

WELCOME

A year ago, we published our priorities for the next five years: addressing the climate emergency; ensuring we have the right homes in the right places; creating a vibrant local economy; reducing health inequalities and delivering good value high quality services. Although so much has since changed, these core priorities remain.

The future will be challenging – the financial restrictions local authorities face are significant. In light of the emerging financial picture we have reassessed our plans and refreshed the Council Plan we're sharing with you here.

The climate emergency continues to shape the way we want our district to develop for future generations to enjoy. Whether focusing on the recovery of the local economy, or choosing where we build affordable homes, decisions will be made through the lens of a looming environmental crisis that cannot be ignored.

Modernising the way we carry out our core services has been accelerated by the national pandemic. Interacting with customers online has become routine, and we look to build on these changes whilst retaining the critical face-to-face and rapid response services that safeguard our residents in the greatest need of our help.

In 2020 our business community has looked to us for support and advice as never before. And we delivered - by the end of the year we had administered over £30 million in grants and issued a rolling programme of national updates and tailored advice for specific sectors. We will continue to work closely with businesses

locally as our district moves into a recovery phase. Part of this will see the fruition of projects that will enhance the Winchester district's public realm and its high quality environment whilst continuing to make the most of our rich heritage.

This plan sets out how we will use our resources in a way that will make a real difference to the quality of lives of you our residents and the environment. Although it runs until 2025, it will be updated and adapted to take account of changes along the way. More local people than ever before have let us hear their views on our new virtual channels of engagement so please keep telling us what you think. We want to hear the views of all in our communities so that our plans can factor in a balance of views and benefit the broadest range of people. We continue to listen and remain here for you all.

Cllr Lucille Thompson

Leader of Winchester City Council

February 2021

THE CHALLENGES WE FACE

This plan sets out the challenges faced by the Winchester district, how we will respond to them and the principles which underpin our work.

The key challenges are:

- The climate emergency and the need to reduce the Winchester district's carbon footprint
- Recovery and Restoration response to the COVID-19 pandemic
- The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on younger age groups
- Poor air quality in parts of the district
- Inequality and its effects on mental health and physical wellbeing
- Expensive housing
- A population which is ageing while younger people leave the district
- Brexit and its impact on the economy
- Shifting ways of working and the need to improve the technology infrastructure
- Poor provision of public transport and safe walking and cycling routes in parts of the district
- Maintaining high quality services while balancing the council budget, particularly in light of the COVID-19 pandemic

CLIMATE CHANGE

The council has set two clear climate emergency targets and we are looking to our residents and businesses to help us find solutions to dramatically cut the district's carbon footprint. We will reduce the carbon emissions of the council to become carbon neutral by 2024, and aim to achieve the same for the district by 2030.

Our vision for a climate resilient district:

1. Changed lifestyles with local people, organisations and businesses enabled to share their ideas and work together to create a carbon neutral future
2. The air is clean to breathe
3. The natural and built environment is protected, maintained, sustained and enhanced
4. People can move around the place easily and prefer to travel on foot, by bike and using public transport supported by other agencies and organisations
5. The district is broadly self-sufficient in renewable energy
6. Homes and businesses have measures in place to protect against extreme climate events

How we will achieve this:

Winchester City Council's Carbon Neutrality Plan sets out our journey to carbon neutrality. The principles behind this plan underpin all activities of the council and are reflected in all its strategic aims and policies – including this Council Plan.

There are four main areas:

- Reducing carbon emissions
- Reducing energy demand, increasing renewable energy
- Ensuring environmental resilience
- Offsetting

YOUR COUNCIL PLAN

This Council Plan is a high level document covering the period 2020 to 2025. It sets out what the council wants to achieve and informs other strategies and plans including the Local Plan and individual service plans.

The Council Plan was last updated in March 2021.

OUR PRIORITIES

Tackling the climate emergency and creating a greener district

Homes for all

Living well

Vibrant local economy

Your services. Your voice

TACKLING THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND CREATING A GREENER DISTRICT

The climate crisis remains a significant, long term challenge to all of us in the coming years and decades, and there is a growing ecological crisis too. Winchester City Council has committed to tackle these crises and hand our district to our children and grandchildren in a better state than it is now.

What we want to achieve:

- Winchester City Council to be carbon neutral by 2024
- Winchester district to be carbon neutral by 2030
- Reduced levels of waste and increased recycling, exceeding national targets
- Clean air, more ambitious than national targets
- Everything most residents need should be in reach by foot, bike or public transport
- Our district's extensive natural habitats safeguarded and enhanced

How will we achieve this?

- Carbon neutrality to continue to be central to everything we do
- Positive local plan policies which promote low carbon development, sustainable travel and increased bio-diversity
- Encourage renewable energy generation and support start-ups and businesses in green energy and green technology

- Work with and enable businesses, organisations and residents to deliver the Carbon Neutrality Action Plan throughout the district
- Work towards a more sustainable food system and reduce food waste
- Continue to work with Hampshire County Council to deliver the City of Winchester Movement Strategy and prioritise walking, cycling and public transport throughout the district
- Delivering the actions in our Biodiversity Action Plan
- Work with other public authorities to expand the range of materials that we can recycle as solutions become available

What have we achieved so far?

- Cut the council's carbon footprint by 468 tonnes in 2019/20 on a like for like basis from the previous year (figures released in 2020)
- Green tariff electricity supplied to all council operational buildings reducing carbon emissions by 19%
- £5.3m M3 LEP funding received for a new Park & Ride site including photovoltaic panels and electric vehicle charging points
- Photovoltaic panels installed on the Winchester Sport & Leisure Centre capable of generating 140,000 kilowatts per year
- Over 500 trees planted during 2020/21
- 33 new electric vehicle charging points installed across district

- Refuse collection fleet upgraded to minimum Euro6 standard
- Introduced kerbside glass, battery and small electrical collections
- Increased recycling rates from 36.1% to 43.3%
- Flood Alleviation Scheme completed at Durngate in January 2021
- £200,000 of external funding secured to deliver carbon reduction works in collaboration with partners
- New Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) approved January 2021
- Created new areas of wildflower meadows

LIVING WELL

We want all residents to live healthy and fulfilled lives. We recognise that our residents are living longer and want to ensure the district offers the right mix of facilities to support good physical and mental health for all ages and abilities.

What we want to achieve:

- Reduced health inequalities
- A wide range of physical and cultural activities for all ages and abilities
- Increased opportunities for active travel
- A wider diversity of residents and businesses involved in ensuring that WCC services work for all, especially for residents who need more help to live well
- Attractive and well-used public facilities and green spaces with space for relaxation and play

How will we achieve this?

- Focus our activities on the most disadvantaged areas, communities and groups, supporting a greater diversity of residents
- Offering a wide range of accessible activities for all to enjoy at the new Winchester Sport and Leisure Park
- Supporting communities to extend the range of sports and cultural facilities across the district
- Enable and promote safe cycleways and pathways to make it safer and more appealing for our residents and visitors to cycle and walk to their destination
- Maintain and enhance open spaces and parks

- Develop Local Plan policies that promote healthy lifestyles in healthy surroundings

What have we achieved so far?

- Working with partners across the district we reacted promptly to the COVID-19 pandemic to build and support community networks that have assisted many thousands of vulnerable people
- Adapted how we work to ensure wellbeing programmes for people with long-term health conditions have continued
- Continued construction of the new Winchester Sport and Leisure Park during the pandemic
- Most public toilets and open spaces were kept open during lockdowns and the re-opening of play areas and skate parks was prioritised when restrictions changed
- £500,000 issued in council grant support to key voluntary sector organisations to support our most vulnerable residents
- We worked collaboratively to encourage seamless joint working across voluntary organisations, community partnerships and the third sector – achieving a high level of shared awareness and mutual support around the provision of various support mechanism for our residents
- Licensing arrangements for taxis revised to improve public safety, and air quality

HOMES FOR ALL

Housing in our district is expensive and young people and families are moving out because they are unable to find suitable accommodation they can afford. The Winchester district needs homes for all – homes that are affordable and built in the right areas for our changing communities.

What we want to achieve:

- More young people and families working and living in the district
- All homes to be energy efficient and affordable to run
- Diverse, healthy and cohesive communities - not just homes
- No-one sleeping rough, except by choice

How will we achieve this?

- Building significantly more homes ourselves
- Strengthening our Local Plan to ensure the right mix of homes is built for all sectors of our society, including young people
- Using the new Winchester Housing Company to deliver a wide range of housing tenures to meet local needs
- Directly and in partnership with the voluntary sector, providing support for our homeless and most vulnerable people
- Move the energy efficiency of new and existing homes towards zero carbon

- Working with developers to ensure that they provide affordable housing and homes at fair market value as part of new developments

What have we achieved so far?

- Completed construction of 12 new homes, purchased one ex-council house and enabled eight bedsit flats to be built by Emmaus Project through grant funding
- Grant funded Trinity Centre project
- On site with 119 new homes at Stanmore, Kings Worthy and Weeke which will be completed and occupied over the next six months
- Council built homes under construction or in planning have had their energy efficiency enhanced
- Strategic Housing Market Assessment to inform the housing policies in the new Local Plan completed
- 33 individuals were accommodated in emergency accommodation, 29 of these individuals were moved on to more suitable and longer term accommodation options during periods of national restrictions
- Capital funding provided to partners to build 28 additional units providing accommodation and support for homeless and vulnerable individuals due to COVID-19
- Additional COVID-19 secure accommodation for the homeless provided for cold weather
- Care call programme - over 601 calls made to elderly and vulnerable tenants
- Coitbury House made available to LOWE to house 'property guardians'

VIBRANT LOCAL ECONOMY

Winchester district is home to a host of successful businesses and enterprises with high levels of employment in both our urban and rural areas. As we look beyond the COVID-19 pandemic, it is vital we restore the vibrancy of our high streets, retain and develop our existing business base and make the Winchester district a place where new businesses want to locate. We also need to attract new investment in low carbon workspaces and transport links and begin the transition to a greener, more sustainable economy.

What we want to achieve:

- Increase opportunities for high quality, well-paid employment across the district
- A shift to a greener, more sustainable economy
- New offices and workspace meet changing business needs and are located in areas with sustainable transport links
- More younger people choosing to live and work in the district
- Our city, market towns and rural communities recover well and have a compelling, competitive visitor offer
- Winchester district attracting new and relocating businesses and enterprises

How will we achieve this?

- Working with our key stakeholders to position Winchester district as a centre for digital, creative, knowledge-intensive networks

- Focusing on a 'green recovery' post COVID-19 and continue to provide tailored, sector specific business support
- Supporting business in meeting the challenge of carbon neutrality and encouraging 'green growth'
- Prioritising the needs of younger people in the redevelopment of central Winchester
- Working in partnership to strengthen the appeal of Winchester and promote and develop our unique cultural, heritage and natural environment assets
- Promoting our independent businesses and supporting start-ups

What have we achieved so far?

- Awarded over £30m of government grant funding to support businesses throughout the pandemic
- Supported our businesses and the safe reopening of high streets through our 'Back to Business' campaign including a business helpline; regular business bulletins; free 1-1 business support service for our high streets and tailored COVID-19 business support for our high streets
- Progressed development of industrial units in Bishop's Waltham and Winchester
- Undertaken feasibility work for the creation of a creative hub in Kings Walk in central Winchester.
- Completed a round of consultation on the latest proposals for Central Winchester Regeneration attracting 2,700 exhibition visits and 330 responses
- Helped create additional outside seating areas in the city and market towns to support social distancing

- Relocated Winchester Street Market successfully to The Broadway in Winchester on Sundays and established a regular food market
- Launched the 'Rediscover What's On Your Doorstep' campaign to encourage residents to stay local and spend local
- Established the city centre, market towns and retailer partnerships to help promote economic vitality across the district
- Commissioned a new ten-year Green Economic Development Strategy

YOUR SERVICES, YOUR VOICE

We will continue to provide high quality, good value, resilient services that are continuously improving to address the changing needs and expectations of residents, tenants, visitors, businesses and not-for-profit organisations across our district – and are accessible to all whatever their circumstances.

We will give all our residents the opportunity to make their voice heard and be able to understand how the council makes its decisions.

What we want to achieve:

- An open, transparent, inclusive and enabling council
- Improved satisfaction for our services
- Good value compared to other similar authorities
- Continuous improvement in cost-effectiveness
- High accessibility and usage of our services
- Constructive and effective partnerships across the district
- A balanced budget and stable council finances

How will we achieve this?

- Continuously improving processes that:
 - Involve the public, businesses, stakeholders and ward councillors earlier in the design, deliberation and decision-making process
 - Effectively respond to and learn from complaints and feedback to drive service improvement

- Embed effective partnership working with the community, voluntary groups and organisations, local businesses, our suppliers and other public bodies
- Transparent and publicly visible performance measures which drive improved satisfaction and performance
- More effective use of technology to make it simpler and easier to deal with the council and its delivery partners while reducing cost
- Focus on accessibility and inclusiveness to ensure our decision-making and services are accessible to and usable by all
- Investing in our staff and making the most of their skills and talents

What have we achieved so far?

- We maintained a clear focus on maintaining service levels and quality and strong partnership working with our suppliers, even during the COVID-19 pandemic. For example we:
 - Kept our telephone lines open
 - Collected more waste and recycled more of it
 - Expanded glass collection services
 - Rapidly implemented support payments to businesses
- We also increased digital service delivery and engagement including:
 - Roll out of online forms for all customer transactions
 - Rapidly rolling out remote working
 - Moving council meetings online
 - Using new virtual consultation methods

- We developed a new Customer Charter and simplified our Complaints Policy to prioritise resolution and improve customer experience
- We continued to innovate and reduce cost in other areas – for example, the new mobile payment system for all our car parks which removed the associated 30p ‘convenience charge’ to users

OUR VALUES

Our communities drive everything we do and we are committed to delivering the best customer service possible. Our values drive the way we work and help us achieve this.

- We are empowering – enabling communities and our team to take action
- We are innovative – challenging the status quo
- We act with integrity – always honest, open and fair
- We are adaptable – embracing change
- We are collaborative – working with others to get the best result

