



Meeting	Council
Date and Time	Wednesday, 14th January, 2026 at 6.30 pm.
Venue	Council Chamber, Castle Hill, Winchester SO23 8UL and streamed live on YouTube at www.youtube.com/winchestercc

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that an Ordinary Meeting of the Council will be held at 6.30 pm on Wednesday, 14th January, 2026 in the Council Chamber, Castle Hill, Winchester SO23 8UL and all Members of the Council are summoned to attend.

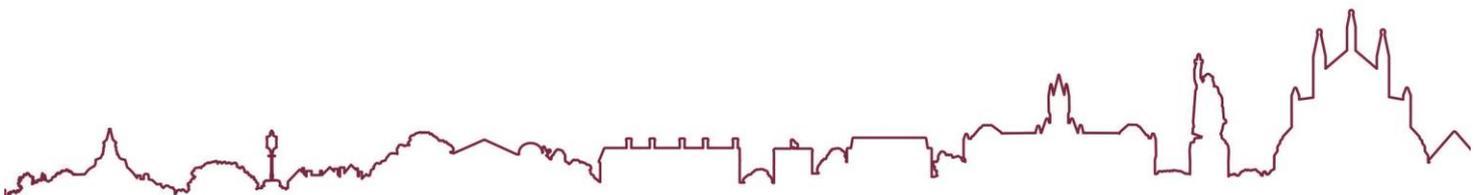
Note: This meeting is being held in person at the location specified above. Members of the public should note that the meeting will be streamed live to the council's YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/WinchesterCC).

A limited number of seats will be made available at the above named location, however attendance must be notified to the council at least 3 working days before the meeting. Please note that priority will be given to those having registered to speak during the Public Question session over those wishing to attend and observe. Please note that Questions must be received in writing by Democratic Services (democracy@winchester.gov.uk) prior to **10am**, five working days preceding the day of the council meeting.

AGENDA

- 1. Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 24 September 2025** (Pages 9 - 16)
- 2. Disclosure of Interests**
To receive any disclosure of interests from Councillors or Officers in matters to be discussed.

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



4. **Questions from Members of the Public**
To receive and answer any questions from the public.
(Questions must be received in writing by Democratic Services – democracy@winchester.gov.uk – no later than 10am on Wednesday 7 January 2026)
5. **To consider and determine the following Recommended Minutes of the Audit and Governance Committee held 27 November 2025 - Pay Policy Report and Statement 2026/27 (AG170).** (Pages 17 - 44)

RECOMMENDED:

That the Pay Policy Statement for the financial year 2026/27 be adopted.

6. **Information for Council**
South Downs National Park Authority: Cllr Jerry Pett
7. **Notices of Motion**
(a) **Armed Forces – End to the Unjust Benefits System for Veterans – “Credit Their Service”**

Proposer: Cllr Danny Lee

Seconder: Cllr Brian Laming

Preamble

Winchester is a proud supporter of the Armed Forces community, the Royal British Legion (RBL) and Armed Forces Covenant. Our district has deep historic and present-day ties with the Armed Forces, including service personnel, veterans, and their families who contribute to our community.

However, veterans receiving military compensation continue to face unfair treatment in the welfare system. The Royal British Legion’s “Credit Their Service” campaign highlights this serious injustice.

This inequity results in our poorest veterans and their families being denied full financial support that would otherwise be available to civilians receiving equivalent compensation through civil courts. Winchester City Council can lead locally by ensuring military compensation can be treated fairly and advocate for national reform.

Council Notes

- That military compensation, awarded by the UK Government for injury, illness or loss sustained in service, is still treated as income by c80% of local authorities in the UK and is therefore means-tested benefits, despite civilian personal-injury compensation being fully disregarded.
- That the Royal British Legion’s ‘Credit Their Service’ campaign has

identified more than 150,000 veterans and family members affected nationally each year.

- That councils have the discretion to disregard Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS) and War Pension income in local benefits including Council Tax Support (CTS), Housing Benefit (HB), Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP), and Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG).
- That the Royal British Legion lists Eastleigh and other authorities – including Wigan, Durham, Northumberland, and Basingstoke – as councils that have adopted fairer treatment by fully disregarding military compensation in local schemes.
- That Winchester City Council has a strong commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant and can demonstrate national leadership by ensuring local veterans are treated fairly. Winchester City Council signed the Covenant on 2 March 2022¹.

Council Resolves

1. To support the Royal British Legion's "Credit Their Service" campaign, recognising the injustice caused when military compensation is treated as income in local means-tested benefits.

2. To amend all relevant Winchester City Council policies to ensure that

- All Armed Forces Compensation Scheme payments and War Disablement Pensions are fully disregarded when assessing financial liability for Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG).
- All Armed Forces compensation and War Pension income is fully disregarded when assessing eligibility or award levels for Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP).
- The same principle is applied wherever legally permissible in Council Tax Support and Housing Benefit calculations within local discretionary parameters.

3. To embed this position explicitly within the Council's Private Sector Housing Policy and DFG Policy Statement, citing the Armed Forces Covenant duty to ensure fair treatment.

4. To publicise the policy clearly to veterans, local voluntary groups, and Armed Forces representatives across the district.

5. To write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions urging national reform so that military compensation is fully exempt from all means-tested Department for Work and Pensions benefits.

¹ [Winchester City Council - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/winchester-city-council-signs-armed-forces-covenant) - no member of the Armed Forces Community should face disadvantage in the provision of public and commercial services compared to any other citizen. And, and in some circumstances that special treatment may be appropriate especially for the injured

6. To work with the Royal British Legion, the Hampshire Armed Forces Covenant Partnership, and neighbouring councils to support consistent adoption of “Credit Their Service” principles across Hampshire.

.....
Ref/Notes

1. [Credit their Service](#)

(b) Protecting Streams and Rivers Across the Winchester District.

Proposer: Cllr Kelsie Learney
Seconder: Cllr Suzanne White

This Council recognises that our streams and rivers are vital to the ecological health, cultural heritage, and future sustainability of the Winchester district.

Our district includes internationally significant chalk streams, the River Itchen, River Meon, and River Dever, as well as the River Hamble and other watercourses.

These rivers provide habitats for unique and endangered species, support livelihoods, recreation, the wellbeing of our residents and have historical and cultural significance. However rivers across the UK, and here in the Winchester district, face increasing pressures from pollution, over-abstraction, habitat and biodiversity degradation, and climate change.

This Council welcomes the priority given to the protection and restoration of rivers and chalk streams within the recently adopted Local Nature Recovery strategy for Hampshire and the specific reference to chalk streams within the recently published consultation draft revision of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

However these measures are unlikely to counter the cumulative impact of:

- Government proposals to scale back biodiversity net gain (BNG) requirements
- Indications that nature-friendly farming measures within Environmental Land Management schemes (ELMs) may be rolled back.
- Proposed changes weakening Habitats Regulations
- Reference in the draft NPPF to “an unacceptable adverse effect on water quality” rather than absolute protection
- The removal of the House of Lords’ amendment to the Planning and Infrastructure bill which required spatial development strategies to identify the measures to protect chalk streams from environmental damage; and impose responsibilities on strategic planning authorities in relation to the protection and enhancement of chalk stream habitats.

Council therefore resolves to:

1. Restate this Council's intention to lead by example to protect and restore our rivers and streams and their catchments.
 2. Continue to advocate to Government and national and regional bodies, including the Environment Agency, for the protection of our chalk streams and other freshwater ecosystems.
 3. Support local initiatives and citizen monitoring efforts that protect and restore river health, such as citizen science water testing and river fly monitoring, riparian buffer planting, natural flood management, creating wildlife corridors and sustainable agriculture partnerships.
 4. Support public engagement to raise awareness of the importance of chalk streams and rivers to Hampshire's natural and cultural heritage.
 5. Request that the Environment Agency publishes an annual "State of the Rivers" report to track progress in protecting the aquatic environment, in collaboration with local environmental organisations.
-

(c) Hampshire Mayoral Election.

Proposer: Cllr Caroline Horrill

Seconder: Cllr Stephen Godfrey

This council notes the announcement last month from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government that the inaugural elections to select a Mayor for the new Hampshire Mayoral Combined Authority would not take place until May 2028.

This Council believes that the election of a Mayor for the Hampshire & the Solent Combined County Authority must happen as early as possible, preferably in May 2026, but should not be delayed beyond May 2027.

This Council resolves to:

1. Formally oppose the Government's proposal to delay the Hampshire Mayoral election from May 2026 to May 2028.
 2. Write to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government expressing this Council's concern at the proposed delay and calling for the election to proceed in May 2026 as originally planned and not to be postponed beyond May 2027.
-

(d) Local Elections.

Proposer: Cllr Caroline Horrill
Seconder: Cllr Stephen Godfrey

This council notes the letter from the Minister of State for Local Government and Homelessness on 18th December 2025 inviting views on the postponement of local elections from May 2026.

This Council believes that local elections, including those planned for Winchester City Council in May 2026, must not be postponed.

This Council resolves to request that the Leader responds to the Minister accordingly – making clear that Winchester City Council does not support postponement of its elections.

8. Changes to Committee Memberships

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

9. Questions from Members of Council

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

LAURA TAYLOR
Chief Executive

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



6 January 2026

Agenda Contact: David Blakemore, Democratic Services Team Manager
Tel: 01962 848217 Email: dblakemore@winchester.gov.uk

Quorum = 15 members

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

A question may only be asked if notice has been given by delivering it in writing to Democratic Services no later than 5 working days preceding the Council meeting. For example, if the Council meeting is being held at 6.30pm on a Wednesday then the question would need to be received by 10am on the preceding Wednesday. Please email to democracy@winchester.gov.uk.

FILMING AND BROADCAST NOTIFICATION

This meeting will be recorded and broadcast live on the Council's website. The meeting may also be recorded and broadcast by the press and members of the public – please see the Access to Information Procedure Rules within the Council's Constitution for further information, which is available to view on the [Council's website](#).

DISABLED ACCESS:

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

This page is intentionally left blank

Public Document Pack Agenda Item 1

COUNCIL

Wednesday, 24 September 2025

Attendance:

Councillors Present

Achwal S (Chairperson)

Gordon-Smith	Latham
Achwal V	Learney
Aron	Lee
Bailey-Morgan	Miller
Batho	Morris
Becker	Murphy
Bolton	Pett
Brook	Pinniger
Brophy	Porter
Chamberlain	Reach
Clear	Rutter
Cook	Scott
Cramoysan	Small
Cunningham	Thompson
Cutler	Tippett-Cooper
Eve	Tod
Godfrey	Wallace
Horrill	White
Laming	Williams
Langford-Smith	

Apologies for Absence:

Councillors Bennett, Power, Warwick, Westwood and Wise

[Recording of Meeting](#)

1. **MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 9 JULY 2025**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Ordinary meeting of the Council held on 9 July 2025 be approved and adopted.

2. **DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

Councillors Porter, Tod, Wallace and Williams each declared disclosable pecuniary interests in respect of agenda items due to their role as Hampshire County Councillors. However, as there was no material conflict of interest, they

remained in the room, spoke and voted under the dispensation granted on behalf of the Audit and Governance Committee to participate and vote in all matters which might have a County Council involvement.

Councillor Pett declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in respect of agenda items due to his role as Council's representative on the South Downs National Park Authority. However, as there was no material conflict of interest, he 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 South Downs National Park Authority involvement.

3. **ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE MAYOR, LEADER AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE.**

The Mayor referred to recent engagements and then announced his forthcoming charities events.

The Leader then announced that the Independent Planning Inspector for the Winchester District Local Plan had recently published her initial findings following the recent examination hearings. The Inspector has indicated that the Plan is likely to be capable of satisfying the necessary steps before adoption, subject to some modifications. The Inspector had highlighted that the council's approach to un-met housing need and duty to cooperate, was sound. Local energy efficiency standards had been included in the Plan, that went beyond current Building Regulations and had been accepted. The Leader reported that this was all very positive news for the district as an adopted Local Plan would help control unplanned development on greenfield sites achieved via planning appeals, and the additional environmental protections would help the council's priorities in this area. He commended the Strategic Planning Manager and his team, and all officers involved, for their achievements. The Council then reciprocated with applause.

The Chief Executive announced apologies for the meeting.

4. **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

There were no Questions before Council.

5. **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF COUNCIL**

With the leave of the Mayor, the Leader firstly introduced Report CL176.

The Leader explained that the process of Local Government reorganisation began on 5 February 2025 with a statutory invitation from the Minister and required a submission to Government by Friday 26 September. It was acknowledged that the process, criteria, and timeline were imposed by the government, but that a response from the Council was required.

The Leader outlined the next steps as follows:

The government would review submissions and undertake public consultation on all those that meet the specified criteria, likely between November and January 26. A final decision would be made by the Minister by March 2026. He stressed that a failure to submit a proposal would mean the Council's preferred option would not be considered. He stated that Hampshire County Council intended to submit its own proposal to merge Winchester with Basingstoke and Deane, Hart, Rushmoor, and East Hampshire, and this would proceed regardless of this council's decision.

The decision before the Council was whether to submit its own proposal, referred to as "Option Two" in the submission document prepared by twelve councils across Hampshire and Isle of Wight. Option Two proposed a new unitary council for incorporating the districts of Winchester, Test Valley, and East Hampshire, had been supported by residents during the engagement process. The Leader stated his belief that this proposal met all government criteria. It was the result of a collaborative effort involving other councils and external experts, was underpinned by robust financial methodology, and was informed by extensive public engagement.

The Leader set out the submission was a positive plan that created a logical set of four mainland authorities while treating the Isle of Wight as a special case and proposed that it remained a single island unitary. Its aim was not only to protect essential services during the transition but to use unitarisation to deliver better long-term outcomes for residents. The choice presented to council was to either agreeing this submission and supporting this preferred option or, by doing nothing, accepting the imposition of other, less desirable, outcomes.

Council then turned to the 8 questions which had been received, which were all heard at the meeting along with associated supplementary questions. The questions received and their response were subsequently set out on the [council's website](#).

6. **LOCAL GOVERNMENT RE-ORGANISATION FINAL SUBMISSION (CL176)**

The Leader introduced the Report prior to Council hearing Questions submitted by Councillors (agenda item 5).

The Mayor invited questions from Council on Report CL176 and its appendices.

In summary, the following matters were raised, and each were responded to by the Leader:

1. A question was raised as to whether it would be appropriate to pause the process, given perceived gaps in the government's criteria and a number of external unknowns.
2. An explanation was sought for the significant difference between the savings forecast in the Council's proposal (£63.9m) and the loss forecast in Hampshire County Council's proposal (over £31m).

3. Clarification was requested on whether Cabinet members had seen the detailed financial modelling for disaggregation and implementation costs.
4. A question was asked as to whether there were any areas where the proposal was considered weaker when assessed against the government's six criteria.
5. Clarification was sought on how a decision on council groupings could be reached without Cabinet having seen detailed financial forecasts for the proposed new authorities.
6. A question was asked about the inherent risks within the financial model being used, particularly in light of its previous application in the Cumbria reorganisation.
7. An explanation was sought as to why a four-unitary model had not been modelled, as it might have been more cost-effective.
8. A question was asked regarding what backup plan was in place for parts of the Winchester district that were included in the proposals of other councils.
9. Clarification was sought on whether concerns raised by Hampshire County Council about alleged "incorrect statements" in the report would be addressed before its final submission.

Council the proceeded to debate the matters in the report. In summary, the following matters were raised:

1. It was stated that the choice was to either refuse to participate in the process or to act responsibly by submitting the preferred Option Two.
2. Option Two was supported as it would keep local government closer to communities, create a unitary of a viable size, and group similar rural areas together.
3. A request was made to ensure the historic mayoralty of Winchester was retained in any new structure.
4. Concern was expressed about the lack of access for all councillors to the detailed financial data underpinning the proposal, which was felt to be essential for making a fully informed decision.
5. The significant discrepancy between the financial forecasts of the Council's proposal and the Hampshire County Council proposal was highlighted as a major concern.
6. It was argued that the process was not a choice but had been imposed by government, and the proposal represented the best collective effort of 12 councils to create a logical plan within that framework.

7. The need for councillors to place trust in the professional judgement of the twelve Section 151 officers who had produced the financial case was noted.
8. Concern was expressed regarding the Hampshire County Council proposal regards the creation of authorities that would be among the largest in the country by population, spread over vast geographical areas, and therefore not truly local.
9. The consultation process undertaken by the district councils was contrasted favourably with that of the County Council, which was described as not offering residents a genuine choice.
10. It was argued that the new unitary authorities would not be 'greenfield' as they would inherit existing staff, services, and expertise from all predecessor councils.
11. Option Two was described as the "least worst case" in what was seen as a flawed, top-down process.
12. The significant "democratic deficit" that would be created by having fewer councillors representing much larger populations was raised as a recurring point of concern.
13. A counter-argument was made that for upper-tier services, the new arrangements could be considered more local, as residents would have more councillors representing them at that level than at present.
14. A desire for more detail and transparency was voiced, not to cause delay but to enable better understanding and judgement.
15. The reliance on financial models was questioned, with concern expressed that savings were being overestimated and disaggregation costs underestimated, drawing parallels with the experience in Cumbria.

Throughout the debate, council recognised the effort and commitment shown by council officers to prepare the proposal under very tight deadlines.

The Leader confirmed that he would take the matters raised during the meeting forward for Cabinet's consideration. He thanked councillors for their considered debate, acknowledged the concerns regarding the level of financial detail provided and gave the following summary

1. He believed that the long-term success of any re-organisation, designed to last for 50 years, depends more on fundamental design principles than on immediate financial projections. The key criteria for a successful outcome are creating authorities that are coherent in terms of geography, economy and housing delivery linked to recognised communities.
2. He emphasised that the current system was financially unsustainable, and no re-organisation model can fully resolve the underlying funding gap.

- a) The 'do nothing' option would lead to a projected £2 billion financial shortfall at Hampshire County Council over the next five years.
 - b) By 2028/29, the combined forecast deficit for all authorities was approximately £320 million (£280 million for Hampshire County Council and £42 million for other authorities).
3. He clarified that the projected savings do not eliminate the deficit but merely reduce it. For example, the proposed £63 million in savings would lower the £320 million deficit but would not immediately create a surplus. This fundamental problem in local government finance remains.
4. He asserted that the financial projections should be treated as a comparative "decision-making tool". The Council was operating within strict rules imposed by central government regarding the size of authorities, the timetable, and the overall process. Therefore, the chosen proposal represents the best, or as suggested during debate the "least worst," option available within these significant constraints.
5. Failure to submit the Council's preferred option would be a significant tactical error. If the Council did not submit its proposal, other less desirable options for Winchester will be the only ones considered by the government. This would leave proposals on the table that include:
 - a) Unwanted boundary changes to district areas.
 - b) The potential for a unitary council that grouped together local areas such as Southwick, Denmead, or Whiteley with northern areas such as Aldershot and Farnborough.
6. His interpretation of the debate was that a majority of councillors:
 - a) Broadly support submitting Option 2 as the preferred option for this council
 - b) Understand that not submitting a proposal was effectively a vote in favour of one of the alternatives, less preferred options from other councils.
7. The Leader confirmed he would take the following key points forward to the Cabinet meeting for consideration:
 - a) The ongoing concerns held by councillors regarding the financial details and modelling.
 - b) The broad support for submitting Option 2 as the Council's preferred way forward.
 - c) A commitment to continue advocating for important issues as the process continues, including:

- Achieving the right number of councillors for effective representation.
 - Ensuring that risk and environmental considerations are integrated into the next stage of the process.
8. Effective service design and financial modelling once the final structural configuration was determined. He concluded that, despite the challenges, the proposed plan was the right way forward and offers the best possible outcome for the residents of the district and the wider county for the next 50 years.

Following a request from a member, at the discretion of the Mayor, council were invited to indicate their preference to support submission of the proposal and therefore support for Option 2 by way of a show of hands. The majority of members indicated their agreement although a number of members abstained and a number of members did not indicate their preference or otherwise.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Cabinet report of 25 September 2025 be noted, and it be noted that that Cabinet will consider the comments of Council as summarised by the Leader as set out above.
2. That it be noted that Cabinet is asked to approve the full proposal to the Government of the proposals for local government reorganisation in Hampshire and Isle of Wight at their meeting on 25 September 2025 and in doing so, pending consideration of the views of council, indicates this councils support for Option 2 of the proposed new unitary authority geographies for Hampshire and Isle of Wight.
3. That it be noted that a final version of the proposal is under preparation following external legal advice which details that Option 3 will be referred to as Option 1A. Option 1A is Option 1 as the core option but this is wholly conditional upon a formal request to Government as part of the Council's submission to undertake a modification to permit Option 1A as outlined in the proposal documents.
4. That it be agreed that in the event of minor changes being necessary to the submission, if they are agreed by all 12 councils, that the Leader, in consultation with the Chief Executive is authorised to agree such amendments on behalf of Winchester City Council.

7. **CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS**

There were no changes to committee memberships for Council to note.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and concluded at 9.20 pm

The Mayor

This page is intentionally left blank

AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

27 November 2025

Draft Minute Extract

PAY POLICY REPORT AND STATEMENT 2026/27 (AG170)

The Service Lead – Human Resources introduced the report which set out the council's pay policy statement for 2026/27 for consideration and recommendation to Council. It was confirmed that there were no material changes from the previous year, with the main differences relating to the change to the pension age to 57 from April 2028 and slight amendments to the policy relating to "acting up" allowances.

The Service Lead responded to members' questions as summarised below:

- a) The rationale for extending the "acting up" allowance period beyond 12 months.
- b) Clarification on the current living wage that was being paid and whether contractors were required to pay the living wage. The Director (Legal) agreed to check this point.
NB Subsequent to the meeting, the Director circulated a written response to committee members which in summary confirmed that a standard paragraph was included all of the council's Tender and Request for Quote templates stating that the council was an accredited Living Wage employer which applied to both its own employees and its suppliers. It was also referenced throughout the councils 'Guide to Sustainable Procurement' and then reinforced in contract terms.
- c) The number of apprentices currently in employment and whether apprentices were paid a living wage. The Service Lead advised that apprentices were paid according to a separate pay scale which she would circulate to members outside of the meeting.
NB: Subsequent to the meeting, it was confirmed that the council currently had five apprentices who were paid the Living Wage (£24,243). In addition, there were three existing staff members undertaking upskilling apprenticeships and these individuals remain on their existing pay grades.
- d) The reason for the pay ratio benchmark of 20:1 and whether there was the possibility of updating the pay statement to aim for a lower ratio. The Service Lead agreed this would be reviewed as the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) process progressed.
- e) The current number of agency staff and the impact this had on the pay structure.
- f) Concerns about staff retention and a potential greater increase in agency staff due to Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).

RECOMMENDED (TO COUNCIL):

That the Pay Policy Statement for the financial year 2026/27 be adopted.

REPORT TITLE: PAY POLICY REPORT AND STATEMENT 2026/27

27 NOVEMBER 2025

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

Contact Officer: Manjit Sandhu Tel No: Email: msandhu@winchester.gov.uk

WARD(S): ALL

PURPOSE

This Pay Policy Statement is provided in accordance with Section 38(1) of the Localism Act 2011 and will be updated annually from 1 April each year.

The Pay Policy Statement sets out Winchester City Council's policies relating to the pay of its workforce for the financial year 2026/27, in particular:

- the remuneration of its Chief Officers;
- the remuneration of its "lowest paid employees"; and
- the relationship between:
 - the remuneration of its Chief Officers and
 - the remuneration of its employees who are not Chief Officers.

The purpose of the statement is to provide an open and transparent framework that ensures clarity, fairness and consistency in the remuneration of Chief Officers. It also ensures that employees at all levels of the Council are remunerated on a fair and equitable basis in accordance with equality legislation.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the Pay Policy Statement for the financial year 2026/27 is recommended to Council for adoption.

IMPLICATIONS:1 COUNCIL PLAN OUTCOME

- 1.1 Publishing an Annual Pay Policy Statement demonstrates an open and transparent approach to determining how council employees are remunerated. Defining key principles of how remuneration is determined contributes to the objective of achieving a balanced budget and stable council finances.

2 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1 There are no additional financial implications for the council in adopting this Pay Policy Statement. The proposed 2026/27 budget fully reflects the assumptions in the Pay Policy Statement.
- 2.2 The level of remuneration is a very important factor in both recruitment and retention of staff. There is a need to balance affordability and value for money with creating a reward framework that ensures the council can recruit, retain, motivate and develop employees who have the skills and capabilities necessary to ensure the continued provision of high quality services.

3 LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The Pay Policy Statement 2026/27 takes full account of the Secretary of State's guidance in relation to open and transparent reporting of senior level pay in addition to relevant legislative requirements. This includes ensuring that there is an appropriate relationship between the remuneration levels of our senior managers and of all other employees.
- 3.2 The Pay Policy Statement 2026/27 takes account of:
- the Local Government Transparency Code 2015 issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government in February 2015
 - Openness and Accountability in Local Pay: Guidance under S40 of Localism Act 2011 issued in February 2012
 - Openness and Accountability in Local Pay: Guidance under S40 of Localism Act 2011 Supplementary Guidance issued in February 2013
 - guidance issued by the Joint National Council (JNC) for Local Authority Chief Executives on pay policy statements, published in November 2011 and supplementary notes published in January and March 2012
 - employment and equalities legislation affecting local authority employers, where relevant.
- 3.3 The Council's current Contract Procedure Rules encourages existing contractors to apply the Living Wage Foundation rates of pay and for new contractors to submit a plan on how they will implement the Living Wage

foundation rates of pay should they be awarded the contract when bidding for contracts.

4 WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The overall approach to the remuneration for all employees, including senior management is based on:
- compliance with equal pay, discrimination and other relevant employment legislation such as the Equality Act 2010; and
 - ensuring that our overall remuneration packages position the council as an “employer of choice” and that as such our “total reward package” is competitive within the local government and public sector markets.
- 4.2 In the application of the remuneration framework, the council takes into account market rates, individual performance and the need for consistency in the way remuneration bandings are applied. All remuneration differentials can be objectively justified using job evaluation mechanisms that directly establish the relative levels of posts in remuneration bands according to the requirements, demands and responsibilities of the post.
- 4.3 In determining remuneration, the council recognises the need to exercise the greatest care in managing scarce public resources while securing and retaining high quality employees. The principle of fair pay is important to the provision of well-managed services and the council is committed to ensuring fairness and equity in its remuneration practices.

5 PROPERTY AND ASSET IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None.

6 CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

- 6.1 The Localism Act 2011 requires the Council to publish a Pay Policy Statement on an annual basis. There are no material changes to the provisions set out in previous policy statements and there is therefore no requirement to consult on this policy wider than the scrutiny by the Audit & Governance Committee.

7 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 None.

8 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSEMENT

- 8.1 There is no differential impact on a specified group as all HR matters are applied consistently.
- 8.2 As required nationally, the council reports on any potential discrepancies in pay, based on gender (“Gender Pay Gap” reporting), in accordance with the statutory timeframe.

8.3 An equality impact assessment (EIA) has been completed on the implementation of the Pay Policy Statement and no negative impacts from the policy have been identified. The EIA will be reviewed annually alongside the Pay Policy Statement.

8.4 As requested at the February 2021 meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee, the distribution of gender by grade is now provided in the annual report (Appendix 2).

9 DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

9.1 This report does not contain confidential data and so there is no need to undertake a Data Protection Impact Assessment.

10 RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk	Mitigation	Opportunities
Financial Exposure <i>Failure to recruit / retain necessary, high-quality employees leading to increased costs of employing locum / agency staff</i>	Assessment of market rates and individual performance combined with consistent application of remuneration bandings. Revisions to the pay grades implemented in recent years improved the Council's position within the employment market which should aid recruitment and retention.	Positioning the council as an Employer of Choice.
Exposure to challenge <i>Failure to comply with the publication requirements of the Localism Act 2011, resulting in adverse local media coverage or legal challenge</i>	Pay policy review is embedded within the committee work programme to ensure annual publication.	
Reputation <i>Failure to recruit / retain necessary, high-quality employees leading to service delivery delays / failures.</i>	Assessment of market rates and individual performance combined with consistent application of remuneration bandings. Revisions to the pay grades implemented in recent years improved the Council's position within	

	the employment market which should aid recruitment and retention.	
Other <i>Potential increase in sickness absence amongst lower paid staff if they do not believe their contribution to the council is valued.</i>	Revisions to the pay scales implemented during April 2019 and 2023 improved the basic pay for staff; the council remains a Living Wage Foundation employer.	

11 SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

- 11.1 Under the Localism Act 2011 ('The Act') every council is required to prepare and adopt a Pay Policy Statement and have that statement approved by Council. The Pay Policy Statement must contain the policy for the remuneration of the council's employees on appointment, subsequent progression and any use of bonus or performance related pay. There are specific requirements as to the appointment of Chief Officers set out in the council's Constitution. The Pay Policy Statement sets out the approach to the remuneration of Chief Officers on their ceasing to hold office or to be employed by the authority.
- 11.2 The Act also requires councils to define 'lowest paid employees', to consider the relationship between the remuneration of the highest and lowest paid and to explain the rationale for their approach and to publish details of pay relativities to encourage fairness in remuneration.
- 11.3 The Pay Policy Statement sets principles and rules relating to the remuneration of senior employees. It does not set out the details of individual payments made in accordance with these principles – although there are separate requirements for the publication of payments made to senior staff in the annual statement of accounts.
- 11.4 The nationally agreed local government pay award is applied from the 1 April each year.
- 11.5 The Pay Policy Statement 2026/27 does not contain any substantial changes to those considered previously.

KEY POLICY ISSUES

- 11.6 There are a number of matters to note in the attached Pay Policy Statement:
- a) The Policy uses the term "Chief Officers" to identify senior employees, or those in receipt of the highest remuneration. This reflects a requirement in the Act, where the definition covers a number of senior posts for Winchester City Council (see 2.3 of the Pay Policy Statement). The Policy recommends the current practice of adopting

national pay schemes and job evaluation procedures as a basis for determining remuneration.

- b) The definition of “lowest paid employees”, required to show pay relativities, draws on Scale 3 of the pay scales, the lowest pay of permanent staff in the Council at present. The ratio of remuneration for highest to lowest paid is under 20:1 – the benchmark as recommended by the Hutton Review.
- c) The City Council is a ‘Living Wage Foundation Employer’ which means that a nationally agreed minimum hourly rate of pay is applied to directly employed employees.
- d) The Policy also covers increases and additions to remuneration. This is already covered by our adopted pay scheme and policies on annual incremental increases, which the Policy refers to. The Policy also makes clear at present the council has not adopted performance related pay or a system of bonus payments and sets out the policy on payment of honoraria.
- e) As stated in Annex A/Pensions Discretions Policy Statement, the current earliest age, as set by the Government, at which pension savings can be accessed is age 55. From April 2028 this will rise to age 57. The 2028/29 Pensions Discretions Policy Statement will be updated accordingly at that time.

12 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

12.1 Publishing an annual Pay Policy Statement is a statutory requirement under the Localism Act 2011 therefore no other options were considered.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:-

Previous Committee Reports:-

AG041 Final Report and Pay Policy Statement 2021/22, 11 Feb 2021
 AG062 Final Report and Pay Policy Statement 2022/23, 11 November 2021
 AG092 Final Report and Pay Policy Statement 2023/23, 10 November 2022
 AG103 Final Report and Pay Policy Statement 2024/25, 9 November 2023
 AG142 Final Report and Pay Policy Statement 2025/26, 28 November 2024

Other Background Documents:- None.

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 – Pay Policy Statement 2026/27
 Appendix 2 – Gender Distribution by Grade
 Appendix 3 – Equality Impact Assessment

Appendix 1

Winchester City Council
Pay Policy Statement – Financial Year 2026/27

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This Pay Policy Statement is provided in accordance with Section 38(1) of the Localism Act 2011 and will be updated annually from 1 April each year.
- 1.2 The Pay Policy Statement sets out Winchester City Council's policies relating to the remuneration of its workforce for the financial year 2026/27, in particular:
- the remuneration of its Chief Officers
 - the remuneration of its "lowest paid employees"
 - the relationship between:
 - the remuneration of its Chief Officers and
 - the remuneration of its employees who are not Chief Officers
- 1.3 The purpose of the statement is to provide an open and transparent framework that ensures clarity, fairness and consistency in the remuneration of Chief Officers. It also ensures that employees at all levels of the council are paid on a fair and equitable basis in accordance with equality legislation.

2. Definitions

- 2.1 For the purpose of this statement the following definitions will apply:
- 2.2 "**Remuneration**" in addition to salary will also include charges, fees, allowances, benefits in kind, increases in/enhancements to pension entitlements, and termination payments.
- 2.3 "**Chief Officer**" refers to the Statutory Chief Officers (Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer and S151 Officer) and to Strategic Directors.
- 2.4 "**Lowest paid employees**" refers to those employed on Grade 3 of the council's pay framework.
- 2.4.1 The above definition for the "lowest paid employees" has been adopted because Grade 3 is the lowest grade on which employees are presently paid within the council's pay framework.
- 2.4.2 Those engaged on Casual Worker Agreements are paid a fixed hourly rate in line with the voluntary UK Living Wage Foundation. They are excluded from the definition of "lowest paid employees".

- 2.5 **“Employee who is not a Chief Officer”** refers to all employees that are not covered under the “Chief Officer” group above. This includes the “lowest paid employees” i.e. employees on Grade 3.

3. Pay Framework and Remuneration Levels

3.1 General Approach

- 3.1.1 Remuneration for all employees needs to be at the appropriate level to secure and retain high-quality employees dedicated to fulfilling the council’s business objectives and delivering services to the public. This has to be balanced by ensuring remuneration is proportionate and appropriate for the role. Each council has responsibility for balancing these factors and faces its own unique challenges and opportunities in doing so. It is important that Winchester City Council retains flexibility within its pay framework to cope with a variety of circumstances that might necessitate the use of market supplements or other such mechanisms for individual categories of posts where appropriate. Using such solutions should only be short term and regular reviews should ensure that they are discontinued when circumstances change.

3.2 Responsibility for Decisions on Remuneration

- 3.2.1 It is essential for good governance that decisions on remuneration and reward packages for the Chief Executive and Chief Officers are made in an open and accountable way and that there is a verified and accountable process for recommending the levels of top salaries.
- 3.2.2 Remuneration for employees at all grades is based on the national agreements on pay as follows:
- National Joint Council for Local Government Services
 - Joint Negotiating Council for Chief Officers
 - Joint Negotiating Council for Chief Executives.
- 3.2.3 Remuneration packages above £100,000 gross per annum must be considered by Cabinet, with a recommendation to Full Council.

3.3 Salary grades and grading framework

- 3.3.1 Grades for all posts are determined by a consistent job evaluation process. This followed a national requirement for all local authorities and other public sector employers to review their remuneration and grading frameworks to ensure fair and consistent practice for different groups of workers with the same employer.
- 3.3.2 Job Evaluation is a systematic process for ranking jobs within an organisation ensuring consistency of approach and outcomes appropriate to the complexity and accountability of the role. Where the grade of a post changes as a result of the job evaluation process, any pay adjustment will

only be backdated to the date on which the role was considered by a job evaluation panel.

- 3.3.3 The council's pay structure is based on the pay spine issued by the National Joint Council (NJC) as part of the National Agreement for Local Government Services. Roles are placed within the pay structure on the basis of the evaluated grade of their role.
- 3.3.4 Incremental spinal column points provide for progression in role with the acquisition of skills, experience and competence (subject to satisfactory performance).
- 3.3.5 Pay awards are applied in line with the national agreements detailed in 3.2.2 on an annual basis for all employees, in conjunction with the nationally recognised trade unions.

3.4 Market Review and Market Payments

- 3.4.1 The council will from time to time, benchmark its remuneration and benefits by comparing a sample of posts. For the purpose of benchmarking and market testing the comparator group comprises public sector authorities in Hampshire, West Sussex and Surrey and authorities in other areas if relevant, who are similar to the council in terms of size (number of employees and population) and similar relevant factors. Jobs within London Boroughs will not be used for comparator purposes due to London weighting allowance. In exceptional circumstances, other external market pay data, including private sector data, will also be considered where relevant.
- 3.4.2 Where the benchmarking exercise highlights a discrepancy in remuneration, following consideration of a report made to the Executive Leadership Board (ELB) a market supplement may be awarded, subject to annual review. Market supplements are typically paid as a fixed monthly amount.
- 3.4.3 Decisions relating to awarding a market supplement for the Chief Executive will be referred to Cabinet, with a recommendation to Full Council.
- 3.4.4 In some circumstances, targeted recruitment (i.e. 'Golden hellos') and retention (i.e. 'Golden handcuffs') payments can be more effective than market supplements in addressing 'hard to fill' vacancies. In contrast to market supplements, these are typically one-off payments at the start or end of a set period with repayment terms in the event of an early resignation from post.
- 3.4.5 Where evidence supports a recruitment/retention payment, the Chief Executive will approve the payment and repayment terms in the event of an early resignation from post.

4. Remuneration

4.1 Remuneration details including benefits in kind are set out in the council's published Annual Statement of Accounts.

4.2 **“Chief Officers”**, as defined in paragraph 2.3 of this statement, are paid within the council's pay framework which applies to all other employees. Normally, Chief Officers have received the same percentage pay award as other managers and employees within the council.

4.4 “Lowest paid employees”

4.4.1 Winchester City Council is an accredited Living Wage Foundation Employer. The Living Wage is paid voluntarily and is set to avoid poverty wages and support the principle that workers should be paid at a level which enables them to achieve an acceptable standard of living. The lowest paid employees are presently paid within the salary range for Grade 3 which covers six salary points ranging between £26,824 - £29,064.

4.4.2 The lowest paid employees do not include apprentices for whom there are separate remuneration arrangements.

4.5 Honoraria and Additional Responsibilities

4.5.1 All employees are expected to perform any other duties commensurate with their job grade as reasonably required from time to time. However, there may be occasions where an employee agrees to take on additional duties and responsibilities that may be at the same level of their substantive grade but are beyond the reasonable scope of their normal job remit. In such circumstances, subject to approval from ELB, an honorarium payment may be awarded. Honoraria are awarded in £100 multiples and should not normally exceed £500. Awards up to a maximum of £1,000 may be approved by ELB in specific circumstances.

4.5.2 The appropriate Strategic Director, in consultation with ELB, may award an “acting up” allowance where an employee takes on temporary increased responsibility.

4.5.3 The amount awarded should reflect the nature and duration of the work or responsibility. Where the employee has been covering the long term absence of a more senior officer, “acting up” payments are calculated based on the difference between the employee's scale point and the bottom scale point of the role they are covering. Temporary acting-up arrangements of this nature should not normally not exceed more than 12 months duration and acting up should generally be undertaken for at least one month before payment will apply.

4.6 Charges, fees or allowances

- 4.6.1 No fees for election duties are included in the salaries of Chief Officers. Any additional fees payable for such responsibilities are calculated in accordance with the statutory rules and associated guidance published by the Government.
- 4.6.2 Special fees are paid for Returning Officer duties which are not part of the post holder's substantive role. These fees are payable as required and can be made to any senior officer appointed to fulfil the statutory duties of this role.
- 4.6.3 The Returning Officer is an officer of the City Council who is appointed under the Representation of the People Act 1983. Whilst appointed by the City Council, the role is one which involves and incurs personal responsibility and accountability and is statutorily separate from their duties as an employee of the council. The Returning Officer is paid a separate allowance for each election for which they are responsible.
- 4.6.3 Where the council's Monitoring Officer or S151 Officer is not a Chief Officer, a special responsibility allowance of £6,000 gross per annum is paid in recognition of the additional requirements of the statutory role.
- 4.6.4 Any allowance or other payment will only be made to an employee in connection with their role or the patterns of hours they work and must be in accordance with the council's employment policies.
- 4.6.5 Where the council offers voluntary benefits e.g. childcare vouchers and employee discount schemes, they are offered to all employees regardless of their role and grade within the council.

4.7 Performance related pay

- 4.7.1 Performance is reviewed annually through the council's appraisal system and the council reserves the right to withhold increments where performance has not met the required standard and where this has been raised with the employee formally. Beyond annual increments awarded in this way, the council does not offer performance related pay to any employee.
- 4.7.2 Subject to approval from the appropriate Corporate Head of Service and Strategic Director, an employee may receive more than 1 increment in any financial year.

4.8 Pension

- 4.8.1 All employees, as a result of their employment, are eligible to join the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS).
- 4.8.2 In addition to the employee's own contribution, the council makes a contribution of 18% towards the pension of each member of the LGPS scheme.

4.9 Remuneration on appointment and promotion

- 4.9.1 The starting salary on appointment or following promotion will normally be based on the appointee's level of relevant experience and current salary, regardless of whether they are a current employee of Winchester City Council.
- 4.9.2 The chair of the recruitment panel has the discretion to determine the appropriate spinal column point within the agreed pay scale but the starting salary should not exceed the mid-point of the pay scale. In exceptional circumstances (e.g. the current salary is higher than the mid-point of the scale), the Service Lead: Human Resources or in their absence, the HR Manager: People, may authorise appointment on a spinal column point which is higher than the mid-point of the scale.

5. Relationship between Remuneration of “Chief Officers” and “Employees who are not Chief Officers”

- 5.1 It is the policy of the council to ensure that the ratio of the salary of the highest paid officer and the lowest paid officer is below the 20:1 ratio recommended as a maximum in the terms of reference for the 2011 Hutton review of Fair Pay in the Public Sector.
- 5.2 As at 1st April 2025, pay ratios within the council stand as follows:
- Highest to lowest = 5.6 to 1
- 5.3 This is based on the following salary packages:
- Highest paid annual salary = £ £151,183
 - Lowest paid (minimum grade 3) = £26,824

6. Benefits in kind

- 6.1 The council pays professional fees for officers where it is an essential requirement for the post holder to maintain professional accreditation. Only one set of professional fees are paid per annum.
- 6.2 The council offers a Health Care Cash Plan scheme which is available to all employees regardless of their role and grade within the council.
- 6.3 A Park and Ride pass is offered to all employees.
- 6.4 Officers who are designated as “Essential Car Users” are issued with a permit for one of the car parks nearer to the council offices to enable them to meet the specific operational requirements of their role.

7. Termination Payments

- 7.1 Payments made on termination of employment are limited to those expressly required or allowed by law. In accordance with the council's Constitution,

termination payments which exceed £100,000 (regardless of the post to which they apply and the reasons for the payment) require approval from full council.

8. Access to Pension Payments

- 8.1 In some circumstances, an employee may be eligible to access their pension on termination of employment.
- 8.2 The LGPS requires employers to prepare and publish a written statement of policy in relation to the payment of pensions. The council's policy on pensions (and related discretionary payments) is set out in **Annex A** of this document.

9. Redundancy Payments

- 9.1 The calculation of redundancy payments is based on the provisions of Employment Rights Act 1996 and may be subject to revision should this legislation be amended.
- 9.2 Redundancy payments are based on a ratio of completed years' service and the employees' age at the effective date of termination, using a multiplier of 1.6. Completed years' service will be capped at 20 years and the maximum of 48 weeks' pay will apply. The council uses the employee's actual contractual pay to calculate redundancy payments.

10. Settlement Agreements

- 10.1 In exceptional circumstances, and specifically to settle an employment tribunal claim or similar significant dispute, the Section 151 Officer can agree payment of a settlement up to £10,000.
- 10.2 In such cases, each decision as the level of payment will be taken on its merits. Where the proposed termination payment exceeds £10,000, approval from the Section 151 Officer and one other Chief Officer is required.
- 10.3 In accordance with the council's Constitution, settlement payments which exceed £100,000 (regardless of the post to which they apply) require approval from full council.

11. Re-employment of officers

- 11.1 When an employee is dismissed on the grounds of redundancy, the council will not re-employ them for a period of 12 months following the termination.
- 11.2 When an employee ceases employment with the council on the grounds of early retirement with the employer's consent, the council will not re-employ them for a period of 12 months following the termination.

12. Data Transparency

- 12.1 Under the Local Government Transparency Code 2014, remuneration information and a list of responsibilities for employees paid over £50,000 must be published. This information is available on the council's external website. 'Senior employees' remuneration can also be found in the annual Statement of Accounts.

Annex A

Pensions Discretions Policy Statement

The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 and Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy statement is made in accordance with Paragraph 60 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 and Paragraph 2 (2) of Schedule 2 of the Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014.
- 1.2 It sets out how Winchester City Council will apply discretionary provisions available within those Regulations.
- 1.3 This policy applies to all employees of Winchester City Council who are members of the Local Government Pension Scheme. It does not apply to Elected Members of the council.
- 1.4 In formulating and reviewing its policy, the council:
 - has regard to the extent to which the exercise of discretionary powers, unless properly limited, could lead to serious loss of confidence in the public service; and
 - is satisfied that the policy is workable, affordable and reasonable having regard to the foreseeable costs.

2. Purpose of this Policy

- 2.1 This policy aims to provide fairness and consistency in situations where the council is agreeing to the release of accrued pension benefits.

3. Flexible Retirement – Regulations 30 (6) and 30 (8) (2013 Regulations)

- 3.1 The Pension Scheme allows for flexible retirement from age 55 with the payment of all or part of accrued pension benefits in situations where the employer agrees to the hours of work or the level of responsibility being reduced **and** to the release of pension benefits. In most cases, the pension benefits will be reduced if taken before normal retirement age.

- 3.2 Flexible retirement can benefit both the employee through enabling a gradual adjustment to retirement and the council through the ability to retain valuable experience and knowledge; it also increases the opportunity for succession planning and reflects the ethos of flexible working.
- 3.3 The council will consider all requests for flexible retirement in response to written requests from eligible employees.
- 3.4 The council will approve requests only where it is in their interest to do so; where there is no adverse impact on the service; where the costs are affordable or where there are likely to be cost savings achieved as a result of the proposal.
- 3.5 A request should typically involve a substantial reduction of at least 40% in remuneration, either through reduced hours or level of responsibility.
- 3.6 Requests for flexible retirement will be considered by the Executive Leadership Board. Where a request for flexible retirement is from a Chief Officer, the decision will be made by the Chief Executive. Requests for flexible retirement from the Chief Executive will require approval from full council.

4. Awarding Additional Pension – Regulation 31(2013 Regulations)

- 4.1 The council will not make use of the provision to award additional pension.
- 4.2 This discretion is therefore not exercised.

5. Shared Cost Additional Voluntary Contributions (SCAVC) and Shared Cost Additional Pension Contributions (SCAPC) – Regulations 16(2) (e) and 16(4) (d) (2013 Regulations)

- 5.1 The council will exercise discretion to allow Local Government Pension Scheme Members to contribute to a shared cost salary sacrifice additional voluntary contribution scheme.
- 5.2 The council will not exercise its discretion to allow Local Government Pension Scheme Members to contribute to a Shared Cost Additional Pension Contributions Scheme.

6. Discretion to “switch on” the 85 year rule for 55 year olds and older but before the age of 60 – Para 1(1) (c) Schedule 2 of the 2014 Regulations

6.1 The council will only exercise this discretion where there is a business reason to do so and where any costs associated with the discretion are affordable and sustainable to the council. Requests will be considered by the Executive Leadership Board.

7. Waiving Reduction due to Early Payment of Pension – Regulation 30 (8) (2013 Regulations)

7.1 Employees can retire from age 55 and receive immediate payment of their pension benefits however the pension benefits payable will be subject to an actuarial reduction.

7.2 The council will exercise the discretion to waive the actuarial reduction where Regulation 30 (7) is applicable (that is where employment is terminated on the grounds of redundancy or in the interest of business efficiency).

7.3 The council will exercise this discretion only where there is a business reason to do so and where any costs associated with the discretion are affordable and sustainable to the council. Requests will be considered by the Executive Leadership Board.

8. Early Payment of Deferred Pension Benefits – Regulation 30 of the LGPS (Benefits, Membership and Contributions) Regulations 2007

8.1 The council will not normally exercise this discretion but may consider it in exceptional circumstances where any costs associated with the discretion are affordable and sustainable to the council.

8.2 Requests will be considered by the Executive Leadership Board.

9. Transfer of Pension Rights – Regulation 100 (6) (2013 Regulations)

9.1 The Regulations permit the employer to extend the normal time limit (currently 12 months) during which a scheme member may transfer service from a previous employer.

9.2 The council will not make use of the provision to extend the normal time limit.

9.3 This discretion is therefore not exercised.

10. Aggregation of Membership - Regulations 22, 7(b) 8(b) (2013 Regulations)

- 10.1 If a member has a deferred, pre-1 April 2014 LGPS pension account, the Regulations allow for them to make a decision about whether it is combined with their new LGPS membership. If the LGPS account was deferred on or after 1 April 2014 the Regulations allow the member to elect to keep them separate.
- 10.2 Any such decision to maintain combined or separate pension accounts must be made within 12 months of becoming an active member.
- 10.3 The Regulations permit the employer to extend the normal timescale.
- 10.4 The council will not make use of the provision to extend the normal time limit.
- 10.5 This discretion is therefore not exercised.

11. Other Discretions

- 11.1 With the exception of the discretions set out in this policy statement, the council will not exercise any pension discretions pursuant to the 2013 and 2014 Regulations.

12. Review of the Policy

- 12.1 This policy will be reviewed by Human Resources annually.

Appendix 2

Gender distribution by grade

The council has an overall gender split of 60% female to 40% male employees.

1 September 2024

	F%	M%
Chief Executive	100	0
Director	60	40
Corporate Head of Service	71	29
Grade 9	33	67
Grade 8	30	70
Grade 7	48	52
Grade 6	51	49
Grade 5	68	32
Grade 4	62	38
Grade 3/2	69	31

1 September 2025

	F%	M%
Chief Executive	100	0
Director	50	50
Corporate Head of Service	71	29
Grade 9	50	50
Grade 8	30	70
Grade 7	52	48
Grade 6	51	49
Grade 5	66	34
Grade 4	61	39
Grade 3/2	68	32

Winchester City Council

Data and Equality Impact Assessment

When undertaking your Data and Equality Impact Assessment 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 against the Data Protection Act 1998 and General Data Protection Regulations and the public sector equality duty.

The checklist below is to help you sense check your policy or project before you move to Section 2. Note that the public sector duty is inclusive and not exclusive if there are any other relevant matters please insert a row.

Section 1 - Data Checklist

		Yes/No	Please provide details
1	Have there been any complaints data related to the policy or project you are looking to implement?	No	No complaints have been received in respect of the city council's pay policy.
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 is implemented and reviewed annually by the Human Resources department of the city council. The policy and annual report is reviewed by the Executive Leadership Board and the Audit & Governance Committee.
3	Have previous consultations highlighted any concerns about the policy or project from an equality impact perspective?	No	No concerns have been highlighted and the pay policy statement is implemented in accordance with central government guidance and regulations. At the request of the Audit & Governance Committee February 2021, gender distribution by grade is now included in the annual report.

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	The Council is required under the Localism Act 2011 to publish a pay policy statement on an annual basis. There are no concerns in the implementation of this policy. <i>A self-assessment and action plan for the implementation of this policy will be undertaken.</i>
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	The council's pay policy statement fully takes account of central government guidance and regulations and there are no concerns about any accessible data.
6	Do you have any past experience delivering similar policies or projects which may inform the implementation of your scheme from a data protection point of view?	Yes	The Localism Act 2011 requires annual publication of a pay policy statement. In the main, the policy sets the generic principles and rules for the pay of its employees and Chief Officers and does not include details of the pay arrangements for individual, named employees.
7	Are there any other issues that you think will be relevant?	No	

Section 2 - Your Equality Impact Assessment form

Directorate:	Your Service Area: Human Resources	Team: Human Resources	Officer responsible for this assessment: Manjit Sandhu, Service Lead HR	Date of assessment: 23.09.2025
---------------------	--	---------------------------------	--	--

	Question	Please provide details
1	What is the name of the policy or project that is being assessed?	Pay Policy Statement 2026/27
2	Is this a new or existing policy?	Annual update to existing policy.
3	Briefly describe the aim and purpose of this work.	The purpose of the pay policy statement is to provide an open and transparent framework that ensures clarity, fairness and consistency in the remuneration of Chief

		Officers. It also ensures that employees at all levels of the Council are remunerated on a fair and equitable basis in accordance with equality legislation.		
4	What are the associated objectives of this work?	To provide an annual update to ensure that statutory obligations are met which include the public sector equality duty.		
5	Who is intended to benefit from this work and in what way?	Staff are intended to benefit. Publication of a pay policy ensures an organisation's approach to pay is open and transparent and does not discriminate.		
6	What are the outcomes sought from this work?	To provide a Pay Policy Statement in accordance with Section 38(1) of the Localism Act 2011 which is agreed and updated annually from 1 April each year.		
7	What factors/forces could contribute or detract from the outcomes?	A lack of transparency and fairness in the implementation of the city council's pay policy.		
8	Who are the key individuals and organisations responsible for the implementation of this work?	The city council has a directly employed team which manages the pay policy implementation.		
Please select your answer in bold . Please provide detail here.				
9a	Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of race differently?	Y	N	The policy will not have an effect on an individual or group of the community on the basis of race.
9b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	Implementation of current policy together with a review of existing staff.		
10a	Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of gender?	Y	N	The policy will not have an effect on an individual or group of the community on the basis of gender.
10b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	Implementation of current policy together with a review of existing staff.		

11a	<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"> • <i>Physical access</i> • <i>Format of information</i> • <i>Time of interview or consultation event</i> • <i>Personal assistance</i> • <i>Interpreter</i> • <i>Induction loop system</i> • <i>Independent living equipment</i> • <i>Content of interview)</i> 	Y	N	The policy will not have an effect on an individual or group of the community on the basis of disability.
11b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	Implementation of current policy together with a review of existing staff.		
12a	Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of sexual orientation?	Y	N	The policy will not have an effect on an individual or group of the community on the basis of sexual orientation.
12b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	Implementation of current policy together with a review of existing staff.		
13a	Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or group of community on the basis of age?	Y	N	The policy will not have an effect on an individual or group of the community on the basis of age.
13b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	Implementation of current policy together with a review of existing staff.		
14a	Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of religious belief?	Y	N	The policy will not have an effect on an individual or group of the community on the basis of religious belief.
14b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	Implementation of current policy together with a review of existing staff.		

15a	Could this policy or project have the potential to affect individuals on the basis of gender reassignment?	Y	N	The policy will not have an effect on an individual or group of the community on the basis of gender reassignment.
15b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	Implementation of current policy together with a review of existing staff.		
16a	Could this policy or project have the potential to affect individuals on the basis of marriage and civil partnership?	Y	N	The policy will not have an effect on an individual or group of the community on the basis of marriage and civil partnership.
16b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	Implementation of current policy together with a review of existing staff.		
17a	Could this policy or project have the potential to affect individuals on the basis of pregnancy and maternity?	Y	N	The policy will not have an effect on an individual or group of the community on the basis of pregnancy and maternity.
17b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	Implementation of current policy together with a review of existing staff.		
18	Could any negative impacts that you identified in questions 9a to 17b create the potential for the policy to discriminate against certain groups on the basis of protected characteristics?	Y	N	The policy statement has been reviewed and none are identified.
19	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	Race: n/a- as no negative impact identified.
				Gender: n/a- as no negative impact identified.
				Disability: n/a- as no negative impact identified.
				Sexual orientation: n/a- as no negative impact identified.
				Age: n/a- as no negative impact identified
				Gender reassignment: n/a- as no negative impact identified.

				Pregnancy and maternity n/a- as no negative impact identified.
				Marriage and civil partnership: n/a- as no negative impact identified.
				Religious belief: n/a- as no negative impact identified.
21	How will you mitigate any potential discrimination that may be brought about by your policy or project that you have identified above?	None identified. Annual reviews and continuous monitoring of staff pay, particularly in relation to protected characteristics.		
22	Do any negative impacts that you have identified above impact on your service plan?	Y	N	None identified.

Signed by completing officer	Samantha Hanks, Employee Engagement Partner, 23.09 2025
Signed by lead officer	Manjit Sandhu, Service Lead HR, 24.09.2025

This page is intentionally left blank