

CABINET

Wednesday, 10 September 2025

Attendance:

Councillors
Tod (Chairperson)

Cutler
Cramoysan
Becker
Learney

Porter
Reach
Thompson

Members in attendance who spoke at the meeting

Councillors Godfrey, Horrill and Lee

[Video recording of this meeting](#)

1. **APOLOGIES**

No apologies were received.

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

There were no changes to be made.

3. **DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

Councillors Tod and Porter declared disclosable pecuniary interests in respect of various items on the agenda due to their 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. In addition, both Councillors confirmed that in respect of report CAB3518 (Community Infrastructure Levy Funding Allocations) even though in this instance there was a material conflict of interest, the same dispensation applied.

4. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Ian Tait addressed Cabinet as summarised briefly below.

Ian Tait referred to his comments made at a previous Cabinet on 22 January in relation to 158 and 159 High Street, Winchester at which the Leader advised that these council owned vacant properties would be marketed for sale. He believed that a suitable purchaser had not been forthcoming so requested an update. He also asked for an update on 160 High Street which was also owned by the council with the ground floor

leased to a commercial tenant but the upper floors currently unoccupied. He believed that the necessary work should be undertaken to make these upper levels available for housing.

Councillor Tod responded to the comments made, including explaining the background to the acquisition of these properties by the council and confirming a suitable offer for the purchase of 158 and 159 High Street had not been forthcoming. He outlined the various complexities involved in ascertaining viable options and the possible future proposals.

5. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 15 July 2025 be agreed as a correct record.

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

Councillor Cramoysan announced that the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) had confirmed that the air quality measured in the Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in Winchester had improved sufficiently so it was no longer required to be monitored as an AQMA. He highlighted that the council had recently adopted a new Air Quality Strategy for the district which included targets to go above and beyond the UK national air quality targets, with an update to be provided to the Health and Environment Policy Committee on 18 September.

Councillor Becker provided an update on the following:

- the recent successful Access All Areas event at Stanmore.
- the “Personal Bests” event at the Winchester Sport and Leisure Park, which was an inclusive event focused on participants who have learning difficulties. A new “Winchester Aqua Bests” event would take place on 30 October, allowing adults with learning disabilities an opportunity for swimming and other water-based activities.
- the Winchester Sport and Leisure Park has been shortlisted in the regional public club centre of the year category and would also be considered for outstanding club centre of the year at the UK Active Awards. She passed on her congratulations to the Sports and Leisure Park staff.

7. **NATURE IMPROVEMENT PLAN**
(CAB3517)

Councillor Learney introduced the report which set out the council’s proposals to first halt the decline in nature and then take measures to reverse it and emphasised that the whole council was responsible for action on nature recovery. A public facing document would be prepared setting out the council’s priorities and how they would be delivered.

Cabinet also received a brief presentation from the Principal Ecologist/Biodiversity Officer on the five pathways outlined in the plan.

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

Councillor Lee welcomed the adoption of the Nature Improvement Plan but criticised the delay since the Nature Emergency declaration. He asked that the plan's principles be urgently embedded across all council functions with a clear implementation programme, including a proposed "nature literacy programme" for staff. He queried expectations for increased partner activity and emphasised the importance of framing the media launch appropriately to increase public understanding and engagement.

Councillor Learney responded to the comments made above. In addition, she responded to questions from Cabinet Members, together with the Principal Ecologist/Biodiversity Officer and the Service Lead - Sustainability and Natural Environment.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the Winchester District Nature Improvement Plan 2025-2030 technical document be adopted.
2. That authority be delegated to the Corporate Head of Economy and Community to create and publish a resident and partner facing executive summary setting out the nature improvement priorities and key areas of delivery.

8. **COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY FUNDING ALLOCATIONS**
(CAB3518)

Councillor Porter introduced the report, explaining the background to CIL fund collection and that the fund was divided into three areas - transport and active travel, district and strategic projects and health and community projects. She also provided a brief summary of the funding allocations proposed in the report.

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

Councillor Lee

Councillor Lee queried what he considered to be the urban-focused composition of the CIL allocations panel and believed it should have a broader district-wide representation. He also suggested a review of the 60/30/10 ratio for fund allocation due to impending local government reorganisation. He sought clarification on a significant difference between the CIL funds collected and those made available for allocation, and asked that CIL interest be paid back to the CIL fund for community benefit

rather than the General Fund. He expressed concerns about the "limited assurance" audit on CIL collection and accounting, requesting an action tracker, details of outstanding issues, and a retest of assurance.

Councillor Horrill

Councillor Horrill welcomed the proposal to fund a new pathway at Micheldever Station, noting its critical importance for pedestrian safety in the expanding settlement. She highlighted that the land for the pathway was being donated by an owner under specific conditions and requested confirmation that these detailed conditions would be met to ensure the project's success. She also echoed concerns about the "limited assurance" audit on the CIL collection and accounting, requesting clarification on the pressing issues identified and planned actions for resolution.

Councillor Porter together with the Service Lead – Community responded to the comments made, including confirming that applications for CIL funds were encouraged from across the district. The Director (Finance) also confirmed that the results of the internal audit together with follow up actions were reported to the Audit and Governance Committee. Councillor Cutler stated that points raised regarding the allocation of CIL interest would be considered further under report CAB3514 below.

Councillor Porter and the Service Lead also responded to comments from Cabinet Members.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That funding allocations, capital budget and expenditure be approved as follows from the Winchester City Council CIL receipts ring-fenced to support transport and active travel projects:

i) £36,393 to Hampshire County Council in 2025/26 for the upgrade of the existing pedestrian crossing at Friarsgate in Winchester.

ii) £282,000 to Hampshire County Council in 2026/27 for the provision of a footway adjacent to Andover Road Micheldever.

2. That a funding allocation and capital budget of £153,000 in 2026/27 be approved from the Winchester City Council CIL receipts ring-fenced to support council-led strategic projects, for the provision of a perimeter footpath at River Park recreation ground in Winchester. This is subject to subsequent approval of expenditure under Financial Procedure Rule 7.4.

3. That it be noted that £150,000 of district CIL, which was previously allocated to the delivery of KGV park plan, is no longer required, so has been released back to the fund for future allocation.

4. That authority be delegated to the Corporate Head of Economy and Community to approve grant payments (in instalments where appropriate) based on evidence of spend provided by the applicant.

5. That authority be delegated to the Service Lead Legal to enter into the grant funding agreements in accordance with the council's funding criteria.

9. **GENERAL FUND OUTTURN 24/25 (LESS EXEMPT APPENDIX)**
(CAB3514)

Councillor Cutler introduced the report and set out that it had been discussed at Scrutiny Committee on 8 September where a number of points had been raised including the following:

- a) That the Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance consider the allocation of interest earned from Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds, with the outcome to be shared with the committee.
- b) That the Cabinet Member for Place and Local Plan consider a member discussion with the aim of encouraging applications and schemes for future CIL funding.

In addition, a copy of the draft minutes of the Scrutiny Committee had been circulated to all those present at Cabinet.

In relation to the first point, Councillor Cutler advised that there was no requirement for the interest earned to be transferred back into the CIL fund and as it would be complicated to achieve this his initial view would be not to make any changes. However, he would discuss further and report back to Scrutiny Committee as requested.

In relation to the second point, Councillor Tod suggested that an all members' briefing be arranged outlining how councillors could encourage more CIL bids from within their wards. This was agreed.

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

Councillor Godfrey welcomed the favourable outturns reported and the unexpected additional government funding, which he believed made the cautious 2025/26 budget less necessary, noting a large increase in reserves due to underspending in many areas. He also sought clarification on why the replacement of special maintenance vehicles was categorised as capital expenditure. Additionally, he requested assurance that all reasonable actions had been taken to collect outstanding NNDR before considering debt write-offs and inquired about progress in clearing the appeals backlog. Finally, he commended officers for the high council tax collection rate and the effective use of the Disabled Facilities Grant.

Councillor Cutler together with the Director (Finance) responded to the comments made, including confirming that all possible steps had been taken to

recover the unpaid NNDR and emphasising the impacts of the uncertainties in connection with local government reorganisation on budget planning.

Cabinet members and invited councillors present confirmed that it was not necessary to go into exempt session to discuss the contents of the exempt appendix.

Cabinet agreed to the following for the reasons set out in the report (including the exempt appendix) and outlined above.

RESOLVED:

1. That the General Fund Revenue Outturn and Capital Programme Outturn be noted as set out in the report.
2. That the transfers to and from the Major Investment Reserve as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report be approved and the reserves and closing balances at 31 March 2025 (as set out in Appendix 2) be noted.
3. That the revised 2025/26 capital programme be approved as set out in Appendix 5 of the report including the following new budgets:
 - a. Special maintenance vehicles replacements - £251,000
 - b. Rural Enterprise Prosperity Fund (additional funding received) - £223,000
 - c. Disabled Facilities Grant (additional funding received) - £185,000
4. That the revised 2025-2035 capital programme as set out in Appendix 6 of the report be noted.
5. That the proposal to write-off the five individual outstanding Non-Domestic Rate debts totalling £458,213.50, listed in exempt Appendix 7 of the report be approved, in accordance with Financial Procedure Rule 12.7(f).

10. **HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT OUTTURN 24/25**
(CAB3516)

Councillor Reach introduced the report and set out that it had been discussed at Scrutiny Committee on 8 September where members had made a number of general comments for consideration by Cabinet, as set out in the draft minutes of the committee which had been circulated to all those present at Cabinet.

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

Councillor Horrill welcomed the cross-political cooperation with cabinet members and officers. She expressed concern about the Housing team's stability with recent changes in staffing and the impact on the provision of new homes, specifically mentioning delays in acquiring properties at Kings Barton. She also questioned the budgetary impact of compliance

costs, particularly for fire safety, and advocated for more robust, joined-up IT systems to address tenants' needs. Finally, she emphasised the importance of refocusing on delivery to avoid future project delays.

Councillor Reach together with the Strategic Director responded to the comments made including providing an update on the purchase of new homes at Kings Barton and the provision of a new IT system.

The Cabinet Member and Strategic Director also responded to comments made at Scrutiny Committee including advising that an update on the Swedish Cottages project would be submitted to Cabinet and Scrutiny Committee in November. In addition, the application to the Local Authority Housing Fund had been successful with £900k being awarded which would be used to acquire four properties.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the HRA Outturn figures for 2024/25 be noted as detailed in Appendices 1 and 2 of the report.
2. That the Housing capital programme outturn for Major Works and New Build be noted as detailed in paragraphs 10.5 and 10.6 and Appendices 3 & 4 of the report.
3. That the funding of the 2024/25 HRA capital programme be noted as detailed in paragraphs 10.7 to 10.10 and Appendix 5 of the report.
4. That the reforecast capital programme budget of £48.8m for 2025/26 be approved, as detailed in paragraphs 10.11 to 10.15 and Appendix 6 & 7 of the report, that takes into account potential programme slippage and the reprofiling of expected spend.

11. Q1 FINANCE & PERFORMANCE MONITORING
(CAB3513)

Councillor Cutler introduced the report and highlighted that it had been discussed at Scrutiny Committee on 8 September where a number of points had been raised, including the following:

- a) That the fly-tipping performance be reviewed including reasons for the change in clear-up rate.
- b) That an update on trends from the annual staff travel survey be provided to all members.
- c) That the programme of works to achieve an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of C for all council homes by 2030 be provided.
- d) That Cabinet consider the development of an integrated KPI relating to climate change and the allocation of additional resources to accelerate the delivery of Council Plan priorities.

In addition, a copy of the draft minutes of the Scrutiny Committee had been circulated to all those present at Cabinet.

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

Councillor Lee

Councillor Lee suggested the use of budget positive variances to accelerate small-scale solar projects on council assets and to explore community energy shared ownership, while also emphasising the need for robust methods to attribute carbon savings to specific Carbon Neutrality Action Plan (CNAP) actions. He expressed concern that major regeneration projects, such as the Bar End Depot had been delayed and suggested a more integrated regeneration process could enhance marketability. He suggested that positive variances could be strategically used to address existing project gaps and issues.

Councillor Horrill

Councillor Horrill sought a clearer understanding of progress and constraints regarding the Nutrient Mitigation Solution and shared concerns that the Bar End Depot regeneration project seemed stalled. She questioned the Winchester Movement Strategy's focus, noting the absence of a planned park and ride, which she considered fundamental for traffic reduction. She reiterated concerns expressed earlier in the meeting about the timely delivery of new homes and sought clarification on slow progress in achieving EPC C ratings. Finally, she highlighted that Q1 staff vacancies were delaying housing major repairs stressing the importance of timely delivery for tenants.

Councillors Cutler, Learney, Tod, Reach and Cramoysan responded to the comments made, including advising that an update on the Bar End depot would be submitted to Cabinet shortly and noting that some of the comments had been raised already either at Scrutiny Committee or earlier in the meeting. The Chief Executive also provided an update on the recent staff survey.

On behalf of Cabinet, Councillor Tod requested that the Chief Executive pass on its thanks to all staff for their work in achieving the outcomes outlined in the report.

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

RESOLVED:

That the progress achieved during Q1 of 2025/26 be noted and the contents of the report be endorsed.

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

RESOLVED:

That the list of future items as set out in the Forward Plan for October 2025 be noted.

13. **EXEMPT BUSINESS:**

RESOLVED:

1. That in all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

2. That the public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business because it is likely that, if members of the public were present, there would be disclosure to them of 'exempt information' as defined by Section 100I and Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

<u>Minute Number</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Description of Exempt Information</u>
14	General Fund budget outturn (exempt appendix)) Information relating to the) financial or business affairs of) any particular person (including) the authority holding that) information). (Para 3 Schedule) 12A refers)

14. **GENERAL FUND OUTTURN 24/25 (EXEMPT APPENDIX)**
(CAB3514 EXEMPT APDX 7)

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the exempt appendix be noted.

The meeting commenced at 9.30 am and concluded at 12.00 pm

Chairperson