

Decisions taken by the Cabinet on Tuesday, 30 June 2026

Agenda Item No	Topic	Decision	Reasons	Alternative Options
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Part A – Items considered in public

<p>A6</p>	<p>Notice of Intention to Commence Local Plan preparation update</p>	<p>1. That the Government's requirements for commencement of Local Plan preparation under the new plan making system introduced through the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 be noted, specifically the letter from Government to the Chief Executive on January 15, 2026 and the Government guidance on the 'Roll out of the new plan-making process' updated on 6 March 2026.</p> <p>2. That the proposed Local Government Reorganisation arrangements for</p>	<p>The purpose of report CAB3566 is to update and seek Cabinet approval on a revised Winchester City Council approach to commencing preparation of a new Local Plan or Local Plans for the LPA area under the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 in the context of Local Government Reorganisation, proposed local authority boundary changes and emerging devolution arrangements across Hampshire and the Solent.</p> <p>This follows on the Cabinet's decision on 18 March 2026 to begin work on a</p>	<p>Officers have considered a number of potential approaches.</p> <p>The first option would be to continue with a Winchester-only Local Plan. Whilst this would provide certainty in the short term, there is a risk that significant work would subsequently need to be revisited or amended following Local Government Reorganisation.</p> <p>The second option would be to pause plan-making until successor authorities are established. Whilst this may reduce the risk of duplication, the Council would not be meeting</p>
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		<p>Hampshire be noted, including the proposed Mid Hampshire unitary authority, the transfer of the Parish of Newlands to the proposed South-East Hampshire unitary authority announced on 26 March 2026, and emerging arrangements for devolution and strategic planning across Hampshire and the Solent.</p> <p>3. That in the absence of Government guidance on transitional arrangements for authorities affected by Local Government Reorganisation and to be legally compliant, it be agreed that Winchester City Council will continue to publish a Notice of Intention to Commence Plan Preparation by 30</p>	<p>Winchester-only Local Plan, which was before the Government's announcement on Local Government Reorganisation and was before there had been opportunity to properly consider and seek external legal advice on the implications of the Government's Local Government Reorganisation proposals with the new legislation requiring Local Plans to be prepared within 30 months, with the notice of intention to commence plan making to be issued by 30 June 2026.</p> <p>The timetables for Local Government Reorganisation and the new Local Plan process are currently not consistent. In a recent Parliamentary Answer, the Government</p>	<p>Government's legal requirement to commence work on a 30 month Local Plan by 30 June 2026 and it will delay future plan preparation.</p> <p>The third option would be to continue progressing the requirements of the new planning system and issue the Notice of Intention to commence plan preparation whilst exploring opportunities for collaboration with neighbouring authorities expected to form part of the future Mid Hampshire authority. This would enable work to commence in accordance with the legal requirement whilst recognising future governance arrangements and reducing the risk of duplication.</p>

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		<p>June 2026 on the current administrative boundary.</p> <p>4. That the Strategic Director (Place) be authorised to engage with other Mid Hampshire authorities to explore opportunities for collaborative or joint plan-making and shared evidence gathering for the proposed Mid Hampshire geography.</p> <p>5. That the Strategic Director (Place) be authorised to engage with other South-East Hampshire authorities to explore how we can support an appropriate plan-making process to include Newlands Parish as part of South-East Hampshire.</p> <p>6. That the Strategic Director (Place) be authorised to continue engagement with Government regarding</p>	<p>itself recognises “the challenges posed to plan making by local authority re-organisation and are developing transitional arrangements to address these”. However, the arrangements are not yet available.</p> <p>The intention of the council is still to ensure that a positive Local Plan is put in place on the quickest timing that ensures development in the Winchester district and its successor authorities happens on a planned basis that positively meets the needs of the area rather than through by planning by appeal.</p> <p>In order to be legally compliant at this time the report recommends that the Council continues to</p>	<p>Recommended Approach</p> <p>Officers consider that the third option represents the most pragmatic approach.</p> <p>Continuing to progress plan-making activity whilst seeking Government clarification protects the Council's position, allows evidence gathering and project planning to commence and reduces the risk of future delay.</p> <p>It also provides flexibility to respond to any future Government guidance whilst ensuring that work undertaken now can continue to support successor authorities following Local Government Reorganisation.</p> <p>Any future decisions regarding formal joint plans,</p>

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		<p>plan making requirements, transitional arrangements and future strategic planning responsibilities arising from Local Government Reorganisation and devolution.</p> <p>7. That authority be delegated to the Strategic Director (Place), in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Place and Local Plan and the Director of Legal to amend the above timetable where necessary should the Government issue revised guidance, transitional arrangements or legislation relating to the Local Government Reorganisation and plan making.</p>	<p>publish a Notice of Intention to Commence Plan Making by 30 June 2026 as previously agreed with Cabinet in March 2026. However, to reflect the desire to produce a joint Local Plan Officers will also use the upcoming period to explore opportunities for collaborative plan-making across the proposed Mid Hampshire geography whilst continuing engagement with Government regarding future transitional planning arrangements.</p>	<p>governance arrangements, shared evidence bases or delegated responsibilities would be brought back to Members through separate reports.</p>