CABINET

Thursday, 12 March 2026

Attendance:

Councillors
Tod (Chairperson)

Cutler
Cramoysan
Becker
Learney
Porter
Reach
Thompson

Members in attendance who spoke at the meeting

Councillors Bolton, Horrill, Lee and Williams

Video recording of this meeting

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1. **APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies received.

2. **DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

Councillors Tod and Porter declared disclosable pecuniary interests in respect of items 9, 11, 13 and 14 on the agenda due to their roles 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 relation to item 11, in the interests of transparency Councillor Thompson declared that she was the council's appointed trustee on the Hampshire Cultural Trust and also a council appointed observer on Play to the Crowd. She remained in the room, spoke and voted.

In relation to item 8, Councillor Tod declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest as a member of the Hampshire Prosperity Partnership Board. He remained in the room, spoke and voted

3. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Ian Tait spoke during public participation as summarised below.

Regarding the council's previous proposals for new homes at Dyson Drive, Winchester, he expressed disappointment that the council chose not to appeal the refusal of the planning application for eight affordable homes and estimated that the scheme had cost the Housing Revenue

Account approximately £117,000 in planning and framework costs. He queried whether the council would ever revisit the Dyson Drive proposals.

In his response, Councillor Reach emphasised the separate role of the council in terms of acting as planning authority and that the council did not have the right to appeal in these circumstances. However, the council remained ambitious in its plans to build new homes.

4. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 12 February be agreed as a correct record.

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

Councillor Tod announced that an additional Cabinet meeting had been arranged for 18 March to consider a report on the adoption of the Local Plan prior to recommendation to Council on 24 March 2026. The report would also be considered at a Scrutiny Committee meeting on 17 March.

Councillor Tod also announced that the latest information in relation to Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) was that the government's decision on the model for the new unitary authorities should be received by 26 March 2026.

6. **THE EXTENSION OF THE EXISTING WASTE AND RECYCLING COLLECTION CONTRACT (LESS EXEMPT APPENDIX)**

(CAB3535)

Councillor Cramoysan introduced the report which set out proposals to extend the waste collection contract to ensure continuity in respect of forthcoming LGR proposals and also fulfil the council's stated aim to go greener faster.

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

Councillor Lee

Councillor Lee acknowledged the team's high performance and the success of the food waste collection rollout, but questioned the strategic decision to lock the council into an eight-year extension without first testing the market. He expressed concern that this long-term commitment might restrict the flexibility of any new unitary authority and suggested that a shorter extension or the inclusion of break clauses would be preferable. He also highlighted the possible financial risks in relation to potential drops in recycling revenue following national policy reforms and called for a full impact analysis of recent service changes before committing to the contract extension.

Councillor Bolton

Councillor Bolton also acknowledged the work of the team but queried the timing of the proposed extension, four years before the existing contract expired. He considered that making such a significant decision on behalf of a future unitary authority denied that new body the chance to design its own systems or benefit from increased economies of scale. He believed that the proposal contradicted the council's broader TC25 goals and questioned whether it would drive innovation or help the district go greener faster.

Councillor Cramoysan, together with the Corporate Head of Service Place and Strategic Director responded to the comments made including confirming that a benchmarking exercise had been undertaken and officers were assured the proposal offered the best value for money at the current time. The time and expense involved in retendering a contract of this size was also emphasised.

Cabinet and other members present confirmed they did not wish to go into exempt session to consider further the contents of the exempt appendix.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That an extension of council's existing waste and recycling collection contract with Biffa be approved, in line with the extension provisions contained within the current contract, (CAB3202 November 2019) for a period of eight years, which is compliant with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

2. That authority be delegated to the Strategic Director, in consultation with the Director of Finance and Director of Legal, to finalise the contract extension and secure the necessary provisions to ensure the Council can fully comply with the national Simpler Recycling programme.

3. That in light of the local government reorganisation, a clause into the existing contract be included allowing the novation of the existing contract to a new organisation, and to ensure that any contact extension allows the same.

7. APPROVAL OF TOURISM STRATEGY FOR WINCHESTER DISTRICT (CAB3545)

Councillor Thompson introduced the report as a practical framework for achieving sustainable and ambitious growth in the district's visitor economy, highlighting its vital role in supporting nearly 6,000 local jobs and generating over £292 million in annual spending.

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

Councillor Lee

Councillor Lee welcomed the broad ambition of the tourism strategy and its alignment with the council's carbon neutral goals, but questioned whether the underlying evidence base and stakeholder engagement sufficiently represented rural communities compared to urban areas. He queried the actual annual cost of delivery and sought reassurance on viability if unsecured external grant funding were not forthcoming. He requested further clarity on the future of destination promotion with the expected changes due to LGR and how sustainable certification schemes could provide practical support for small businesses. Finally, he requested more specific themed itineraries for areas like the Central Meon Valley and called for robust mechanisms to monitor visitor pressures to protect residents and sensitive landscapes.

Councillor Bolton

Councillor Bolton acknowledged the vital role of tourism in supporting the local economy but expressed concern that the strategy appeared to focus on the city rather than the whole district. He highlighted that significant assets outside the city, such as market towns and other major attractions, seemed secondary in the strategy and that concentrating tourism in the city risked missing economic opportunities for rural communities and placed unnecessary pressure on urban infrastructure. He requested a clearer commitment to spread the benefits of the visitor economy across the entire district.

Councillor Thompson, together with the Tourism Marketing and Development Manager responded to the comments made, including emphasising the district-wide nature of the strategy and emphasising the number of different partner organisations involved in its formation.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the Winchester District Tourism Strategy 2026-2031 be approved, which will be led and delivered by Winchester City Council in collaboration with partners and businesses operating within the visitor economy.

2. That authority be delegated to the Strategic Director responsible for Economy and Tourism to revise the strategy, at an appropriate time, to reflect the new operating landscape as a result of LGR and the mayoral combined county authority.

8. **THRIVING AND RESILIENT COMMUNITIES STRATEGY**

(CAB3549)

Councillor Becker introduced the report which set out a framework to build connected and confident places by fostering an environment where communities could evolve and solve their own challenges. The Strategy had been discussed by the Health and Environment Policy Committee on 2 December 2025.

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

Councillor Lee
Councillor Lee welcomed the strategy's focus on the practical necessity of community resilience during the ongoing cost-of-living and climate crises. However, he believed it required clearer mechanisms to enable genuine community influence and specifically queried what practical capacity-building support or funding would be available to help parish councils take on a stronger role as LGR progressed. He suggested that specific additional information be provided to parish councils on setting up emergency hubs.

Councillor Godfrey
Councillor Godfrey supported the strategy while highlighting that rural isolation and a lack of local community cohesion remain significant challenges across the district and expressed disappointment about the lack of direct financial contributions to address this. He urged the council to provide stronger leadership by linking the principles of this strategy to all other council activities to improve resident well-being. He also suggested that the mayoralty could play an important role in sharing the strategy's vision but suggested that additional support from the communications team would be required to enable this.

Councillor Becker, together with the Corporate Head of Economy and Community responded to the comments made including emphasising that in the context of the strategy, resilience did not refer to emergency planning. The Chief Executive confirmed that potential funding streams available would be investigated and the resulting information shared with parish councils.

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

RESOLVED:

That the Winchester District Thriving and Resilient Communities Strategy (2026-2030) be adopted as set out in Appendix 1 of CAB3549.

9. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) FUNDING
(CAB3547)

Councillor Porter introduced the report which set out proposals for CIL funding across the district, highlighting the geographical spread and different types of funding proposed.

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

Councillor Lee
Councillor Lee supported the principles of CIL and welcomed the worthwhile investments that benefited residents across the district. However, he raised concerns regarding fairness and geographic balance, noting that approximately 90% of proposed funding appeared to be allocated to urban areas. He asked how the council would ensure that future CIL funding benefited the whole district and queried what safeguards would accompany the proposed new delegated powers to ensure transparency and accountability.

Councillor Horrill
Councillor Horrill acknowledged the importance of CIL in enabling significant projects and supported a more agile, shorter application process for the community fund. She questioned whether the proposed officer delegation level of £500,000 was appropriate for maintaining transparency and requested a clearer explanation regarding the £4.5 million allocation to the Central Winchester Regeneration (CWR) scheme. She queried the appropriateness of the proposal to fund solar panels for the cathedral, suggesting that an organisation with significant unrestricted funds should have progressed the project independently.

Councillor Porter, together with the Corporate Head of Economy and Community and Strategic Directors responded to the comments made including emphasising that a significant portion of the rural district was within the South Downs National Park who had their own separate CIL scheme.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the Strategic Procedural Overview for CIL allocation and spending which apportions percentages of the CIL retained by the city council be revised to reflect 40% for community / health / active travel / transport schemes and 60% for strategic district schemes, as detailed in appendix 1 of the report.

2. That the ongoing commitment to the joint Movement Strategy with Hampshire County Council be noted, supporting the coordinated delivery of transport and active travel infrastructure that helps address the impacts of development on local communities.

3. That a funding allocation of £1,088,638 from Winchester City Council CIL income receipts be and the expenditure under Financial Procedure rule 7.4 be approved, using the existing CIL funded community grants budget, for the following community-led projects:

a) Chesil Theatre, Winchester - extension and refurbishment: £200,000
b) Wickham pavilion: £150,000
c) Theatre Royal, Winchester - boilers and lighting: £78,000

d) Colden Common - skatepark and MUGA: £30,000
e) Kings Worthy – allotments: £35,525
f) The Gurkha Museum - reconfiguration, ramps and toilets: £64,707
g) Winchester City Museum - exhibition upgrade and remodelling: £200,000
h) Trinity, Winchester - new heating system: £32,000
i) Christ Church, Winchester - lifts and toilets: £92,300
j) Colden Common Bowls Club - ramp and safety barrier: £10,000
k) The Carroll Centre, Winchester - toilets and kitchen: £102,251
l) Knowle MUGA: £30,000
m) Durley Village Hall - kitchen: £22,905
n) Boarhunt pavilion: £40,950

4. That it be noted that four applications were refused.

5. That it be noted that one application was referred to Winchester Town Forum for consideration to be funded from Winchester Town CIL.

6. That it be noted that £110,000 previously allocated to three community schemes that are no longer going ahead - Otterbourne pedestrian crossing, Twyford cycle route and Knowle pump track - can be released back to the fund for future allocation.

7. That a capital budget and funding allocation of £359,695 in 2026/27 from Winchester City Council CIL income receipts be approved, ring-fenced to support transport and active travel projects and the expenditure be approved under Financial Procedure rule 7.4, for the following Hampshire County Council projects:

a) Swanmore to Bishops Waltham - footpath/cycleway: £300,000
b) Itchen Valley - path improvements: £59,695

8. That a CIL allocation of £331,000 be approved to the following council-led projects, subject to approval of a full business case:

a) Winchester Cathedral - solar PV installation: £107,000
b) Winchester Science Centre - solar PV installation: £224,000

9. That an increase of £30,000 be approved, funded by CIL, to the existing capital budget of £60,000 for solar PV at Meadowside Leisure Centre and approve its expenditure, bringing the total budget approved for expenditure to £90,000.

10. That a capital budget of £110,000 in 2026/27 be approved (subject to approval of by Winchester Town Forum report WFT343) allocated from Neighbourhood (Town) CIL income receipts and the expenditure under Financial Procedure rule 7.4 be approved for the Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) improvement at St Matthews Field, Weeke.

11. That a CIL allocation of £4.5m to the Central Winchester Regeneration scheme be approved, previously earmarked for this purpose in CAB3484.

12. That authority be delegated to the Strategic Director responsible for CIL to approve funding allocations from Winchester City Council CIL income receipts to community, health, active travel and transport fund projects.

13. That authority be delegated to the S151 officer to approve capital budget and expenditure up to £500k for community, health, active travel and transport fund projects.

10. FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS FOR DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT IN THE SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK FOR THE PERIOD 1 OCTOBER 2026 TO 31 MARCH 2032

(CAB3546)

Councillor Porter introduced the report which proposed the council entering into a new contract to continue to deliver the development management service (including enforcement) on behalf of the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA). If agreed by Cabinet, the contract would be subject to approval by the SDNPA at a meeting on 20 March 2026.

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

Councillor Lee

Councillor Lee supported the principle of local planning delivery but requested clarification on the financial sustainability of the proposed agreement (given a projected £400,000 shortfall) and questioned why a full cost-recovery model was not being pursued. He expressed concern that committing to a contract through 2032 would impact on a future unitary authority following LGR. He welcomed the wider benefits of the partnership but sought reassurance that risks to the council were fully understood.

Councillor Horrill

Councillor Horrill supported the continuation of the agreement but questioned why the council would enter into a contract where anticipated costs exceed income by £400,000. She suggested that the relationship with the SDNP could be improved and queried how the council could better influence the SDNP's strategy to ensure it aligned with local priorities such as the provision of affordable homes.

Councillor Porter, together with the Corporate Head of Planning and Regulatory Services and Strategic Director responded to the comments made, including confirming that officers had regular contact with the team at SDNP. The Director (Finance) provided further information regarding the calculation of costs in the report.

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

RESOLVED:

That the Corporate Head of Planning and Regulatory Services and Director (Legal) be authorised to enter into a new agreement for the delivery of development management services (including planning enforcement) on behalf of the South Downs National Park Authority for the period 1 October 2026 to 31 March 2032. Subject to the South Downs National Park Authority Member approval on 20th March 2026.

11. **ANNUAL REVIEW OF RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY 2026/27**
(CAB3548)

Councillor Cutler introduced the report. report and drew members' attention to the changes since the previous year as summarised in paragraph 11.7 of the report. The report had been discussed at Audit and Governance Committee on 5 March 2026 where members had requested that further consideration be given to whether risk CR010 should be expanded to include reference to risks relating to the Nature Emergency. The Director (Finance) had agreed to discuss this further with the Executive Leadership Board. In addition, a correction was noted to the current controls section of risk CR003 to refer to the Residents' Survey which had been undertaken and completed in 2024.

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

Councillor Lee
Councillor Lee agreed that the report established a structured framework for managing risk and aligned with recognised good practice. He sought clarity on whether risks related to LGR should be treated as key strategic risks. In addition, he queried whether risk management should go faster to address climate emergency ambitions but welcomed the inclusion of the nature emergency within the corporate risk register. He also suggested that a more open risk appetite would allow the council to inject more ambition into areas like housing by adopting tried and tested new construction practices.

Councillor Godfrey
Councillor Godfrey noted the stability of the risk management policy since the previous year and agreed that this consistency should be widely supported. However, he expressed concern that the policy was not being implemented with enough confidence to allow for innovative decisions in areas like affordable council housing. He urged the council to apply its open risk appetite to adopt modern methods of construction, such as modular building, to deliver energy-efficient homes within the existing budget.

Councillor Cutler responded to the comments made including emphasising that LGR would have its own risk register. The Strategic Director also responded to comments confirming that the council would seek to use modern methods of housing construction provided they were economic.

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

RESOLVED:

That the Risk Management Policy for 2026/27, the Risk Appetite Statement for 2026/27 and the current Corporate Risk Register be approved.

12. **Q3 FINANCE & PERFORMANCE MONITORING**

(CAB3537)

Councillor Cutler introduced the report and advised that it had been considered at Scrutiny Committee on 4 March 2026, the minutes of which had been circulated to all members present.

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

Councillor Lee

Councillor Lee welcomed the Q3 report and commended the work undertaken by officers to track the delivery of council plan priorities. He raised specific queries regarding the decarbonisation of corporate buildings, seeking assurance that projects remained on schedule. Additionally, he requested further information on the waste performance target to understand whether the quarterly household waste figures were standalone measures or cumulative towards the annual target.

Councillor Bolton

Councillor Bolton expressed concern that the TC25 transformation programme had not delivered sufficient savings according to its original objectives. He challenged the decision to drop specific TC25 monitoring from the performance report. He further expressed concern that the presentation of savings blurred the distinction between cost reductions and revenue growth.

Councillor Cutler responded to the comments made including confirming that he was in discussions with officers on the best method of presenting the information requested in relation to performance on waste collection and would take the possible alternatives to Scrutiny Committee for their view. Councillor Cutler and the Director (Finance) also responded to the comments in relation to the TC25 programme, emphasising that the LGR proposals had required a change in priorities.

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

RESOLVED:

That the progress achieved during Q3 of 2025/26 be noted and the contents of the report be endorsed.

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

RESOLVED:

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

14. **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.

Minute Number	Item		Description of Exempt Information
15	Extension of the existing waste and recycling collection contract (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)

15. **THE EXTENSION OF THE EXISTING WASTE AND RECYCLING COLLECTION CONTRACT (EXEMPT APPENDIX)**
(CAB3535)

RESOLVED:

That the exempt appendix be noted.

The meeting commenced at 9.30 am and concluded at 12.40 pm

Chairperson