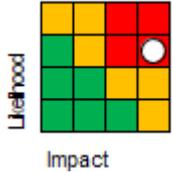
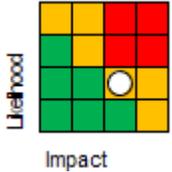
Code	Risk Description	Risk Owner	What might go wrong? (cause)	What will happen? (consequence)	Original Risk Rating	Current Controls	Residual Risk
						and delivery of services and reflected in future service plans	
CR003	Decisions made by the council are challenged due to a lack of a strong evidence base, customer insight and engagement with change or procedural errors	Monitoring Officer G John	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of skill and/or time to identify evidence to support decision making</li> <li>• Lack of consultation with ward members and/ or parish councils over local issues</li> <li>• Procedural error in statutory process</li> <li>• Inconsistent and traditional approach to customer engagement across the council</li> <li>• Lack of awareness of the questions to ask</li> <li>• Lack of awareness of the 'right time' to engage</li> <li>• Lack of public awareness of the opportunity to engage</li> <li>• Council is not aware of the full range of interested stakeholders</li> <li>• Council may only hear the loudest voices and not the silent majority or those that do not readily engage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of a robust and evidence-based approach to customer engagement can lead to:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reputational damage</li> <li>- Views that the council is too Winchester-centric</li> <li>- Decisions made are Inequitable</li> <li>- A perception that people's views are ignored</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Ward members and/or parish council's not being informed</li> <li>• Legal/ judicial review or challenge against a decision made</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engagement with ward and parish councillors (on matters within their ward or parish) encouraged</li> <li>• Risks with regard to significant projects are recognised and addressed separately via robust Project Management and regular reports to the Programme and Capital Strategy Board</li> <li>• Legal and Monitoring Officer consultation on decisions made</li> <li>• 2024 Residents' survey commissioned and will be undertaken in June'24 and results will be used to evidence decision making</li> <li>• A proactive open and transparent approach to communication based on Gunning Principles</li> </ul>	

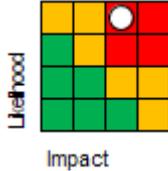
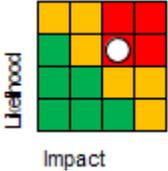
Code	Risk Description	Risk Owner	What might go wrong? (cause)	What will happen? (consequence)	Original Risk Rating	Current Controls	Residual Risk
Page 247						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of external specialist advice when appropriate</li> <li>• Commitment made in the refreshed Council Plan in terms of 'Listening Better'</li> <li>• Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Action Plan is being embedded across the organisation</li> <li>• Updated Constitution adopted at Council on 30 November 2023</li> <li>• Where possible and appropriate, digitalisation will be utilised to mitigate against procedural errors</li> <li>• Substantial assurance opinion following internal audit review of decision making</li> </ul>	
	CR004	Failure to have plans and processes in place to recover and maintain services after a major incident (including pandemic) that has a significant impact on the ability of the Council to provide its services	Chief Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not maintaining an effective corporate wide Business Continuity Plan</li> <li>• Not regularly testing the plan and following-up learning</li> <li>• Key staff unavailable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unacceptable delay and uncertainty in returning to normal working after an emergency</li> <li>• Adverse publicity and criticism</li> <li>• Reputation damage</li> <li>• Adverse social and/or economic impact</li> </ul>	<p>Likelihood</p> <p>Impact</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business Continuity Plans reviewed and tested in 2024 and approved by ELB</li> <li>• IT Disaster Recovery Plan exercise held on 20 March</li> <li>• Business critical services reviewed in</li> </ul>

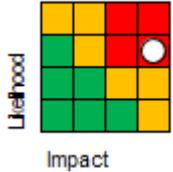
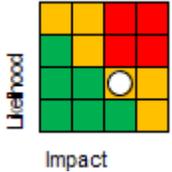
Code	Risk Description	Risk Owner	What might go wrong? (cause)	What will happen? (consequence)	Original Risk Rating	Current Controls	Residual Risk
Page 248 CR006			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication systems ineffective</li> <li>• Lack of awareness of Business Continuity Plan</li> <li>• Failure to assess business critical functions and have plans in place</li> </ul>			2025 with individual business continuity plans created, and approved <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All staff able to seamlessly work from home, where job allows</li> <li>• 2023 internal audit review of business continuity offered substantial opinion and no identified weaknesses.</li> <li>• Work programme in place for 2026 to review, update and test plans</li> </ul>	
	Breakdown of effective partnership working	Chief Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnerships can falter due to lack of shared vision within partnerships</li> <li>• Money spent on Partnership working doesn't add value</li> <li>• Strategic partnerships may falter due to conflicting demands within individual partners</li> <li>• Incorrect application of the procurement regulations due to a misunderstanding as to how and when they</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant project delivery such as the major projects and the new homes building programme could fail due to failure of strategic partnerships</li> <li>• Local delivery could fail if local strategic partners are not aligned</li> <li>• Reputational damage to all partners</li> <li>• Lack of value for money (VfM)</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual review by each CHoS of all partnerships undertaken to identify key strategic partners</li> <li>• Partnership register established and endorsed by ELB on 6 March.</li> <li>• Guidance documents available from Knowledge Hub</li> <li>• Partnership Governance and Management Framework adopted.</li> </ul>	

Code	Risk Description	Risk Owner	What might go wrong? (cause)	What will happen? (consequence)	Original Risk Rating	Current Controls	Residual Risk
			apply to partnership working <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partnerships may be unsuccessfully commissioned due to lack of skills and poor scoping</li> <li>Significant local, regional, or national partners may close down, affecting the council</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partnership scoring tool available to assess project tier</li> <li>Management checklist available from Knowledge Hub</li> </ul>	
CR007	Lack of sufficient funding and/or escalating costs over the medium term reducing financial viability and inability to achieve a balanced budget (General Fund and HRA)	Director of Finance L Keys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduced Government funding</li> <li>Reliance on strategic partners to deliver services and projects</li> <li>Macro economy, including effects of Brexit, reduces locally generated Business Rates and parking income</li> <li>Failure to achieve income targets</li> <li>Inflation rises</li> <li>Penalties are imposed on the Council due to falling standards in services</li> <li>Impact of a Pandemic</li> <li>Additional financial costs preparing for Local Government</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unable to balance the budget</li> <li>Increased Council Tax</li> <li>Public's ability to pay for services</li> <li>Reduce services provided</li> <li>Demand/cost of services</li> <li>Increased construction costs and impact on delivery and viability of key projects</li> <li>Over borrowing and avoidable cost</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One year funding settlement in place</li> <li>MTFS approach setting out medium and longer term options</li> <li>Quarterly finance reporting and monitoring of key income sources</li> <li>Regular policy review and monitoring</li> <li>Scenario planning and sensitivity analysis of key risks</li> <li>Transformation Challenge 2025 (TC25) is embedded into the organisation.</li> <li>Maintain General fund reserve of at least £2m</li> </ul>	

Code	Risk Description	Risk Owner	What might go wrong? (cause)	What will happen? (consequence)	Original Risk Rating	Current Controls	Residual Risk
Page 250			<p>Reorganisation that are unbudgeted for.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uncertainty over total cost of preparing for LGR</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular review of reserves</li> <li>• Annual review of fees and charges</li> <li>• Monthly budget monitoring and regular HRA business plan updates</li> <li>• Substantial assurance opinion following internal audit of the council's financial stability (including TC25).</li> <li>• Cabinet approved MTFS on 19 November 2025 setting a balanced budget to the end of 2027/28</li> </ul>	
	CR008	Availability of new homes to meet the strategic need via a variety of means (build or buy).	Strategic Director S Hendey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing demand for new houses</li> <li>• High cost of housing, including private rented sector</li> <li>• Unable to identify new sites for new houses</li> <li>• Increasing infrastructure demands on new sites</li> <li>• Higher build costs</li> <li>• Increasing inflation and interest rates affecting supply</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased housing waiting list numbers</li> <li>• Increasing homelessness</li> <li>• Difficulty accessing housing markets</li> <li>• Outward migration of younger residents</li> <li>• Adverse publicity</li> <li>• Government intervention</li> <li>• Ability to meet the business plan target which will have a negative effect on income</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A variety of plans in place to deliver new homes</li> <li>• Regular monitoring of projects</li> <li>• Revised Housing Strategy and HRA Business Plan</li> <li>• Cost benchmarking</li> </ul>

Code	Risk Description	Risk Owner	What might go wrong? (cause)	What will happen? (consequence)	Original Risk Rating	Current Controls	Residual Risk
CR009	Failure in cyber security leaving the council exposed to phishing and other attacks leading to compromised IT systems and data loss	Director of Finance L Keys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Malicious attack by Hackers for financial gain</li> <li>Malicious attack by Hackers to disrupt business and ability to deliver services</li> <li>Viral code attack in order to data mine information and identities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Possible complete shutdown of Council IT Systems and Infrastructure</li> <li>Business\service delivery disruption</li> <li>Significant Financial loss</li> <li>Credibility and confidence lost in engaging with digital services and e-payments</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mandatory Cyber Security awareness training held for all staff</li> <li>IT Systems and processes administered to PSN (Public Services Network) standards and protocols</li> <li>ITILv3 Methodology adoption for ITSM</li> <li>Comprehensive and regular reviews of ISP (Information Security Policies) and IT Network Access Policies</li> <li>Operational daily checks and proactive monitoring of Firewalls and pattern updates</li> <li>Staff qualified in Cyber Scheme Professional standards and within GOV UK CESG guidelines</li> <li>Regular system health checks and vulnerability scans</li> <li>System and software maintained to supported levels.</li> </ul>	

Code	Risk Description	Risk Owner	What might go wrong? (cause)	What will happen? (consequence)	Original Risk Rating	Current Controls	Residual Risk
						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Email security managed by accredited 3rd party</li> <li>Insurance for potential losses of a cyber attack</li> <li>Third party review jointly with TVBC being undertaken to see what further actions the councils can pro-actively take to mitigate this risk further</li> </ul>	
R010	Failure to effectively respond to the Climate Change Emergency and reduce the council and district carbon emissions	Chief Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Failure to achieve target for the council to be carbon neutral by 2024 and the district by 2030</li> <li>Carbon emissions increase</li> <li>Air quality drops</li> <li>Insufficient project capacity in-house</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reputational damage for failing to meet targets</li> <li>Increased risk of flooding - damage to property, disruption to business, health, and wellbeing of displaced residents</li> <li>Increased risk of droughts - pressure on river system health, depleted aquifer/reservoir volumes, negative impact upon agriculture, fire risk</li> <li>Extreme heat and cold - health risk for vulnerable people, pressure on emergency and health services</li> <li>Protests by lobby groups</li> <li>House price volatility</li> </ul>	 <p>Likelihood Impact</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revised CNAP plan put in place 13/09/2023</li> <li>Actions leading towards carbon reduction are clearer in theme and size of reduction needed.</li> <li>Climate Emergency declared in 2019</li> <li>Asset Management Strategy</li> <li>£45mil HRA</li> <li>Council named 'Top Performing' district council for Climate Change</li> </ul>	 <p>Likelihood Impact</p>

Code	Risk Description	Risk Owner	What might go wrong? (cause)	What will happen? (consequence)	Original Risk Rating	Current Controls	Residual Risk
CR011	Lack of preparedness and incapability to respond to events caused by climate change	Chief Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Failure to prepare for an adverse weather event, for example long period of rain, heavy snow, or heatwave</li> <li>• Failure to manage sluice gates and maintain rivers</li> <li>• Failure to have plans in place to respond and recover to an adverse weather event</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flooding causing damage to property and assets</li> <li>• Loss of income to the council e.g. closed car parks due to snow</li> <li>• Adverse publicity</li> <li>• Damage to reputation</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiagency Emergency Response Plan in place, reviewed and updated annually</li> <li>• Emergency Planning exercise to test the Plan held annually with partners participating</li> <li>• Completion of flood alleviation schemes</li> <li>• Temporary flood defence barrier purchased and available to be deployed where there is a need</li> <li>• The Emerging Local Plan has clear objectives to support the council priority of Tackling the climate emergency and creating a greener district</li> <li>• Annual review of Flood Action Plan which includes contact details of parish flood coordinators last undertaken in November 2025</li> </ul>	

Code	Risk Description	Risk Owner	What might go wrong? (cause)	What will happen? (consequence)	Original Risk Rating	Current Controls	Residual Risk
						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gold and Silver commander training attended or to be by relevant officers at that level.</li> <li>• Extreme Weather Plan in place</li> <li>• HOIW LRF Multi-agency Flood Plan in place</li> <li>• LRF Community Resilience workstream</li> </ul>	



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## Finance and Performance Report – October to December 2025

### Recommendation

That Cabinet notes the progress achieved during Q3 of 2025/26 and endorses the contents of the report.

### Index

#### Performance Report

Section 1 – Greener Faster

Section 2 – Healthy Communities

Section 3 – Thriving Places

Section 4 – Good Homes for All

Section 5 – Efficient and Effective

Section 6 – Listening and Learning

#### Finance report.

Section 7 - Financial report

### **Updates since Q2 25/26 report**

This report has been updated to include the Tier 1 project highlight report for Local Government Reorganisation and is included under the Efficient and Effective Council Plan priority.

### Red/Amber/Green status

The table below provides a brief explanation of the RAG status used throughout this report to quickly and visually communicate the status of projects and service plan actions.

<b>GREEN</b>	<b>Normal level of attention</b> Project is on track to be delivered on time and within agreed resources
<b>AMBER</b>	<b>Minor concern</b> Some issues, being managed, needs to be closely monitored
<b>RED</b>	<b>Major concern</b> Serious issues, milestone dates being missed, recovery plan required

## **PERFORMANCE REPORT**

### **Section 1 Greener Faster**

#### **Delivery highlights – October to December 2025**

- Local Plan Inspector has accepted in her post-hearing note (ED38a) that the emerging Local Plan policies on climate neutrality that go beyond current or planned Building Regulations (Policies CN1 and CN3) are (subject to consultation to Main Modifications, consistent with national policy), justified and effective.
- New tree manager in post. Applied for and secured grant funding for planting disease resistant elms.
- Published an executive summary of Nature Improvement Plan and worked with communications to promote via video, website and social media.
- The Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hampshire was published on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2025 with Winchester City Council contributing towards the development of the document in partnership with Hampshire local authorities, Natural England, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust and other organisations.
- 27 swift bird boxes have been erected as part of property services work in relation to repairs, maintenance and retrofit, creating nesting habitat.
- Usage of council Electric Vehicle Charge Points continues to remain higher than the corresponding period last year. The council's new rapid charging points have now been operational for over a year. The increase in EV charging is primarily due to more electric vehicles on UK roads and the install of other fast vehicle chargers such as at KGV Pavilion and Belvoir House.
- Progressed the Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment to assess ways in which council, residents, businesses, and infrastructure may be affected by climate risks and impacts. Engaged a range of key internal stakeholders to input into the council's Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (CRVA). Attended HEP committee in December to provide an update on the CRVA.
- The bike bus network in Winchester remains popular during quarter 3. A stall was held at Bishops Waltham Greening event to promote the bike bus. In December, the Winchester Bike Bus project ended, and a report has been submitted to Hampshire County Council highlighting its success.

## Our Carbon Neutrality Action Plan (Council)

<b>Lead Cabinet Member:</b> Cllr Kelsie Learney					<b>Project Sponsor:</b> Cheryl Headon							
<b>Programme RAG status</b>	<b>Timeline</b>				<b>Budget</b>				<b>Carbon</b>			
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
<p><b>RAG Status update:</b> The anticipated carbon savings attributed to decarbonising corporate assets (Guildhall &amp; City Offices and Winchester Sports and Leisure Park) are at risk. Work is ongoing to identify opportunities for further decarbonisation.</p>												
<p><b>Progress achieved during the last quarter:</b> Good progress has been made across all pathways for Q3. The following updates are some of the key highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approval given for the purchase of three additional low carbon vehicles for Special Maintenance fleet; work has progressed with their procurement.</li> <li>• Two electric vehicles for Animal welfare retrofitted and are now in use.</li> <li>• Repair of solar PV panels at Vaultex car park complete. Monitoring shows these panels are now generating as expected. Application for Smart Export Guarantee payments submitted for this site.</li> <li>• PAC board supported development of two Outline Business Case rooftop solar PV projects to Full Business Case. Completed a pre-market engagement exercise for technical work for solar PV projects.</li> <li>• Organised series of engagement sessions to gather updated requirements for Grounds maintenance contract, including exploring efficiencies, changes in priority, and market innovation. Completed a pre-market engagement exercise with interested suppliers.</li> </ul>												
<p><b>Actions for the next quarter:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issue Request for Quote and appoint solar PV consultancy contractors to proceed with technical surveys. Outcome of surveys which will help inform Full Business Case for small scale rooftop PV projects.</li> <li>• Finalise plans and deliver tree planting.</li> <li>• Appoint a supplier, through a framework agreement, to order four low carbon vehicle replacements for Special Maintenance fleet.</li> <li>• Instruct contractor to proceed with solar PV rooftop install at Meadowside Leisure Centre. Installation of new, more energy efficient, boilers.</li> <li>• Member Briefing held on 9 February to provide an update on 'Nature Markets'</li> </ul>												

## Our Carbon Neutrality Action Plan (District)

<b>Lead Cabinet Member:</b> Cllr Kelsie Learney					<b>Project Sponsor:</b> Cheryl Headon							
Programme RAG status	Timeline				Budget				Carbon			
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
<p><b>RAG status update</b> Timeline: whilst good progress has been made across the pathways some projects are still in their infancy and will take time to deliver the kilotonnes of CO2e savings required. Carbon: A key continuing challenge for the district CNAP is tracking the carbon saved by the actions/ projects as this is because the government dataset is reported 2 years in arrears.</p>												
<p><b>Progress achieved during the last quarter:</b></p> <p>Significant progress has been made across all pathways for Q3.</p> <p><b>Key progress</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successful bid for HCC Active travel grant. Allocated £40,000 to deliver active travel initiatives in Stanmore. Finalising grant funding agreement.</li> <li>• Carried out five business carbon saving assessments this quarter. Obtained PAC Board approval to develop a Full Business Case for second Solar for Business site.</li> <li>• Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP) – Received draft modelling stages for the LAEP and the Community Led Energy Plan for achieving net zero energy system by 2030, 2040 and 2050. Reviewing and compiling feedback.</li> <li>• Large scale renewable energy scheme – financial modelling outputs reviewed, current options are not financially viable. Drafting report to PAC board to provide an update on financial viability of the scheme for Q4.</li> <li>• Community Solar Support Scheme – successful UKSPF bid, delivery of second phase commenced in October. Scoped and supporting eight buildings (including one school) keen to progress with small scale solar.</li> </ul>												
<p><b>Actions for the next quarter:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HCC Active Travel Grant – procuring delivery partner for Stanmore scheme.</li> <li>• Working with Sparsholt College to initiate delivery of Digital Inclusion project.</li> <li>• Local Area Energy Plan – provide feedback on modelling stages and expecting final outputs of Local Area Energy plan by March 2026.</li> <li>• Launch peer-to-peer mentoring scheme, available to businesses in the district.</li> <li>• Completion of second phase of Community Solar support Scheme – reporting on outcomes and carbon savings.</li> </ul>												

## Future of Waste and Recycling

<b>Lead Cabinet Member:</b> Cllr Kelsie Learney / Cllr Steve Cramoysan	<b>Project Sponsor:</b> Cheryl Headon							
<b>Programme RAG status</b>	<b>Timeline</b>				<b>Budget</b>			
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
<p><b>Progress achieved during the last quarter:</b></p> <p><b>Food Waste Rollout</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Four collection rounds fully implemented; rollout remains on track.</li> <li>318 tonnes of food waste collected from October to December 2025</li> <li>No significant complaints reported regarding the food waste service.</li> </ul> <p><b>Procurement of food waste containers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All containers and liners were received by 18<sup>th</sup> December 2025.</li> </ul> <p><b>Communications</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing communications to support rollout of new food waste service, including targeted social media advertising as rounds are introduced.</li> </ul> <p><b>Funding and Budgets</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An EPR funding payment for Q1&amp;2 of 25/26 totalling £843,000 has been received. The remaining payments for Q3 and Q4 are expected in January and March 2026 respectively.</li> <li>Reported our New Burdens Transitional Funding spend to date in October and December 2025 to Defra as required.</li> <li>Awaiting New Burdens ongoing service delivery funding confirmation (expected by April 2026).</li> <li>DEFRA have confirmed EPR funding will need to be allocated to improvements in household recycling. This will likely be allocated to Simpler Recycling Implementation, subject to a spending plan and Cabinet approval.</li> </ul> <p><b>Timeline &amp; Simpler Recycling Implementation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HCC have confirmed that they will be building a new Materials Recovery Facility to accommodate the full suite of Simpler Recycling materials, which includes pots, tubs, tray, cartons, co-mingled glass and recycling, and separated paper and card. The Project team have started working on a delivery timetable to accommodate these changes by Spring/Summer 2028 when the new MRF is expected to become operational.</li> </ul>								
<p><b>Actions for the next quarter:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare for and implement remaining food waste rollout phases scheduled for completion March 2026.</li> <li>Simpler Recycling preparation: looking at options to introduce additional recycling streams and reviewing future service delivery options. Engagement activities to educate and support behavioural change, to improve recycling performance.</li> </ul>								

## Nutrient Mitigation Solution

<b>Lead Cabinet Member:</b> Cllr Jackie Porter, Cllr Mark Reach	<b>Project Sponsor:</b> Cheryl Headon							
<b>Programme RAG status</b>	<b>Timeline</b>				<b>Budget</b>			
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
<p><b>RAG status update</b></p> <p>The original timelines were ambitious, relying on desk-based research, but detailed site studies, due for completion by the end of 2025, will provide more precise data on site conditions and potential upgrade options.</p> <p>Due to the evolving nature of the scope, the project approach has been adjusted to remain aligned with developing requirements. These changes have affected the original timeline, however once the feasibility studies across the sites are completed and the civil engineering firm is onboarded, a more accurate and realistic delivery timeline will be provided.</p>								
<p><b>Progress achieved against last quarter</b></p> <p><b><u>Housing Revenue Account (HRA)</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nitrate and phosphate credit sales for the two completed wastewater treatment work upgrades at Northington Road and The Goodens are ongoing:</li> <li>• <b>Northington Road</b> – three quarters of nitrate credits (50 of 63) and nearly all the phosphate credits (4.9 of 5.3) from Northington Road have been allocated to developers. Prices are £3,250 per nitrate credit and £50,000 per phosphate credit (or part thereof). £224k has been invoiced to date and £325k further is expected to be paid once all balances are settled prior to development starting on site (in line with signed Allocation Agreements). Plant installed at Northington Road cost £68k so the income generated to date represents a good return on investment alongside achieving water quality improvements.</li> <li>• <b>The Goodens</b> – credits are now starting to be allocated following the payment of an index-linked monitoring fee to SDNPA. There are 90 nitrate credits and 10.51 phosphate credits available. An initial 8.59 nitrate credits and 0.77 phosphate credits have been allocated to date. £63k has been invoiced to date and £309k is expected to be paid once all balances are settled prior to development starting on site. Some phosphate credits from this scheme will be sold for £100k (each or part thereof) because the mitigation location is upstream of the Alresford area where there are very few phosphate credits available to mitigate development in this area of the catchment.</li> <li>• Commissioned consultants to undertake surveys and feasibility studies for further four sites at Hobbs Close, Baring Close, The Pastures, and Kiln Lane. Awaiting site investigation reports to inform business case development for viable sites in Q4 2025/26.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Partnership for Southern Hampshire (PFSH)</u></b></p>								

- First PfSH WwTW upgrade at Itchen View completed on behalf of PfSH in May 2025 with credits valid for sale from August 2026. LPA pack sent to the council, as host authority, for approval for PfSH to sell the credits as per the Inter Authority Agreement and CAB3459.
- Feasibility studies and CCTV investigations currently in progress across the nine shortlisted sites. Awaiting site investigations to inform business case development for viable sites.
- Note: Due to the evolving nature of the scope, the project approach has been adjusted to remain aligned with developing requirements. The original timelines for the PfSH sites were ambitious, relying on desk-based research. However detailed site studies have been commissioned to provide more accurate data on site conditions and identify potential upgrade options. These changes have affected the original delivery timescales. The feasibility studies are due for completion in Q4 2025/26, and more accurate and realistic delivery timescales will be set out within the individual business cases

**Actions for the next quarter:**

**Housing Revenue Account (HRA)**

- Ongoing sale of nitrate and phosphate credits from the two existing wastewater treatment works at Northington Road and The Goodens
- Completion of surveys and feasibility studies for four sites at Hobbs Close, Baring Close, The Pastures, and Kiln Lane. Detailed site studies will provide more precise data on site conditions and potential upgrade options.
- Development of individual business cases for viable sites for approval from the Chief Finance Officer and Strategic Director as per CAB3470.
- Subject to business case approval, commence procurement exercise for a civil engineering contractor to deliver the HRA site upgrades. Proposed that HRA sites will be prioritised within the overall works schedule.

**Partnership for South Hampshire (PfSH)**

- Completion of surveys and feasibility studies for the nine shortlisted sites. Detailed site surveys will provide more precise data on site conditions and potential upgrade options.
- Commence development of individual business cases for viable sites, in agreement with PfSH. Subject to approval of the business case, the council will seek to appoint a civil engineering contractor to manage, procure, and lead the delivery of this programme.

**Greener Faster - Progress against actions in service plans**

Ref	Project	Cabinet Member	Delivery Date	Status R/A/G		
				Q1	Q2	Q3
1	Prepare full business case for a large-scale renewable energy project	Cllr Learney	April 2027			
2	Produce a business case for delivery for phase 1 of the small-scale renewable energy generation	Cllr Learney	October 2025			<b>Complete</b>
3	Deliver Air Quality Strategy and Action Plan	Cllr Learney/ Cllr Cramoysan	March 2030			
4	Take steps to reduce carbon from council-owned occupied estate	Cllr Tod	Ongoing			
5	Develop a Local Area Energy Plan	Cllr Learney	March 2026			
6	Create sustainable travel networks and projects in local areas	Cllr Learney	April 2026			
7	Develop an Electric Vehicle Charging Points framework for the district	Cllr Learney	April 2026			
8	Develop a Nature Improvement Plan	Cllr Learney	March 2026			

**Red/Amber Status**

1 – Reviewed the financial modelling outputs and viability of project. Report to PAC board in Q4.

7 - The LAEP this will inform the level of investments for EVCP. The timing and nature of work on a council EVCP framework has been reprioritised until after that information is available.

Measuring our progress

Long range trackers (Annual – financial year)										
No.	Performance measure	Cabinet member (Cllr)	Lead Director	17/18 (base)	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	Target & Status 24/25	Target 25/26
GF1	Council total market-based emissions (tCO <sub>2</sub> e) <sup>1</sup>	Learney	Cheryl Headon	4,251.2	4,260.2	3,970.3	4,090.5	2,252.1	3,700	2,100 Set in July 2025
GF1a	Council market-based Scope 1 & 2 emissions (tCO <sub>2</sub> e) <sup>2</sup>	Learney	Cheryl Headon	1,444.3 <sup>2</sup>	595.6	523.4	398.2	57.7		
GF1a	% change relative to 2017/18 baseline year	Learney	Cheryl Headon		-59%	-64%	-72%	-96%		
GF1b	Council market-based Scope 3 emissions (tCO <sub>2</sub> e) <sup>1</sup>	Learney	Cheryl Headon	2,806.9	3,664.6	3,446.9	3,692.3	2,194.4		
GF1b	% change relative to 2017/18 baseline year	Learney	Cheryl Headon		31%	23%	32%	-22%		
GF3	WCC air quality measure	Learney	Cheryl Headon	Not available	Not available	Not available	Not available	Not available		NO <sub>2</sub> 30 µg/m <sup>3</sup> by 2030

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• **Basis of targets:**

GF1 to GF1b - Estimated from the annual Council Carbon Footprint report - based on several interventions with associated carbon savings

GF3 - Target derived from the ['Air Quality Strategy'](#) for targets achieved by 2030

• **Footnotes:**

<sup>1</sup> Since 2017/18 the council has acquired more assets and reports more activities under scope 3 (this includes WSLP, Chesil Lodge, Home working and staff commuting, council cared for housing schemes); Target of 3,700 is the overall target for GF1 to GF1b as they are sub-sets  
Scope 1 = Direct emissions from our activities e.g. gas, council owned cars and vans; Scope 2 = Indirect emission from energy use e.g. electricity; Scope 3 = Indirect emissions from our activities and supply chain e.g. contractor emissions including P&R buses, Winchester Sport & Leisure Park and waste collection.

<sup>2</sup> Figures for baseline year (2017/18) have been revised and updated. This reflects the reclassification of two sites, which were previously reported under Scope 2, these are now correctly reported under scope 3.

Long range trackers (Annual – calendar year)										
No.	Performance measure	Cabinet member (Cllr)	Lead Director	2017 (base)	2020	2021	2022	2023	Target 2030	Status
GF2a	District territorial GHG (ktCO <sub>2</sub> e) <sup>2</sup>	Learney	Cheryl Headon	953.7	790.5	828.9	796.8	768.6		
GF2a	% change relative to 2017/18 baseline year	Learney	Cheryl Headon		-17%	-13%	-16%	-19%		
GF2b	District carbon emissions under scope of LA influence (ktCO <sub>2</sub> e)	Learney	Cheryl Headon	669.9	560.1	591.3	556.7	533.0	520.00	n/a
GF2b	% change relative to 2017 baseline year	Learney	Cheryl Headon		-16%	-12%	-17%	-20%		

- Basis of targets:**

GF2a and GF2b – As set out in the Winchester District Carbon Neutrality Roadmap and [Carbon Neutrality Action Plan](#) to achieve zero carbon emissions.

- Footnotes:**

<sup>2</sup>Data are the overall values for GF2a/b as they are sub-sets. Previously reported figures will/may have been updated as government adjusts its calculation methodology & changes all past data to be consistent / enable direct comparison. Data reported 2 years in arrears; 2024 data from July.

Practical real-time measures (Quarterly)										
No.	Performance measure	Cabinet member (Cllr)	Lead Director	Q3 - 24/25	Q4 - 24/25	Q1 - 25/26	Q2 - 25/26	Q3 - 25/26	Target 25/26	Status
GF4	% of household waste sent for reuse, recycling, and composting	Cramoysan	Cheryl Headon	37.79%	35.70%	40.89%	38.68%	42.27%	40%	
GF5	Residual household waste per household (kg/hh)	Cramoysan	Cheryl Headon	103.91	102.42	103.62	103.38	97.98	<420 kg/hh	
GF6	Energy usage (kWh) – Electricity – City Offices <sup>3</sup>	Learney	Simon Hendey	41,260	41,002	24,491	26,743	39,340	Measure only	n/a
GF7	Energy usage (kWh) – Electricity – Guildhall <sup>3</sup>	Learney	Simon Hendey	77,890	78,998	62,400	69,509	74,969	Measure only	n/a
GF8	Energy usage (kWh) – Gas – City Offices <sup>3</sup>	Learney	Simon Hendey	28,262	62,786	0	0	40,366	Measure only	n/a

GF9	Energy usage (kWh) – Gas – Guildhall <sup>3</sup>	Learney	Simon Hendey	82,805	89,345	18,010	7,905	76,683	Measure only	n/a
GF10	Renewable energy generated (kWh) from solar panels <sup>4</sup>	Learney	Simon Hendey	25,842	43,123	140,117	115,262	34,790	Measure only	n/a

- Basis of targets:**

*GF4 and GF5 - Target based on performance improvement against previous years actuals, and ensuring top percentile performance amongst peers*

- Footnotes:**

<sup>3</sup> *Due to the way metering is set up this includes the whole of each building (less Shoal who are sub-metered) - tenants occupying space including the university (West Wing, Guildhall), CAB and NHS (City Offices) are recharged a percentage for their usage.*

<sup>4</sup> *Data reported relates to: WCC Sites (City Offices, Cipher House, Vaultex,), Winchester Sport and Leisure Park, Depot and Marwell Zoo.*

## **Section 2 Healthy Communities**

### Delivery highlights – October to December 2025

- The Winchester Sport and Leisure Park (WSLP) was announced as the winner of the 'Regional Public Club / Centre of the Year' category for the Southern region at the 2025 UK Active awards during October.
- A lease was completed with Winchester Boxing Club for the former air cadet building at Hillier Way in Winchester, providing the club with a long-term permanent home.
- The draft Community Resilience Strategy was considered by the Health and Environment Policy Committee in November, and community stakeholders in Winchester, Wickham and New Alresford attended sessions to provide their input to the emerging document.
- The bidding round for community applications for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding attracted 20 bids, totalling nearly £1.4M, from seven different parishes in addition to the Winchester town area. These will be determined by Cabinet in March.
- Three CIL funded community projects were completed at Allegra's Ambition outdoor gym and art installation, at the Garrison Ground by [Winchester Sport and Leisure Park](#); new flooring at Wickham Community Centre and new toilets at Unit 12 in Winnall.
- The first Winchester Aqua Bests event took place at WSLP in October, extending the Personal Bests event to the swimming pool. Led by Active LD, but supported and part-funded by the council, it attracted 34 participants.
- The Live Longer Better programme continued, with 87 new participants joining the programme and new sessions introduced at King Harold Court and Hyde Lodge schemes.
- October half-term football sessions at Wickham, Whiteley, Stanmore and River Park, attracted 92 participants of which 27% met Sport England's definition of inactive.
- 16 community grants were awarded, totalling £16,089, for projects including conservation of Bishops Waltham north pond, storage for 1<sup>st</sup> Harestock Brownies and a forest school cooking project at The Hornbeam Hideout in Northington Down.
- The first issue of the new Community Connect newsletter was published in October and sent to 378 email subscribers from the community sector.
- Support to Ukrainian guests saw people referred to skills bootcamps on project management, hospitality and data analytics. The Independence Support Grant scheme saw a final 23 awards made before the scheme closed, having supported 546 applications totalling approx. £273k over more than two years.

- Refurbishment of Chaundler Road Play Area completed. It includes a safer ground surface made from over 7,000 recycled training shoes. New equipment, sensory board and communications board also installed.
- Strategic housing contributed towards the cost of funding for the new Legacy Plus programme in Winchester, delivered by Yellow Brick Road. This is to support young people aged 12-25 who are at risk of criminal exploitation and living in or educated in Winchester. This is a multi agency approach and support is based on the young person's individual need, Nominations are provided from the Housing options and Temporary accommodation team, for young people who would benefit from the programme to prevent their homelessness.
- Strategic Housing have implemented weekly briefings including partners from Community safety team, Trinity and Outreach officers, to ensure relevant information sharing, with a multi agency approach to ensure efficient support is provided to any person rough sleeping in Winchester, to manage anti-social behaviour and prevent homelessness.

**River Park Cricket Pavilion**

<b>Lead Cabinet Member:</b> Cllr Kathleen Becker	<b>Project Sponsor:</b> Cheryl Headon							
<b>Project RAG status</b>	<b>Timeline</b>				<b>Budget</b>			
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
<p><b>Progress achieved during the last quarter:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site visit with the whole project team, community group, Hampshire Cricket Board and future users to tour the facilities, see the layout and discuss the design, fixtures and fittings and facilities that will be made available.</li> <li>• Roof completed</li> <li>• External cladding completed</li> <li>• External windows and doors fitted</li> <li>• Internal walls completed; plastering has begun</li> <li>• First fix electrical completed</li> </ul>								
<p><b>Actions for the next quarter:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to update key stakeholders at key stages of design</li> <li>• Regular contract meetings with Contractor and Consultants</li> <li>• Regular liaison meetings with internal team</li> <li>• Monitor progress of works against programme</li> <li>• Review ongoing budget</li> <li>• Scheduled for practical completion</li> </ul>								

**Healthy Communities – progress against actions in service plans**

Ref	Project	Cabinet Member	Delivery Date	Status R/A/G		
				Q1	Q2	Q3
1	Review data and agree scope of the work for community facility audit(s)	Cllr Becker	March 2026			
2	Deliver a programme of engagement and activity sessions enabling residents to live longer better (HCC fund)	Cllr Becker	March 2026			
3	Adopt a Winchester District Community Wellbeing and Resilience strategy, supported by a statement of our health priorities	Cllr Becker	October 2025			
4	Complete the construction to replace the River Park cricket pavilion	Cllr Becker	June 2026			
5	Community Integration programme for overseas guests - deliver the HCC funded support for independent living and community integration	Cllr Becker	Ongoing			
6	Deliver a programme of grants to community and voluntary sector organisations	Cllr Becker	February 2026			
7	Active Travel Networks – bike bus programme with schools	Cllr Learney	April 2026			
8	Roll out programme of training for Spaces of Sanctuary scheme	Cllr Becker	June 2025		Complete	

**Red/Amber Status**

3 – Draft Community Resilience Strategy was considered by Health and Environment Policy Committee in December and is scheduled to go to Cabinet in March 2026.

Practical real-time measures (Quarterly)										
No.	Performance measure	Cabinet member (Cllr)	Lead Director	Q3 - 24/25	Q4 - 24/25	Q1 - 25/26	Q2 - 25/26	Q3 - 25/26	Target 25/26	Status
HC2	Winchester Sport and Leisure Park - total number of visits	Becker	Cheryl Headon	347,038	358,832	356,284	353,328	334,092	1,455,549	
HC3	Winchester Sport & Leisure Park - number of all concessionary rate visits	Becker	Cheryl Headon	136,816	140,036	137,710	138,069	132,254	570,653	
HC4	Meadowside - total number of visits	Becker	Cheryl Headon	18,892	20,977	19,506	18,511	17,412	83,224	
HC5	Meadowside - number of all concessionary rate visits	Becker	Cheryl Headon	2,631	3,481	3,463	2,936	2,141	11,908	
HC6	Number of housing benefit claimants (rolling total)	Cutler	Liz Keys	2,452	2,301	2,154	2,012	1,925	Measure only	n/a
HC7	Number of Council tax reduction claimants (rolling total)	Cutler	Liz Keys	5,805	5,784	5,767	5,718	5,761	Measure only	n/a
HC8	Average time taken to process new housing benefit claims (days)	Cutler	Liz Keys	16.24	21.38	21.39	19.12	19.35	22 days	
HC9	% Winchester residents claiming out-of-work benefits <sup>1</sup>	Thompson	Cheryl Headon	2.20%	2.10%	2.10%	2.10%	2.00%	Measure only	n/a

- Basis of targets:**

HC2 to HC5 - Target reflects a 5% increase on actuals in 2024/25 and is 11% higher than the projections for 25/26 set out in the original tender

HC8 - Target based on performance improvement against previous years actuals

- Footnotes:**

<sup>1</sup> Data provided by ONS – “CC01 Regional labour market: Claimant Count by unitary and local authority”. Published 17<sup>th</sup> of the month.

### **Section 3 Thriving Places**

#### Delivery highlights – October to December 2025

- UK Shared Prosperity Fund programme 2025/2026 programme remains on track to support 24 projects with grants totalling £550k, and eight projects completed this quarter.
- As part of the council's green business support, Arthian were commissioned at the end of the last quarter to deliver a programme of carbon audits. This quarter, four audits have been undertaken and four green grants applications were received.
- 14 local businesses attended the digital support programme workshop on 'Next Steps Artificial Intelligence' workshop in October.
- The Winchester District Tourism Strategy emerging themes and priorities were tested with a newly established Strategy Advisory Group (10 attended the workshop) in October and a further 24 businesses via the Meet in Winchester and Attractions Partnership meetings.
- A paper was taken to the Economy and Housing Policy Committee in November on the Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) covering the benefit of the LVEP, the council's role in the Executive Delivery Group and emerging themes and priorities of the Hampshire Destination Management Plan.
- The Visit Winchester website page views were up by 31% compared with same period last year with 460k page views. Winchester Cathedral Christmas Market listing was the highest performer of the quarter with 47k views.
- Use of social media channels saw strong growth with views up by 1,388% (1.6m) for Facebook and 154% (461.5k) for Instagram on the same quarter last year. A new weekly what's on round-up was also introduced.
- Discover Winchester achieved 82 pieces of national coverage in the quarter with a combined reach of 539.2 million. Winchester district received over 278 brand mentions and coverage included Daily Mirror, Daily Express, BBC Good Food, London Reviews, Wales Online, London Herald and The Independent.
- The first Plot Lines book of poetry was published as part of the West of Waterlooville Public Arts programme. It was distributed to local residents throughout October and was well received with residents appreciating the gift putting their stories front and centre. Further workshops took place in December to work on the second publication. Over 200 young people have already been engaged.
- A creative education directory was launched which connects schools to creative opportunities and organisations and was circulated and promoted through Discover Creative Careers Month.
- PSPO due to expire Sept 2026 (Alcohol Control Zone) – EQIA drafted and an extension of the current PSPO will be sought via June L & R Committee.
- X2 Criminal Behaviour Orders issued via courts for shop lifting offences.
- 3 Trauma Bleed Kits and subsequent training provided to staff members of Beacon, Trinity and Milford House. Staff on those sites can use the kits, and

any of the 9 kits currently available can also be used by emergency services, the kits are mapped via the police call centre.

- ASB Hot Spot Patrol grant fund (funding for additional patrols outside of normal core patrols) = 18 patrols (152 hours) via the Community Safety Team (ASB Officer) and BID Rangers.
- Active Patrol Engagement
- Community Safety Team (ASB Officer) Active Patrol and Engagement = 69 patrol logs (58 Town Forum and 11 Rural locations).

**Bar End Depot**

<b>Lead Cabinet Member:</b> Cllr Martin Tod				<b>Project Sponsor:</b> Simon Hendey				
<b>Programme RAG status</b>	<b>Timeline</b>				<b>Budget</b>			
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
<b>Progress achieved during the last quarter:</b>								
<p>Cabinet approved remarketing of the site on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2025.</p> <p>Formal Bids were received by the bid deadline on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2025.</p> <p>Due diligence is being undertaken on the bids. Subject to satisfactory assurances and agreed heads of terms with the successful bidder a report will be presented to Cabinet for their consideration.</p>								
<b>Actions for the next quarter:</b>								
<p>Cabinet to consider the successful bid in quarter 2 of 2026/7.</p>								

**Central Winchester Regeneration (CWR)**

<b>Lead Cabinet Member:</b> Cllr Martin Tod	<b>Project Sponsor:</b> Simon Hendey / Ken Baikie							
<b>Programme RAG status</b>	<b>Timeline</b>				<b>Budget</b>			
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
<p><b>Progress achieved during the last quarter:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The project team attended a design team meeting, contributing to the development of the emerging proposals and ensuring alignment across partners.</li> <li>The council were notified that GKRL, one of the two partners within the Jigsaw consortium, will be exiting the partnership and withdrawing from the CWR project. Legal and financial advice have been sought to understand the implications of this decision and inform the council's decision on the way forward.</li> </ul>								
<p><b>Actions for the next quarter:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A paper will be presented to January Cabinet to outline and formalise the change in consortium composition.</li> <li>Public engagement will take place in February, led by Jigsaw, who will provide an update to the community on the emerging proposals and how the scheme is developing.</li> </ul>								

## Local Plan

<b>Lead Cabinet Member:</b> Cllr Jackie Porter				<b>Project Sponsor:</b> Cheryl Headon				
<b>Programme RAG status</b>	<b>Timeline</b>				<b>Budget</b>			
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
<p><b>RAG status update</b></p> <p>The RAG status remains as an amber for this quarter as public consultation only finished on the Main Modifications on the 16th January 2026. Whilst outside this quarter, the comments and Officers response to this public consultation have now been sent to the Local Plan Inspector. The City Council is now awaiting the Inspector's Report that will determine the date that that Full Council can consider the Local Plan.</p>								
<p><b>Progress achieved during the last quarter:</b></p> <p><b>Emerging Local Plan</b></p> <p>During Q3 (October to December 2025) the team have been:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working on the Local Plan Inspector's note ED38a (Post hearing action points) and agreeing all the Proposed Main Modifications, Additional Modifications and Changes to the Policies Map with the Local Plan Inspector prior to the start of the public consultation</li> <li>Undertaking training on 'Keystone Objective' and undertaken public consultation on the Main Modifications using the new Councils new consultation software</li> <li>Organising, with the support of the Coms team, the public consultation material that was needed for the Main Modifications, Additional Modifications and the Changes to the Policies Map which commenced on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2025 and runs until 11:59pm on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2026</li> <li>Processing representations and working through our responses as they arrive</li> <li>Preparing a draft report on the output from the public consultation on the Main Modifications which has been sent to the Local Plan Inspector using the new public consultation software. This is to agree the format and the content of the document with the Inspector prior to the close of the public consultation</li> <li>Holding meetings with Portsmouth City Council, Southern Water Services and a number of other organisations to discuss their draft responses to the Main Modifications; and</li> <li>The Local Plan Inspector has also undertaken an Inspector led public consultation (<a href="#">ED43a</a>) on the Government's Written Ministerial Statement (<a href="#">ED43b</a>) and the letter from Matthew Pennycock MP (<a href="#">ED43c</a>). This Inspector led public consultation was centred around</li> </ul>								

the Duty to Co-operate. We prepared and submitted a response to this Inspector led public consultation ([ED44](#)).

In between working on the Main Modifications public consultation in accordance with the agreed Local Development Scheme, work has started on the next Local Plan (please note that this work on the emerging Local Plan has been temporarily paused until April 2026 in order to allow Officers time to progress the emerging Local Plan to adoption):

- Entered into a contract with AECOM to undertake the Integrated Impact Assessment/Habitats Regulations Assessment and entering in contracts with Consultants to update Employment and Retail assessments
- Assessing the tenders that have been received for the Water Cycle Study
- Undertaken a new 'Call for sites' for the next Local Plan (which commenced the first week of October)
- Attending Duty-to-Cooperate meetings with neighbouring Local Planning Authorities
- Agreeing with the Cabinet Member for Place and Local Plan responses to the Portsmouth and Basingstoke and Deane Local Plans
- Working on finalising the Authority Annual Monitoring Report (which includes the updated 5-year Housing Supply) and the preparing the Annual Brownfield Register
- Completing the Self Build quarterly return and an updating the Self Build Position Statement
- Assisting at two major Public Inquiries and giving evidence/assisting Consultants at these Public Inquiries on the 5-year Housing Land Supply (Wickham and Lanham Lane in Winchester)
- Working on the Business Case for the Keystone Objective Collaborative authoring software
- Undertaken internal training with Development Management and Heritage/Design Officers on the 5-year Housing Land Supply and the new policies in the emerging Local Plan
- Working with Weblabs to update the Local Plan website (to enable both the emerging Local Plan and the next Local Plan to be shown on the website); and
- Ensuring that the Local Plan websites were kept up-to-date with the latest news

**Actions for the next quarter:**

**Emerging Local Plan**

- Continue to process the Main Modifications representations and ensure that all of the responses to this public consultation are sent to the Local Plan Inspector by the end of January 2026; and

- Undertake internal training on the latest 5-year Housing Land Supply and on the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

**Next Local Plan:**

- Understand what is involved with the Government's new 30-month timeframe for preparing a Local Plan and once the regulations have been published, prepare a Project Management Plan
- Review the briefs for the different commissions that will need to be undertaken for the next Local Plan, review any lessons learnt and go out to tender
- Appoint Consultants to undertake various commissions
- Engage with the statutory agencies (Natural England, Environment Agency and Historic England) to discuss and agree the IIA framework and the 'reasonable alternatives'
- In consultation with other department undertake desktop assessments of the SHELAA sites and then start to consider which sites might be suitable to be allocated for development
- Review reports that have been prepared by Consultants and incorporate the findings into the next Local Plan
- Work on reviewing the Local Plan policies in light of the Government's draft National Development Management policies and identify any local specific policies that need to be included in the next Local Plan
- Review the NPPF/National Development Management policies when they are published in their final version and prepare the next Local Plan; and
- Continue to liaise with neighbouring Local Plan authorities and attend Duty-to-cooperate meetings

## Winchester Movement Strategy

<b>Lead Cabinet Member: Cllr Kelsie Learney</b>				<b>Project Sponsor: Cheryl Headon</b>				
<b>Programme RAG status</b>	<b>Timeline</b>				<b>Budget</b>			
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
<p><b>RAG status update:</b></p> <p>Funding for transport related schemes will now be via individual CIL applications, and central government bids, therefore development of schemes rely on successful bids.</p>								
<p><b>Progress achieved during the last quarter:</b></p> <p>Work on the ten next step proposals continues.</p> <p>City Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) Plan to be consolidated by HCC into one document</p> <p>District Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) Approved City Plan to be collated into one document.</p> <p>Micro-Logistics Hub Trial – Consultancy Agreement with hub management company signed, and Licence to Occupy signed and Grant Funding Agreement with Solent Transport processed. Installation works of Hub commenced.</p> <p>A number of LCWIP active travel schemes are still being progressed or have been installed by HCC in the city including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A modal filter on Hyde Church Lane completed,</li> <li>• TRO to permit cycling on the pedestrianised section of Middle Brook Street implemented</li> <li>• Upgrading the crossing at Friarsgate / Middle Brook Street – review of additional tactile paving to the scheme undertaken</li> <li>• Hillier Way, walking and cycling improvements – Topographical survey undertaken, on site engagement with the groups, liaison with the rugby and football club</li> </ul> <p>Fulford Liveable Neighbourhood Pilot HCC engineers reviewed potential options based on feedback in preparation for engagement.</p> <p>CIL Funding CIL bids for transport schemes considered</p>								
<p><b>Actions for the next quarter:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of any further transport schemes to pursue from City &amp; District LCWIP.</li> <li>• Engagement of potential schemes for Fulford Liveable Neighbourhood Pilot.</li> <li>• Development of potential options for Hillier Way</li> <li>• Implementation of upgraded crossing at Friarsgate</li> <li>• Production of a Freight Study, engagement with independent businesses, appointment by Hub Management Company of an Operator and preparation for launch of the trial</li> </ul>								

**Thriving Places - progress against our actions in service plans**

Ref	Project	Cabinet Member	Delivery Date	Status R/A/G		
				Q1	Q2	Q3
1	Deliver a programme of events to mark the 250th anniversary of Jane Austen's birth	Cllr Thompson	December 2025			
2	Manage the delivery of UKSPF programme	Cllr Thompson	March 2026			
3	Produce a Winchester District Tourism Strategy	Cllr Thompson	March 2026			
4	Deliver a programme of green business support and investment in renewable technologies (Green Economic Development Strategy (GEDS) Carbon Neutrality Action Plan (CNAP))	Cllr Thompson	March 2026			
5	Deliver the West of Waterlooville Public Arts programme	Cllr Thompson	March 2026			
6	City Street Market Development Programme	Cllr Thompson	December 2025			
7	Deliver the actions in year 1 Action Plan of the Cultural Strategy	Cllr Thompson	March 2026			
8	Contribute to and engagement with the creation of a Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP). Deliver the actions in year 1 Action Plan of the Cultural Strategy	Cllr Thompson	March 2026			
9	Future of former Leisure Centre: Market the site for sale and find a new investor	Cllr Tod	September 2026			

## Measuring our progress

Long range trackers (Annual)										
No.	Performance measure	Cabinet member (CIlr)	Lead Director	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	Target & Status 24/25	Target 25/26
TP1	% of economically active people in employment (aged 16-64)	Thompson	Cheryl Headon	77.4%	83.7%	75.1%	81.5%	83.6%	Measure only	Measure only
TP2	Business counts (micro, small, medium, large enterprises– source: NOMIS)	Thompson	Cheryl Headon	8,035	8,110	8,165	8,225	8,095	Measure only	Measure only
TP3	No. of unemployed (source: ONS)	Thompson	Cheryl Headon	1,800	1,700	1,235	1,900	1,600	Measure only	Measure only
TP4	% of addresses with Gigabit availability	Thompson	Cheryl Headon	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	62.2%	Measure only	Measure only

Practical real-time measures (Quarterly)										
No.	Performance measure	Cabinet member (CIlr)	Lead Director	Q3 - 24/25	Q4 - 24/25	Q1 - 25/26	Q2 - 25/26	Q3 - 25/26	Target 25/26	Status
TP5	Number of reported fly-tips (actual incidents) <sup>1</sup>	Cramoysan	Cheryl Headon	183	210	102	162	182	Measure only	n/a
TP6	% of fly-tips cleared within contract deadlines/days	Cramoysan	Cheryl Headon	85%	82%	75%	75%	80%	80%	
TP7	Number of reported graffiti incidents (online form totals)	Cramoysan	Cheryl Headon	9	12	11	15	7	<150	
TP8	"Public Space" issue reports <sup>2</sup>	Cramoysan	Cheryl Headon	121	163	110	118	109	<570	
TP9	% of WCC revenue spend with local suppliers	Cutler	Gareth John	28.39%	18.80%	23.30%	23.00%	35.10%	25%+	
TP10	City centre high street footfall <sup>3</sup>	Thompson	Cheryl Headon	2,792,881	2,930,567	2,779,719	2,660,538	2,780,565	Measure only	n/a
TP11	Market Towns high street footfall	Thompson	Cheryl Headon	n/a	n/a	n/a	tbc	tbc	Measure only	n/a

- Basis of targets:**

*TP6 - Target based on viable baseline of numbers that fall within contract timescales (to accommodate where a proportion of fly-tips are more complicated or take longer to clear due to content, e.g. asbestos)*

TP7 and 8 - Target based on performance improvement against previous years actuals

TP9 – Notional target to monitor and encourage value of spend in district to support local business in conjunction with our contract procedure rules.

• **Footnotes:**

<sup>1</sup> Figures are net total of 'actual' reports received (less any that have been identified as duplicates, out of district, private land etc.)

<sup>2</sup> Figures based on total form reports received for 'Clean my Street' relating to bins/bring sites, street mess – human, syringes, spilt waste, street sweeping, overflowing litter/dog waste bins etc.-- glass, litter, alongside report forms submitted for Park Areas and Public Conveniences.

<sup>3</sup> Provided by the Winchester BID Place Informatic reports

Commentary where practical real-time KPI not on target:

**Fly-tip clearance breakdown:**

	Q3 24/25	Q4 24/25	Q1 25/26	Q2 25/26	Q3 25/26
<b>Total fly tips confirmed cleared</b>	156	187	85	144	171
Fly- tips up to 1 metre cubed in size	31	27	13	16	10
<i>Number of which cleared in time (5 working days submission to clearance)</i>	21	16	7	8	6
<i>Percentage of up to 1 metre cubed cleared in time</i>	68%	59%	54%	50%	60%
Fly-tips size 1 metre cubed and above	125	160	72	128	161
<i>Of which in time (15 working days submission to clearance)</i>	111	137	57	100	131
<i>Percentage of 1 metre cubed and above cleared in time</i>	90%	86%	79%	78%	81%
<b>Overall percentage of all fly-tips cleared in time</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>82%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>80%</b>

- The completion targets of 5 and 15 working days include 3 to 5 days for evaluation of fly-tip to assess if any enforcement action can be taken and 2 to 10 days for clearance (depending on size of up to a metre cubed / 1 metre cubed and above)
- Q2 figures are revised from previous report as further clearance data has been received since it was published and is now slightly below target, as the later clearance dates took longer due to sites needing investigating (e.g. oil found, asbestos, access issues)

## **Section 4 Good Homes for All**

Delivery highlights – October to December 2025

- The Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025 – 2030 was published which sets out the council's approach to tackling homelessness and supporting the vulnerable members of our community locally. A working group has been set up to deliver on the ambitious action plan.
- Strategic Housing launched a Tenancy Ready Programme delivered to residents on Hampshire Home Choice and in Temporary Accommodation to provide them with the skills and knowledge to sustain a long-term housing tenancy.
- The new Disabled Facilities Grant Policy was adopted at cabinet, which will allow a more equitable offering of grant funding to disabled residents and those who are most vulnerable. The policy also introduced more strategic options of discretionary funding which better align with the core principles of the better care fund and the ethos of the funding stream.
- Since the self-referral to the RSH, good progress is being made to ensure compliance against the Safety and Quality Consumer Standard, supported by regular monthly meetings with the RSH, from which we have received positive feedback about progress to date.
- The Landlord Service restructure has been delivered, within existing budget and enabled creation of a Building Safety team, alignment of resources to improve the tenant experience and journey, supported by the creation of more Housing Officers to be the 'single point of contact' for tenants.
- At Kings Barton, 10 affordable flats (6 affordable rent and 4 shared ownership) were completed by Cala and handed over to WCC Housing.
- Construction continues on 10 affordable units at Hazeley Road, Twyford.
- Cabinet approved the Final Business Case for the construction of 5 new social rent homes at Woodman Close in Sparsholt.
- Updated Housing Development Strategy 2025-2032 approved by Cabinet in November 2025.
- Multi-agency professionals met to agree process standards for managing the impact of the street attached on the city centre including rough sleeping, waste and tenants not using their accommodation.
- Legacy Plus Project launched in October (aimed at putting in place opportunities that impact on behavioural change and tenant readiness) via an application to WCC Strategic Housing, OPCC ASB Task Force and Yellow Brick Road Projects. The combined applications achieved a total of £37K.

## New Homes Programme

<b>Lead Cabinet Member:</b> Cllr Mark Reach				<b>Project Sponsor:</b> Simon Hendey				
<b>Programme RAG status</b>	<b>Timeline</b>				<b>Budget</b>			
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
<p><b>RAG status update</b></p> <p>There is an increase in programme confidence due to the recent S106 acquisition negotiations, but the RAG status remains Amber due to the lack of control over the pace of delivery by the private developer market. Continued commitment to commissioned schemes to mitigate S106 acquisitions risks.</p>								
<p><b>Progress achieved during the last quarter:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Market engagement with SME and volume housebuilders is ongoing, with the aim of securing new build units for use as council housing.</li> <li>• Contracts have now been exchanged with Cala for the acquisition of 146 S106 units at Kings Barton, Winchester. The first 10 units were handed over to the council during autumn 2025.</li> <li>• Construction continues on the 10 affordable units at Hazeley Road, Twyford.</li> <li>• Cabinet approved the Final Business Case for the construction of 5 new social rent homes at Woodman Close in Sparsholt.</li> <li>• Feasibility studies are underway on a number of pipeline council commissioned schemes with the aim of making them financially viable against a challenging economic backdrop.</li> <li>• The finalised accounts and lessons learned for Southbrook Cottages, Micheldever were reviewed by Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet in November 2025.</li> <li>• The updated Housing Development Strategy 2025-2032 was approved by Cabinet in November 2025.</li> </ul>								
<p><b>Actions for the next quarter:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kings Barton, Winchester - completed units to be handed over from Cala to the council for allocation to tenants on the council's housing register and for sale as shared ownership homes.</li> <li>• Hazeley Road, Twyford – attend site progress meetings alongside Employer's Agent and liaise with housing colleagues regarding build progress and handover.</li> <li>• Continue feasibility work on the suitability of various council-owned sites for development as affordable housing.</li> <li>• Continue engagement with SME and volume housebuilders with the aim of securing new build units for use as council housing.</li> </ul>								

## Housing Compliance Improvement Plan

<b>Lead Cabinet Member:</b> Cllr Mark Reach	<b>Project Sponsor:</b> Simon Hendey					
<b>Programme RAG status</b>	<b>Timeline</b>			<b>Budget</b>		
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q1	Q2	Q3
<p><b>Progress achieved during the last quarter:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All compliance activities tracking above 99%</li> <li>• Positive feedback from Regulator</li> <li>• Building safety manager appointed to permanent role</li> <li>• Building safety team structure appointed</li> <li>• True compliance system Gas and Electric live</li> <li>• Heating contract tender live</li> <li>• Electric contract tender live</li> <li>• Building safety cases 2 complete</li> <li>• Stock condition survey tracking against programme</li> <li>• Policies approved and disseminated</li> </ul>						
<p><b>Actions for the next quarter:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 remaining building safety cases to complete and implement recommendations</li> <li>• Phase II True compliance Asbestos, water, Loler</li> <li>• Appoint and mobilise Heating and Electrical contracts</li> <li>• Induct new starters</li> <li>• Continue with block inspection regimes</li> </ul>						

**Housing procurement of Repairs, Maintenance, Voids, Compliance and Retrofit**

<b>Lead Cabinet Member:</b> Cllr Mark Reach	<b>Project Sponsor:</b> Simon Hendey							
<b>Programme RAG status</b>	<b>Timeline</b>				<b>Budget</b>			
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
<p><b>Progress achieved during the last quarter:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) consultant tendered and appointed</li> <li>• FRA remediation contractor tendered and appointed</li> <li>• Repairs &amp; Maintenance / Voids contract tender live</li> <li>• Positive regulator feedback</li> <li>• FRA programme / upgrades in flight with holistic whole block approach</li> <li>• Satisfied Fire brigade with Winnall remediation work in conjunction with contractor.</li> </ul>								
<p><b>Actions for the next quarter:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appoint / demobilise incumbent repairs contractor</li> <li>• Mobilise new repairs contractor</li> <li>• Interface with MRI asset management system</li> </ul>								

**Good Homes for All - Progress against our actions in service plans**

Ref	Project	Cabinet Member	Delivery Date	Status R/A/G		
				Q1	Q2	Q3
1	Procurement of major repairs and maintenance contract for council homes. Inclusive of tenant engagement.	Cllr Reach	August 2026			
2	Council housing retrofit carbon reduction programme. Focus on lowest EPC properties to achieve more energy efficient homes to meet the carbon neutral 2030 target. Establish a Retrofit Carbon Reduction Strategy	Cllr Reach	Ongoing			
3	Review and refresh the Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy	Cllr Reach / Becker	March 2026		<b>Complete</b>	
4	Achieve regulatory requirements to address damp and mould cases. Ensuring cases are identified and dealt with promptly / effectively when raised by council and private rented tenants	Cllr Reach / Becker	March 2026			

**Red/Amber status**

2. Council Housing retrofit carbon reduction programme this is amber due to having to adjust targets in consideration of the time required to complete the required documentation under SHF Wave 3. With the new Resident Liaison Officer in post, to support tenants, the team is accelerating the work programme where possible to ensure targets are achieved by year end.

4. Damp and Mould process in place in readiness for the implementation of Awaabs Law on 27<sup>th</sup> October 2025 to ensure reports are managed and responded to within required timescales. To further support this work, we have an independent consultant reviewing our approach to ensure it is robust whilst recruitment is underway for two Damp and Mould Case Officers to enable good case management and oversight for council tenants.

## Measuring our progress – Good Homes for All

Long range trackers (Annual)										
No.	Performance measure	Cabinet member (Cllr)	Lead Director	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	Target & Status 24/25	Target 25/26
GH1	% of all WCC homes achieving energy efficiency rating of C or above	Reach	Simon Hendey	62%	63%	65%	70%	70%	70%	73%
GH2	Total new home completions across the district (rolling total)	Reach	Simon Hendey	n/a	121	139	276	322	1,000 by 2032	1,000 by 2032
GH3	Homelessness – numbers recorded as rough sleepers <sup>1</sup> (as at year end)	Reach	Simon Hendey	n/a	n/a	2	3	5	0	5

- Basis of targets:**

GH1 - Derived from Council Plan priorities and HRA Asset Management Policy

GH2 - Derived from affordable housing target laid out in Housing Strategy

GH3 - Derived from Preventing Homelessness Strategy, Government National Housing Priorities and annual homeless survey assessments

- Footnotes:**

<sup>1</sup> Figures are updated from an annual MHCLG rough sleeping count annual snapshot, which takes place every November

Practical real-time measures (Quarterly)										
No.	Performance measure	Cabinet member (Cllr)	Lead Director	Q3 - 24/25	Q4 - 24/25	Q1 - 25/26	Q2 - 25/26	Q3 - 25/26	Target 25/26	Status
GH4	Avg time for homeless household to receive offer of a permanent home (days)	Reach	Simon Hendey	332	310	256	348	279	365 days	
GH5	Retrofit adjustments – total number of houses (running total)	Reach	Simon Hendey	223	247	0	37	101	256	
GH6	Retrofit adjustments – total number of adjustments made (running total)	Reach	Simon Hendey	424	486	0	37	135	772	
GH7	Percentage of planning decisions upheld at appeal (WCC / SDNP)	Porter	Cheryl Headon	n/a	n/a	100% / n/a	61% / 100%	80% / 67%	70%	

- Basis of targets:**

GH4 – Reflects council allocation policy

*GH5 and 6 - Derived from maximum number of homes funded in housing annual capital programme.*

*GH7 – Government target is for at least 2 out of 3 cases to be dismissed at appeal., so target based on improving above government targets*

### **Commentary**

**GH3** - Several local challenges are currently contributing to an increase in rough sleeping numbers including the reduction in stage 1 supported housing accommodation available for those sleeping rough or at risk of rough sleeping and a lack of suitable accommodation, particularly one-bedroom accommodation. Westview House, previously the district's Stage 1 accommodation provider, closed in April 2025 following A2's termination of their support contract. This decision was prompted by the county council's announcement to withdraw all funding for Stage 1 accommodation from March 2026. The closure resulted in the loss of 29 bed spaces.

In response, the council is actively collaborating with alternative accommodation providers to mitigate the impact. Plans include:

- Increasing capacity at Trinity, The Beacon, and Emmaus House
- Exploring the potential to bring Westgate back into use

The council has secured county funding to establish an in-house Housing First scheme, which will offer 7 beds dedicated to supporting the district's most complex and vulnerable individuals who are homeless or at risk of rough sleeping

We are constantly working with those found rough sleeping through our outreach work. It should be noted that the figure of 5 rough sleepers in the table above is from the annual rough sleeping count which is undertaken in November each year and is not a quarterly figure.

**GH5 and GH6-** Council Housing retrofit carbon reduction programme this is amber due to having to adjust targets due to the time required to complete the required documentation under SHF Wave 3. With the new Resident Liaison Officer in post, to support customers, the team is accelerating the work programme where possible to ensure targets are achieved by year end whilst recognising that delivering the Retrofit programme faces a number of challenges due to the complexities of the sector and targets may need to be adjusted.

## Measuring our progress – Housing TSM

Practical real-time measures (Quarterly)										
No.	Performance measure	Cabinet member (CIlr)	Lead Director	Q3 - 24/25	Q4 - 24/25	Q1 - 25/26	Q2 - 25/26	Q3 - 25/26	Target 25/26	Status
GH8	Proportion of homes for which all required gas safety checks have been carried out	Reach	Simon Hendey	n/a	n/a	99.91%	99.89%	99.93%	100%	
GH9	Proportion of homes for which all Electric Checks have been carried out	Reach	Simon Hendey	n/a	n/a	98.30%	98.81%	99.21%	99.84%	
GH10	Asbestos Inspections % of Reg 4 Surveys	Reach	Simon Hendey	n/a	n/a	66.78%	98.29%	100%	100%	
GH11	Proportion of Lifts with 100% of valid Loler Certificates	Reach	Simon Hendey	n/a	n/a	97.50%	97.50%	100%	100%	
GH12	Proportion of homes with a 100% of Working Smoke Detector checked	Reach	Simon Hendey	n/a	n/a	99.70%	99.56%	99.60%	100%	
GH13	Proportion of homes with a 100% of Working Carbon Monoxide Detector checked	Reach	Simon Hendey	n/a	n/a	99.70%	99.62%	99.70%	100%	
GH14	Numbers of Damp and Mould open cases inspected, and resolution agreed within 14 days	Reach	Simon Hendey	n/a	n/a	71%	75.33%	98.00%	95%	
GH15	Number of outstanding High Risk Fire Risk Assessment actions	Reach	Simon Hendey	n/a	n/a	3	0	0	0	
GH16	Number of outstanding Fire Risk Assessments	Reach	Simon Hendey	n/a	n/a	76	0	0	0	

- **Basis of targets:**

*GH8 to 16 - Targets based on regulatory standards*

### Commentary

**GH8** – 2 voids, the meter has been capped and will be uncapped and serviced at the end of the void works. This is done to ensure there is no gas safety issues while the property is being prepared ready for a new customer. We have one property that is going through the eviction process so no access has been granted and when the eviction takes place it will then go through the void process

**GH9** - 4 voids (EICR is carried out at the end of the void to ensure no works have damaged the electrics); additionally, 22 inspections booked, and 15 being chased to allow completion of inspections.

**GH12 & 13** - 7 and 5 voids respectively (meaning will be done as part of all the void process, as for GH8); 3 each for GH12 and 13 awaiting fuel upgrades, which have been booked in and the checks are booked at the same time, with additional properties (11 and 6) being chased and again trying to gain access to properties where we haven't got legal backing to force entry we go through our no access process

## **Section 5 Efficient and Effective**

Delivery highlights – October to December 2025

- Digital Customer Experience business case prepared with one-off funding proposed in the General Fund Budget 2026/27 that will be considered in February. Approval will enable the council to move forward by procuring a CRM and digital telephony platform to improve council customer's experience, modernize core customer-facing systems and prepare our systems and workforce for a smooth transition to the new Unitary Authority.
- Project is building relationships with neighbouring councils to form an effective network of ideas and support, ahead of the LGR decision.
- Business case approved to introduce automation of Housing Income annual Universal Credit (UC) checks, which currently relies on significant manual effort to complete each year.
- The Planning Digitalization project has focused on scoping potential improvements within current systems, with the option of a new system dismissed as this would disadvantage the council as it transitions to the new Unitary Authority. Working with officers of the Planning, Built Environment and Enforcement teams, the project is investigating the potential to adopt automation to reduce manual, repetitive admin tasks with the aim of taking pressure off teams and helping them to become more efficient and improve customer experience.
- My Council Services (MCS) forms on WCC website completely refreshed to coincide with MCS upgrade which contributes to improved digital customer journey.
- Updated web pages include Environmental Health and Animal Welfare, Parking, Housing Repairs, Tenant Involvement, and Air Quality (to promote new Air Quality Strategy).
- Guildhall Events has switched to a fully digital booking and payment system (Lemon) which simplifies the booking journey and makes payment easy and quick. This could work very well for other services, including Pest Control.
- Phase 1 of the M365 SharePoint Online project has successfully completed, delivering modernised sites and simpler ways of working for the teams involved. Early benefits include easier access to information, clearer document management, and more streamlined collaboration, helping services work more efficiently and effectively.

## Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)

<b>Lead Cabinet Member: Cllr Neil Cutler</b>		<b>Project Sponsor: Laura Taylor</b>	
<b>Programme RAG status</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Budget</b>	
	<b>Q3</b>	<b>Q3</b>	
<b>Progress achieved during the last quarter:</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch of “Close enough to be local, big enough to stay strong” website and statutory consultation.</li> <li>• A rapid assessment was undertaken against the MHCLG suggested list for preparedness and internal teams have started work in recommended areas.</li> <li>• KPMG commissioned to support development of a countywide data hub and standard service taxonomy structure.</li> <li>• LGR Programme established as a Tier 1 project, governance arrangements agreed and PMO initiated.</li> <li>• Establishment of the principles of our unitary ready transition plan.</li> <li>• LGR all staff and all member briefings continue.</li> <li>• Began developing a two-year service plan covering 2026–28, extending the planning period to support effective preparation for LGR and continued high quality service delivery for residents.</li> </ul>			
<b>Actions for the next quarter:</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First LGR Programme Board meeting to be held (February 2026)</li> <li>• Government decision on the future structure for Hampshire and the Solent area is expected in March 2026</li> <li>• Standing up and defining scope of the LGR workstreams across local authority partners</li> <li>• Development of a county wide data hub</li> <li>• Voluntary joint committee governance arrangements to be agreed</li> <li>• Internal systems and data review in preparation to ensure LGR preparedness</li> <li>• Establishing the internal LGR Programme Plan and risk register</li> </ul>			

**Efficient and Effective - Progress against actions in service plans**

Ref	Project	Cabinet Member	Delivery Date	Status R/A/G		
				Q1	Q2	Q3
1	Further promotion of self-serve and digital services including the increased take-up of electronic billing (rollout of “Digital by Default”) and notifications for Council Tax, Business Rates and Housing Benefits services, and the further roll out of SMS for the issue of electronic payment alerts and reminders.	Cllr Cutler	Ongoing			
2	Support TC25 transformation and digital agenda by supporting digital innovation and digital initiatives across the Council.	Cllr Cutler	Ongoing			
3	Digitalisation and review of the Planning Service (linked to this, other services that use the IDOX platform).	Cllr Porter	TBC			
4	Review of website to improve digital customer experience.	Cllr Cutler	Ongoing			
5	Customer focused digital improvements of Housing & Landlord services.	Cllr Reach	April 2026			
6	Development of Cyber Security and Resilience Strategy to increase cyber resilience and awareness across the council.	Cllr Cutler	April 2025	Complete		
7	Lead on the review and refresh of strategic key performance indicator set that align to the new Council Plan priorities.	Cllr Cutler	June 2025		Complete	

**Red/Amber status**

**3** Pace of digitalisation within Planning services has been impacted by operational pressures however work is underway to seek opportunities for automation which could significantly improve efficiency and customer experience. The project’s discovery was extended, and deliverables are now actively being replanned due to the constraints of LGR and existing, widely used systems.

**5** The customer focussed digital improvements for landlord services has a number of strands and we are investing further in MRI housing management systems to support the digital journey for the service and customers. We are recruiting temporary resource to support this significant project work to ensure its successful delivery.

## Measuring our progress

Practical real-time measures (Quarterly)										
No.	Performance measure	Cabinet member (Cllr)	Lead Director	Q3 - 24/25	Q4 - 24/25	Q1 - 25/26	Q2 - 25/26	Q3 - 25/26	Target 25/26	Status
EE1	% complaints responded to within 10 working days	Becker	Liz Keys	86%	90%	88%	90%	97%	90%	
EE2	% of upheld and partially upheld complaints	Becker	Liz Keys	45%	68%	60%	70%	59%	Measure only	n/a
EE3	Number of digital resident interactions with the council (online reports)	Becker	Laura Taylor	6,706	16,616	7,564	7,049	7,021	42,000	
EE4	% of major planning applications decided within time or agreed extension (WCC / SDNP)	Porter	Cheryl Headen	100% / ~	94.3% / ~	91.67% / ~	100% / ~	100% / 100%	80%	
EE5	% of non-major planning applications decided within time or agreed extension (WCC / SDNP)	Porter	Cheryl Headen	82% / 81%	93% / 88%	93.67% / 84.67%	94% / 81%	89% / 95%	80%	

- Basis of targets:**

*EE1 - Target based on achievable outcome times, aligned with customer expectation and common target used by other authorities*

*EE3 - Target based on performance improvement against previous years actuals (also allowing for plateau in new garden waste sign-ups as limited number of properties are viable for garden waste, i.e. have gardens)*

*EE4 & 5 - Government targets are 60%, WCC target based on performance being above government targets*

### Commentary

**EE3** – Currently interactions by form are projected to be just under target for the year, however Q4 generally more than doubles in numbers (as can be seen by the number Q4 24/25) so totals may well reach target; Additionally, Q3 is also higher than for the same period 24/25

## **Section 6 Listening and Learning**

Delivery highlights – October to December 2025

- The council undertook the stage 1 consultation for the Community Governance Review with targeting key stakeholders and including engagement with all town and parish councils. This was achieved through a dedicated web page, public notices, drop in events and widespread distribution of an initial consultation document.
- Launch of the 8-week consultation on the Main Modifications, Additional Modifications and Changes to the Policies Map which is one of the final stages in the Local Plan development.
- The district Social Inclusion Partnership was relaunched in December and attended by 18 people from a range of organisations.
- The Stanmore community network met in November, with 17 people in attendance from a variety of organisations representing the community, faith, housing and education sectors. They discussed how to improve communication, collaboration and awareness of services.

**Listening and Learning – Progress against actions in service plans**

Ref	Project	Cabinet Member	Delivery Date	Status R/A/G		
				Q1	Q2	Q3
1	Community Governance Review – creation of a Winchester Town Council	Cllr Becker Cllr Cutler	April 2027			
2	Local Government Reorganisation and Devolution	Cllr Tod	2027/28			
3	Transfer of assets to parish councils – public conveniences	Cllr Becker	April 2026			
4	Parish Council engagement – planning	Cllr Porter	September 2025		Complete	
5	Review and refresh EDI Policy, Strategy and Action Plan	Cllr Becker	February 2025	Complete		
6	Prepare a consultation policy and charter for adoption and use across the council	Cllr Becker	March 2026			

**Red/Amber status**

3. Discussions underway with parishes to offer transfer of assets. Whether transfer takes place will be dependent upon decisions by Town and parish councils.

Long range trackers (Annual)										
No.	Performance measure	Cabinet member (Cllr)	Lead Director	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	Target & Status 24/25	Target 2026
LL1	% of residents satisfied with the way the council runs things (LG Survey) <sup>1</sup>	Becker	Laura Taylor	No survey	75% (SE 62%)	No survey	69% (LG 55%)	n/a	> LGA average	> LGA average
LL2	Resident's satisfaction with local area (LG survey) <sup>1</sup>	Becker	Laura Taylor	No survey	96% (SE 74%)	No survey	87% (LG 75%)	n/a	> LGA average	> LGA average
LL3	Housing Satisfaction survey scores TSM	Reach	Simon Hendey			78%	76%	tbc	n/a	82%

- Basis of targets:**

*LL1 & 2 - Target based on outperforming scores from LG surveys to provide better satisfaction for our residents*

*LL3 – Target agreed with the TACT board based on benchmarking similar housing providers so as to aim for top quartile performance*

- Footnotes:**

<sup>1</sup> Previous year's data relates to past resident survey responses for equivalent questions.

Practical real-time measures (Quarterly)										
No.	Performance measure	Cabinet member (Cllr)	Lead Director	Q3 - 24/25	Q4 - 24/25	Q1 - 25/26	Q2 - 25/26	Q3 - 25/26	Target 25/26	Status
LL4	Number of respondents to consultations	Becker	Laura Taylor	1,332	112	98	1,745	1,526	Measure only	n/a

## **Section 7 Financial Report**

### **Financial Position**

This section presents a summary of the council's financial position as of 31 December 2025 regarding the General Fund (Revenue and Capital) and Housing Revenue Account budgets.

### **General Fund Revenue**

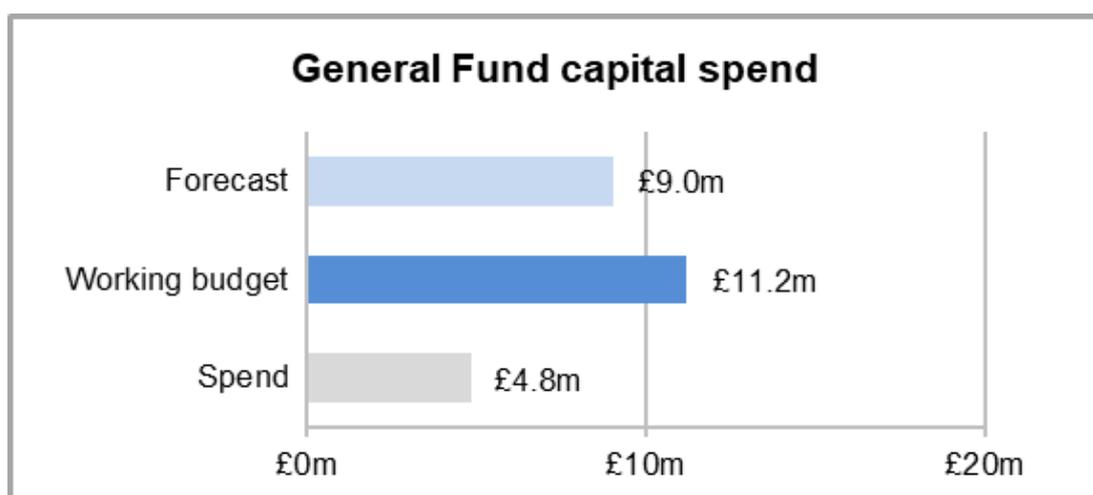
#### **Summary**

1. A balanced budget was set by Council in February 2025 (CAB3494 refers).
2. Inflation is currently 3.4% as at December 2025 (CPI). This remains within the original budget forecast.
3. An employee underspend of £0.4m is forecast, which is made up of higher than anticipated vacancy management savings (originally budgeted at £0.3m) and a lower than budgeted for pay settlement.
4. The ongoing TC25 project has identified further budget savings of approximately £0.310m per annum in 2025/26. The total achieved by TC25 to date is £1.67m (56%).
5. Interest receivable has been reviewed and a total net interest receivable of £0.792m is now forecast, which is £0.3m higher than budget.
6. Extended Producer Responsibility grant was confirmed at £1.680m for 2025/26, which was £0.846m higher than the provisional figure of £0.834m which was used in the budget.
7. Guildhall income is forecast at £60k lower than budget, mainly due to the temporary closure of the Bapsy Hall.
8. Parking overtime budgets are forecast to be £30k overspent for the year, this is under review for 2026/27.
9. The latest NNDR pool forecast is £195k below the original budget.
10. Utility costs are forecast to be £150k above budget.
11. HVO costs for waste vehicles are forecast at £40k for 2025/26, which is £160k below the £200k annual budget.

<u>General Fund Budget Forecast 2025/26 (£000)</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Forecast</u>	<u>Variance</u>
Greener Faster	8,783	8,453	330
Healthy Communities	4,108	4,258	(150)
Good Homes for All	1,378	1,378	
Thriving Places	2,920	2,980	
Efficient and Effective	7,209	6,499	710
<b>TOTAL before funding</b>	<b>24,396</b>	<b>23,566</b>	<b>830</b>
<b>TOTAL funding</b>	<b>(24,396)</b>	<b>(25,447)</b>	<b>1,051</b>
<b>FORECAST BUDGET UNDERSPEND</b>			<b>1,881</b>

## General Fund Capital

1. General Fund capital expenditure to the end of June was £4.8m the majority of which relates to the following projects: Food Waste including the purchase of vehicles (£1.51m), River Park Cricket Pavilion (£1.18m), CIL funded community projects (£0.44m), Disabled Facilities grants (£0.68m), Resurfacing of St Catherine's car park (£0.1m), and the refurbishment of public conveniences (£0.17m). There have also been smaller amounts of expenditure on several other projects.
2. Capital budgets for 2025/26 were revised for brought forward balances and other changes, such as reforecasting, as part of the General Fund 2024/25 outturn reported to September cabinet (CAB3514 refers), and this is reflected in the working budget below. The forecast of full year spend is lower due to some forecast slippage such as Energy Management projects (£0.3m) and CIL funded community projects (£0.4m) and forecast savings with the largest being the acquisition of vehicles and containers for food waste (£0.3m). Due to the nature of capital expenditure, there is always a risk of programme slippage particularly in respect of projects that have yet to commence.
3. The full year budget and forecast below excludes £4m in respect of the Strategic Asset Purchase scheme (SAPS). This budget will only be spent if suitable assets are identified. There have been no SAPS purchases to date in 2025/26.



4. Key items of expenditure in Q1-Q3 2025/26:

**River Park Cricket Pavilion**

*Total Budget: £2.3m*

*Exp: Prior years £0.039m*

*Q1-Q3 £1.178m*

*Total*

*£1.217m*

Work on the new pavilion is substantially complete and is expected to open in Spring 2026. The new pavilion will be a valuable additional asset in River Park, which is already a hub for sporting, community and social activity and recreation. It will provide the required standard of changing rooms, umpire facilities, toilets and accessibility to enable a wide and diverse range of people to participate in

cricket. By providing high quality facilities, increased community sport outcomes can be achieved across a wider demographic and the pavilion can be used to support users of River Park, not just cricket, by provided changing and club house facilities to support their events or sports. The current variance is at 31 December 2025 and reflects the timing of payments to contractors as per the agreed schedule.

**Food Waste**

*Total Budget: £1.8m*

<i>Exp: Prior years £nil</i>	<i>Q1-Q3 £1.51m</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>£1.51m</i>
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The council has completed its purchase of the food waste vehicles and containers; the collection of food waste commenced in October. Food waste recycling has the potential to reduce the district's carbon footprint by an estimated 1,900 tonnes of CO2e per year by recycling this waste to generate clean green energy and nutrient dense soil improver.

**Disabled Facilities Grants**

*Total Budget: £1.53m*

<i>Expenditure: recurring annually</i>	<i>Q1-Q3</i>	<i>£0.68m</i>
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During the period 1 April to 31 December £678,000 of grants were paid over. In addition to the grant allocation, the council holds £0.6m of unapplied grant from prior years which can be applied to DFG expenditure should it exceed grant received in year.

Such grants enable residents of private and/or social housing who are disabled or have a mobility or other limiting condition to apply for adaptations to be undertaken in their home. Adaptations can include the installation of stair lifts, level access showers, kitchen adaptations or ramping etc. and enable residents to remain in their homes rather than having to move, go into hospital, or into residential care.

## Housing Revenue Account summary

### Summary

1. A deficit budget of £2.03m was set by Council in February 2025 (CAB3490 refers).
2. The inflationary uplift budget forecast for salaries, as with the General Fund, was 4.0% for 2025/26. The final uplift was 3.2%, which will reduce pressure on staffing budgets but will be offset by low government grant for increase in Employers NI.
3. An overall deficit of £0.578m is forecast for 2025/26.

<b>Housing Revenue Account Budget Forecast 2025/26 (£000)</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>NET</b>
Housing Management - General	6,752	(258)	6,493
Housing Management - Special	4,123	(3,083)	1,039
Repairs & Repairs administration	12,762	(182)	12,580
Debt management & interest income	5,800	0	5,800
Contribution to Major Repairs costs (Depreciation)	10,917	0	10,917
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40,353</b>	<b>(3,524)</b> 	<b>36,830</b>
Rent, Service Charges & Other income			(34,236)
<b>FORECAST BUDGET OVERSPEND</b>			<b>2,593</b>
<b>AGREED BUDGET OVERSPEND</b>			<b>2,016</b>
<b>Forecast movement:</b>			<b>578</b>
<b>Of which (net):</b>			
<b>Baseline</b>			<b>887</b>
<b>One-off</b>			<b>(309)</b>

4. In total there is a forecast adverse variance of £0.578m which is made up of a number of variances which offset one another as follows.
5. There were a high number of vacancies in the first half of 2025/26. Much of this vacancy has been offset through the use of interim staff in quarter 2 and quarter 3 to cover vacancies, which has now largely offset any savings from

vacancies. Most vacant posts have now been filled and the use of agency staff is expected to fall in Quarter 4.

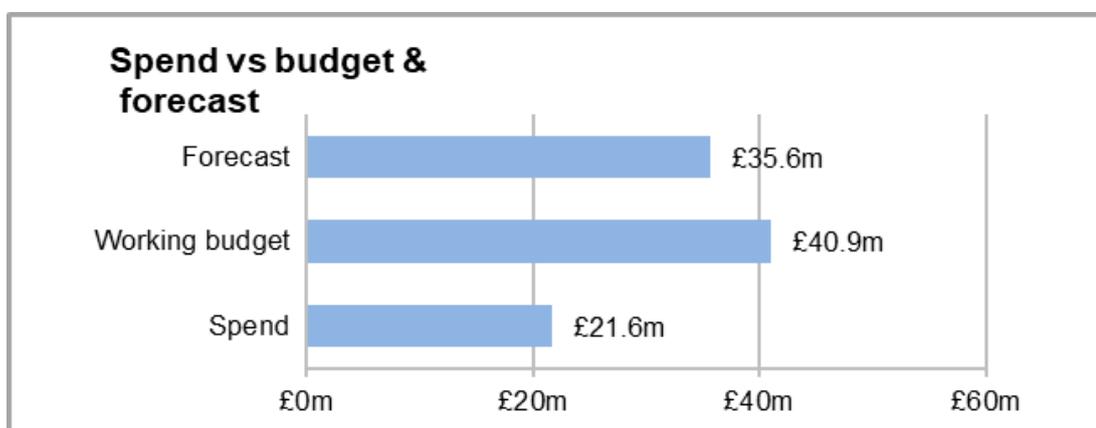
6. The 2025/26 budget included a one-off investment budget for software upgrades, stock condition survey, and repairs procurement. It is expected that £0.15m of the budget set aside for software development will not be spent in 2025/26 and will be returned to the working balance to be reprofiled over future years.
7. So far in 2025/26, there has been a trend demonstrating both an increase in void properties, and an increase in the associated average cost of repairing void properties to bring these back into use. On current trend, the likely overspend on void properties is likely to be approximately £1m. Additional void costs are also reflected in a forecast adverse variance of £0.03m on empty property council tax charges.
8. Adverse variances on reactive repairs arise due to a waking watch, which was in place at Winnall flats while fire safety issues were resolved, generating an adverse forecast variance of £0.07m. In addition, the continuing stock condition surveys are identifying HHSRS repairs that are being dealt with which, in the short term, are adding pressure of £0.2m to reactive repairs budgets. Compensation payments in respect of complaints and disrepair are also forecast to exceed budget by £0.1m.
9. The depreciation charge is notoriously difficult to estimate accurately, as the actual charge for the year is calculated based on both component cost of assets and valuation of properties. However, based on the 2024/25 outturn, the projected depreciation forecast has been increased by £0.3m. Whilst depreciation is a notional figure, the council is required to transfer a sum equal to depreciation to the major repairs reserve which is restricted to capital expenditure only.
10. Following the changes to the Right to Buy legislation in November 2024, making RTB sales less attractive, the business plan included an assumption that RTB sales would peak in 2025 due to high demand in applications immediately prior to changes. However, the business plan assumption of 20 sales has been surpassed, with over 30 sales as at quarter 3, virtually all of which relate to applications made in November 2024. This has resulted in a reduction in forecast rental income of £0.1m.
11. Adverse variances are offset by a reduction in the net interest cost forecast for 2025/26. The interest cost of external borrowing is based on known PWLB debt and the rates at which the loans were taken out. Interest income on internal balances, and internal borrowing costs are based on estimated cashflow in and out of the HRA and an assumed interest rate based on short term PWLB rates. The rate achieved to date on interest on balances has been

significantly better than assumed which, combined with a slower spend on capital throughout 2025, has generated a favourable variance of £1.3m.

12. Issues with the quality of retrofit work to void properties undertaken in 2023/4 have been identified. Engagement with the contractor responsible has taken place and a sample of 30 properties has been selected to determine the extent of retrospective work required. At this stage it is prudent to make provision for the gross cost of works of £ 0.5m in 2025/6 and £ 0.5m in 2026/7 until the extent and nature of works is confirmed, as well as the proportion of the cost that may fall back to the Council.

### Housing Revenue Account Capital Spend

1. Housing capital expenditure to the end of December was £22.48m, of which:
  - £3.29m was on major works.
  - £0.21m improvements & upgrades.
  - £17.09m on the New Build programme; and
  - £1.89m on other schemes.
2. Capital budgets for 2025/26 have been revised for carried forward balances and other changes following the approval of the HRA outturn report in September 2025. (report CAB3465). Due to the nature of capital expenditure, there is always a risk of programme slippage, particularly in respect of the unallocated new builds budget that is largely pending decisions to proceed with specific projects.
3. Capital expenditure in quarter 4 is expected to continue to include expenditure on the acquisitions at Kings Barton, with further stage payments expected, and will account for nearly half of the overall capital forecast by March 2026. Furthermore, contracted retrofit works on 125 properties are expected to commence in Quarter 4.



4. Key items of expenditure in Q3 2025/26 includes:

• **Major repairs** *Total Budget £8.21m*

*Exp: Recurring Annually*                      Q1-Q3 £3.286m                      *Total £3.286m*

The major repairs programme reflects the planned major repairs to the council's housing stock, and includes investment in doors, windows, wall structures, kitchens and bathrooms, roofing and other similar major works. Expenditure on planned programme works doubled between Quarter 2 and Quarter 3, and major works contract are expected to be largely complete by 31<sup>st</sup> March, with the exception of block works of £1m, which is currently being scoped and anticipated to be carried forward to 2026/27. Expenditure on reactive major repairs is demand led and, as at quarter 3, was forecast to be £0.25m below budget. The forecast spend for 2025/26 is currently £6.6m against revised budget of £8.21m.

• **Climate Emergency** *Total Budget £5.336m*

*Exp: Recurring annually*                      Q1-Q3: £0.744m                      *Total £0.744m*

The HRA Business plan includes a £45m investment into energy efficiency measures across the housing stock, and includes expenditure on insulation and ventilation measures, and significant energy investment measures at the Swedish Cottages. The current programme for 2025/26 is anticipated at £3.22m. The main variance relates to the termination of the contract at Swedish Cottages, which was considered by Cabinet at its October meeting. In addition, the programme is being reviewed following the decision by DESNZ to withdraw grant funding within the SDHF programme, and this is covered in detail in the 2026/27 HRA budget report. Forecast spend for 2025/26 has been revised downwards to £3.2m as a result.

• **Fire Safety Improvement works** *Total Budget £6.00m*

*Exp prior years: None*                      Q1-Q3: £0.26m                      *Total £0.26m*

The HRA Business plan included a budget of £6m, phased between 2025/26 and 2027/28, to cover potential fire safety upgrade works, such as compartmentation, in blocks. Since the beginning of the year, a dedicated fire safety manager has been employed, relevant survey work completed and reviewed, and work is now commencing with compartmentation works at one block currently underway. The majority of spend will take place in 2026/27.

• **Improvements & Upgrades** *Total budget £0.68m*

*Exp: Recurring annually*                      Q1-Q3: £0.2119m                      *Total £0.21m*

The budget for improvements and upgrades relates specifically to Sheltered Housing upgrades and Estates improvements. The Estates improvements programme expected spend for 2025/26 is £0.35m, against budget of £0.46m.

• **Victoria House Sewerage Connection** *Total Budget £0.516m*

*Exp: Prior years - None*                      Q1-Q3 £0.00                      *Total £0.00m*

The budget included £0.5m for potential remedial upgrades to the sewerage connection at Victoria House. However, the work has been undertaken at no cost to the Council and the budget will therefore not be spent.

- **Sewage treatment plant upgrades** Total budget £1.58m

Exp: Prior Years – None                      Q1-Q3 £0.23m                      Total £0.23m

The budget includes £1.5m for upgrades to sewage treatment plants across the HRA stock. This is divided into works to reduce costs where running costs are high and works to generate nutrient credits. Sites are currently being surveyed, and one site currently expected to be upgraded by the end of the year. As a result, forecast spend in 2025/26 is expected to be £0.3m and a carry forward request made for the remaining budget.

**New build:**

- **Local Authority Housing Fund Round 3** Total budget: £0.530m

Exp: Prior years None                      Q1-Q2 £0.51m                      Total £0.51m

The Council was successful in securing £0.9m in Round 3 of the Local Authority Housing fund. No properties were identified in Quarter 1; however, two suitable properties were subsequently identified for purchase during July 2025. Both properties completed during Quarter 3. Two further properties have been identified within the Kings Baerton development, and, subject to decision record, remaining funding will be applied to the completion of these units.

- **Buyback of former Council Houses** Total budget: £1.36m

Exp: Prior years £0.312m                      Q1-Q3 £0.20m                      Total £0.512m

In September 2024 the Cabinet approved the spend of up to £1.36m on the repurchase of former Council properties. To date, one property has been purchased in 2024/25, and one further acquisition made in 2025/26.

- **Kings Barton Property Acquisition** Total budget: £33.927m

Exp: Prior years £0.03m                      Q1-Q3 £16.45m                      Total £16.48m

The acquisition of 146 units at Kings Barton was agreed during 2024/25. The deposit and advance works payments have now been made. Build at the scheme is progressing and 10 units were completed and handed over during Quarter 3.

- **Woodman Close New Build** Total budget: £2.16m

Exp: Prior years £0.00m                      Q1-Q3 £0.06m                      Total £0.06m

The construction of five units at Woodman Close was agreed during Quarter 3, and construction is due to commence in early 2026.

- **Unallocated budgets New Homes** Total budget: £6.43m

Exp: Prior years £0.00m                      Q1-Q3 £0.00m                      Total £0.00m

The capital programme includes £6.43m of budgets subject to approval of expenditure. During Quarter 2, Cabinet agreed in July 2025 to dispose of Cornerhouse and return the budget to unallocated, and subsequent delegated decisions have been made to allocate £0.5m to match fund the purchases of LAHF properties, and in quarter 3 agreed to proceed with a development at Woodman Close, which reduced the unallocated funding to £6.43m.

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## Forward Plan of Key Decisions

1 April 2026 – 30 June 2026

This document sets out key decisions to be taken within the next 28 days, together with any key decision by individual Members of the Cabinet and officers. It also includes potential key decisions beyond that period, though this is not comprehensive and items will be confirmed in the publication of the key decisions document 28 days before a decision is taken.

Key Decisions are those which are financially significant or which have a significant impact. This has been decided, by the Council, to be decisions which involve income or expenditure over £250,000 or which will have a significant effect on people or organisations in two or more wards.

The majority of decisions are taken by Cabinet, together with the individual Cabinet Members, where appropriate. The membership of Cabinet and its meeting dates can be found [via this link](#). Other decisions may be taken by Cabinet Committees, Cabinet Members or Officers in accordance with the Officers' Scheme of Delegation, as agreed by the Council.

Whilst the majority of the Cabinet's business at the meetings listed in this document will be open to the public, there will be occasions when the business to be considered contains confidential, commercially sensitive or personal information. The items of business where this is likely to apply are indicated on the plan.

This is formal notice under The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 that part of the Cabinet meetings listed in this document may be held in private because the agenda and reports for the meeting will contain exempt information under Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and that the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing it.

If you have any representations as to why the meeting should be held in private, then please contact the Council via [democracy@winchester.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@winchester.gov.uk) . [Please follow this link to the Council's Constitution](#) which includes a definition of the **paragraphs** (Access to Information Procedure Rules, Part 4 paragraph 8.4) detailing why a matter may be classed as exempt from publication under the Local Government Acts, and not available to the public.

Anyone who wishes to make representations about any item included in the Plan please contact the Democratic Services Team prior to the meeting to make your request. Copies of documents listed in the Plan for submission to a decision taker are available for inspection on the Council's website. Where the document is a committee report, it will usually be available five days before the meeting. Other documents relevant to the decision may also be submitted to the decision maker and are available on Council's website or via email [democracy@winchester.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@winchester.gov.uk).

Please note that the decision dates are indicative and occasionally subject to change.

If you have any queries regarding the operation or content of the Forward Plan please contact David Blakemore (Democratic Services Team Manager) on 01962 848 217.

	Item	Cabinet Member	Key Decision	Wards Affected	Lead Officer	Documents submitted to decision taker	Decision taker (Cabinet, Cabinet Member or Officer)	Date/period decision to be taken	Committee Date (if applicable)	Open/private meeting or document? If private meeting, include relevant exempt paragraph number
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**Section A**

Decisions made by Cabinet & Cabinet committees

1	Land transaction (if required)	Cabinet Member for Regeneration	Yes	All Wards	Geoff Coe	Cabinet report	Cabinet	May-26	27-May-26	Part exempt 3
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**Section B**

Decisions made by individual Cabinet Members

None currently scheduled for this period

**Section C**

Decisions made by Officers

2	Treasury Management - decisions in accordance with the Council's approved strategy and policy	Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation	Yes	All Wards	Designated HCC Finance staff, daily	Designated working papers	Designated HCC Finance staff, daily	Apr-26	Apr-26	Open
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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

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