

CABINET

Wednesday, 17 June 2026

Attendance:

Councillors
Tod (Chairperson)

Cutler
Learney

Reach
Thompson

Apologies for Absence:

Councillors Cramoysan, Becker and Porter

Members in attendance who spoke at the meeting

Councillors Godfrey, Horrill, Lee and Wallace

Other members in attendance:

Councillor Batho

[Video recording of this meeting](#)

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillors Becker, Cramoysan and Porter as noted above.

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

There were no changes required.

3. **DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

Councillors Tod declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in respect of reports CAB3560 and CAB3561 on the agenda due to his role as a Hampshire County Councillor. 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 County Council involvement.

4. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Two members of the public spoke during public participation as summarised briefly below.

Jo Burch - Safer Limits on Winchester's Roads (SLoWR)

Jo Burch spoke as co-chair of the SLOWER campaign and expressed concerns regarding rising traffic volumes and speeding vehicles across Winchester, highlighting that in some locations narrow pavements and roads have created dangerous conditions for pedestrians. She particularly referenced Hyde Street where she had experienced vehicles mounting pavements at times to avoid oncoming traffic. Ms. Burch requested the urgent progression of a feasibility study for Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) and the agreement of an installation contract with Hampshire County Council (HCC), noting that funding had already been secured and a 700-signature petition for a pilot on Hyde Street had been collated. She urged the Cabinet to act immediately to ensure the city's roads were safe for all residents.

Councillors Tod and Learney responded to the comments made, including stating that the Winchester Town Forum speed installation project was being progressed but advised that the group needed to obtain permission from HCC (not WCC) in relation to the signs required for the pilot along Hyde Street.

Patrick Davies

Patrick Davies spoke regarding report CAB3561 and raised concern over the plan to spend approximately £750,000 on a Reformer Pilates studio, as he believed that it targeted an exclusive clientele and replicated services already provided by private gyms. He also questioned the integrity of the internal processes involved in putting forward the proposal and the timing of the report, noting that it had not been included in the annual Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) update report to March 2026 Cabinet. He requested that the proposal should be reconsidered as he believed it was not a proper priority for public expenditure.

Councillor Tod stated that Mr Davies' comments would be considered during discussion of report CAB3561 below.

5. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 28 MAY 2026**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 28 May 2026 be agreed as a correct record.

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

Councillor Thompson provided an update on the large number and variety of organisations, projects and businesses funded by the council following receipt of funding from the UK Shared Prosperity and Rural England Prosperity funds since 2022. The final meeting of the Property Board had taken place, and she thanked board members for their time and commitment over the previous years.

Councillor Tod announced that he had written to the Minister for Local Government and Homelessness and the Minister for Housing and Planning to ask for clarification about how the council could reconcile the new planning process outlined in the new plan making process guidance with the proposals for boundary changes outlined as a consequence Local Government Reorganisation. No response had yet been received.

Councillor Tod also announced that Councillor Becker was currently on maternity leave and her responsibilities would be covered by other members of cabinet until further notice.

7. **LEISURE CENTRE VAT TREATMENT AND PROPOSED TRANSITION TO AGENCY OPERATING ARRANGEMENTS (LESS EXEMPT APPENDICES)**
(CAB3560)

Councillor Cutler introduced the report on behalf of Councillor Becker, emphasising that it followed updated guidance from HMRC and would not impact on the customer experience of the leisure centre.

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

Councillor Lee

Councillor Lee welcomed the proposal provided that services to residents remain protected. He expressed caution regarding the reliance on external tax advice and suggested delaying implementation until formal HMRC guidance was published. He raised several specific queries relating to the occupational licenses, the continuity of maintenance responsibilities, and the potential implications should the operator experience financial difficulties. He suggested Cabinet should consider using any additional income for reinvestment in energy efficiency and decarbonisation measures across the leisure estate to support the council's green objectives.

Councillor Godfrey

Councillor Godfrey generally welcomed the proposal to transition to an agency operating model for the Sport and Leisure Park. He raised technical queries concerning the treatment of VAT and sought assurance that the council would be fully compensated for the additional administrative burden placed on staff. Finally, he questioned what protection was in place should HMRC change its guidance and queried why this beneficial fiscal solution had taken over three years to be brought forward.

Councillor Cutler, the Strategic Director and the Service Lead: Finance responded to the comments made including confirming that advice and best practice had been sought from other local authorities before the proposal in the report had been brought forward.

Cabinet moved into exempt session to discuss the contents of the exempt appendices before returning to open session to consider the report's recommendations.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That it be agreed in principle that the progression to an Agency Variation to the existing Leisure Management Contract with Sports and Leisure Management Limited (SLM) who will be the agent with Everyone Active Charitable Trust as authorised sub-agent be approved (define in this report as Everyone Active).
2. That authority be delegated to the Strategic Director – Place, in consultation with the Director of Legal, Section 151 Officer, to finalise Heads of Terms and enter into a Deed of Variation and any other necessary and appropriate agreements, including agreement of the detailed financial and operational arrangements.
3. That the estimated financial benefits arising from the proposal be noted, including the introduction of a guaranteed uplift in annual income to the council.

8. **WINCHESTER SPORT AND LEISURE PARK IMPROVEMENTS**
(CAB3561)

Councillor Tod introduced the report on behalf of Councillor Becker emphasising the importance of the WSLP in offering access to different sports and fitness facilities to a wider sector of the community, including NHS referrals. He highlighted that the council owned the WSLP building and it was essential for its offer to be updated to ensure it remained financially viable.

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

Councillor Wallace

As chair of Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Wallace expressed concerns that the accelerated timetable bypassed proper scrutiny and the spirit of the council's constitution provisions relating to decision-making. He questioned the justification for allocating £740,000 of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding to a successful leisure facility, noting the lack of a clear link to mitigating development impacts. Furthermore, he highlighted the inequity of using funds generated district-wide for city-based projects, particularly when rural areas contribute significantly to the total CIL pot. Consequently, he stated he could not support the recommendation and urged Cabinet to refocus CIL expenditure on its primary purpose of supporting infrastructure throughout the district.

Councillor Lee

Councillor Lee also questioned whether the allocation of £740,000 in CIL funding for improvements at an already successful urban leisure centre represented the fairest or most appropriate use of scarce resources. He expressed concern regarding the pattern of investment across the district and queried whether the proposal addressed a genuine district-wide priority or served to further enhance a niche Winchester town facility. He highlighted the council's own evidence of substantial unmet needs elsewhere in the district and challenged the justification for directing limited CIL funding in the city centre at the expense of other competitive requirements.

Councillor Horrill

Councillor Horrill welcomed the continued success of the WSLP as a district asset but sought clarification on what specific actions were taken to engage residents and users regarding the proposed improvements. She also raised concerns regarding why the project appeared outside of the standard CIL process and decision-making and believed there was a lack of evidence to support the report's claims of long-term resilience. Finally, she emphasised that while the facility must evolve to meet customer needs, the current proposal lacked transparency.

Councillor Tod thanked councillors for their contributions and also referenced the comments made by Mr Davies during public participation earlier in the meeting.

Councillor Tod and the Strategic Director responded to the comments made including on the CIL process and the high demand for additional group exercise class provision at WSLP. The Strategic Director advised that early engagement had been undertaken with users of WSLP and that further consultation would take place.

The Director: Legal clarified that because the proposed decision was subject to full council approval, it was not an executive decision (i.e. one to be taken by Cabinet) and therefore not classed as a key decision.

The Chief Executive clarified that there was no constitutional requirement for the report to be considered by a scrutiny committee prior to submission to Cabinet. She confirmed that it was for full council to determine whether to approve the capital budget of £740,000.

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

RECOMMENDED (TO COUNCIL):

T

That a capital budget of £740,000 be approved to deliver improvements at Winchester Sport & Leisure Park.

RESOLVED:

That subject to budget approval by full Council as set out above:

1. That the allocation of £740,000 of District-wide Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding and associated capital expenditure to deliver improvements at Winchester Sport & Leisure Park (WSLP) be approved, subject to Full Council approval of the associated capital budget.

2. That an exception to the Contract Procedure Rules to enable one of the direct award options set out in section 3.6 of this report be approved.

3. That authority be delegated to the Strategic Director, to approve minor amendments to the detailed design, specification and scope of the project during delivery, provided such changes remain within the approved budget and do not materially alter the strategic objectives or overall outcomes of the scheme approved by Cabinet.

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

RESOLVED:

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

10. **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>
11	Leisure Centre VAT Treatment and Proposed Transition to Agency Operating	) Information relating to the) financial or business affairs of) any particular) person (including the authority

Arrangements (exempt) holding that information).
appendices)) (Para 3 Schedule 12A refers)

11. **LEISURE CENTRE VAT TREATMENT AND PROPOSED TRANSITION TO
AGENCY OPERATING ARRANGEMENTS (EXEMPT APPENDICES)**

During exempt session, the Strategic Director responded to Cabinet Member questions regarding the details of invoice payments under the proposed arrangements. In addition, she responded to a question from Councillor Godfrey in relation to the predicted savings.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the exempt appendices be noted.

The meeting commenced at 9.30 am and concluded at 11.05 am

Chairperson