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HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 25 February 2026

Attendance:

Councillors
Pett (Chairperson)

Bennett
Brophy
Horrill

Lee
Power
Westwood

Apologies for Absence:

Councillors Latham and Miller

Deputy Member:

Councillor Horrill (deputy for Councillor Miller)

Others in attendance who addressed the meeting:

Councillor Cramoysan (Cabinet Member for Recycling and Public Protection)
and Councillor Learney (Cabinet Member for the Climate and Nature
Emergency)

[Full Video Recording](#)

1. **APOLOGIES AND DEPUTY MEMBERS**

Apologies were noted as above.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Lee made a personal statement that he was a Trustee of WinACC, should any discussion arise in this respect during the consideration of items.

Councillor Pett declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in respect of any agenda items it may impact, due to being a member of the South Downs National Park Authority. However, as there was no material conflict of interest, he stated that he had a dispensation granted by the Monitoring Officer that enabled him to speak and vote on these matters.

3. **CHAIRPERSON'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairperson announced that two working groups, involving members only at this stage, had been established and updates were provided as follows:

- i. Identifying current barriers to increasing the availability and accessibility of Electric Vehicle Charging Points across the Winchester.

The group were in the process of working with officers over the coming weeks and would report back in due course.

- ii. Developing practicable incentives, including indicative costs, for householders off mains drainage to modernise private sewerage systems to reduce the risk of the leaching of nutrients into the surrounding land and watercourses.

A report had been prepared on nutrient neutrality which had been endorsed by members of the committee and would be circulated in due course for progression, together with a copy of the recent Partnership for South Hampshire (PfSH) paper referencing a useful framework for nutrient mitigation.

4. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meetings held on the 2 December 2025 be approved and adopted.

5. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no comments or questions made during public participation.

6. **ENHANCED BIODIVERSITY DUTY - HEP046**

Following introduction by the Cabinet Member for the Climate and Nature Emergency, the Service Lead: Sustainability and Natural Environment and the Ecologist/Biodiversity Officer presented the report in relation to enhanced biodiversity duty, and several questions were asked, including the following:

1. An enquiry was made regarding whether the council possessed the ability to capture data on biodiversity projects, such as hedgerow planting, that occurred on land outside of council ownership. It was explained that community groups were encouraged to report their actions and that the mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) reporting would provide more robust data on such delivery. It was further noted that the Nature Improvement Plan (NIP) aimed to establish clearer templates and direct routes for communities and parish councils to share this information.
2. Further clarification was sought on whether additional guidance or incentives could be provided to parish councils to assist in monitoring local biodiversity activities. It was noted that the council

intended to use platforms such as Parish Connect to provide guidance and encourage reporting. It was suggested that sharing examples of work undertaken by different parishes could encourage engagement.

3. An explanation was requested regarding the biodiversity gains data in the report, specifically why certain habitat baseline figures remained identical to post-development figures. It was clarified that the table followed a standard government template which included retained habitats. It was explained that if a developer retained an existing habitat without alteration, the units would appear in both the baseline and post-development columns.
4. A request was made for a key or more user-friendly format to be included in future reports to help the public understand the relationship between biodiversity units and hectares. It was confirmed that while the current report followed a statutory template, future iterations of the Nature Improvement Plan reporting could be adapted to be more accessible.
5. A question was asked concerning the adequacy of resources for BNG monitoring and whether a robust enforcement system was in place to ensure developers met their commitments. It was stated that monitoring fees were set to ensure adequate resourcing and that the BNG governance framework was designed to make enhancements measurable and enforceable over a 30-year period.
6. Further clarification was sought on the lack of off-site biodiversity units secured within the local planning authority boundary and whether this indicated a shortage of habitat banks in the district. It was explained that while the council did not have full control over private land, work was being undertaken with the Partnership for South Hampshire to identify land across the county for habitat banks. It was noted that the market for these banks was beginning to materialise.
7. A question was raised as to whether the council could enforce the requirement for BNG units to be located within the district. It was clarified that while the statutory metric provided financial incentives to keep units in close proximity to a development, the council could not refuse an application solely because units were provided in a different location.
8. An enquiry was made as to where information regarding amendments to Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) could be located. It was noted that this information had been discussed during a previous committee meeting regarding the Nature Improvement Plan.
9. Further clarification was sought on whether the objectives of the Nature Improvement Plan were supported by sufficient financial and human resources. It was stated that the action plan was developed to be commensurate with available resources. It was further noted that the

NIP remained a priority for the sustainability team with a supporting budget.

10. A question was asked regarding why a large number of planning permissions were exempt from BNG requirements and what examples of such exemptions existed. It was noted that the government had introduced exemptions to streamline the planning system.
11. A question was raised regarding whether the presentation of data could be improved to show the time required for habitats to mature and how this linked to carbon credits. It was agreed that future public-facing reports would aim to be more accessible and that the team would consider how to better demonstrate the linkage between biodiversity data and carbon credits.

The questions were responded to by the Cabinet Member, the Service Lead: Sustainability and Natural Environment, and the Ecologist/Biodiversity Officer.

In conclusion, the committee thanked officers and the Cabinet Member for an informative report.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received and the comments raised by the committee, as summarised above, be noted.

7. **SUPPORT CREATION OF LOCAL CARBON CREDITS - PRESENTATION**

Following introduction by the Cabinet Member for the Climate and Nature Emergency, the Sustainability Manager then gave a presentation on supporting the creation of local carbon credits, and several questions were asked, including the following:

1. Further clarification was sought on the graph illustrating carbon flux, specifically regarding the prioritisation of sites and whether "high yield" referred to current status or future potential. It was explained that the graph represented carbon being sequestered from or emitted into the atmosphere based on land use, with green indicating net sequestration and orange indicating a carbon-emitting site, such as the agricultural use at Littleton Triangle.
2. A question was asked regarding how the sequestration figure of 125 tonnes per year compared with other local authorities. It was responded that research into other authorities was not yet complete, and while 125 tonnes was a contribution, it was small in relation to total annual district emissions.
3. Further clarification was sought on whether changing farming practices at the Littleton Triangle would provide financial advantages to both the land manager and the council through the sale of carbon credits. It

was explained that landowners balanced economic and environmental gains, and that income streams from natural capital markets, such as carbon credits or biodiversity net gain, served as potential arguments for alternative land uses.

4. An enquiry was made regarding the relative value of land used for carbon sequestration compared to land for agriculture or housing, and whether credits were a sufficient incentive for developers. It was noted that business cases were required to demonstrate value for money and that future scoping would compare the economic returns of natural capital schemes against other land uses.
5. A question was raised concerning the funding and management of projects for parish councils, and what guidance was available regarding plan viability and responsibility for volunteer-run groups. It was acknowledged that parish councils required working examples and further guidance to understand the path toward delivering shovel-ready projects.
6. Further clarification was sought on the potential for a toolkit to assist parishes in monetising small pockets of land through simplified carbon credit systems. It was observed that equipping parishes with such tools would assist them in viewing land acquisitions as assets rather than liabilities.
7. A suggestion was made to utilise a "pincer movement" by working with existing partnerships, such as farm clusters and the wildlife trust, to move the project forward locally. It was responded that joining up different projects and stakeholders, including the South Downs National Park, was a key part of the strategy.

The questions were responded to by the Cabinet Member and the Sustainability Manager.

In conclusion, the committee thanked officers and the Cabinet Member for an informative presentation.

RESOLVED:

That the presentation be received and the comments raised by the committee, as summarised above, be noted.

8. **PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER AND ENFORCEMENT - PRESENTATION**

Following introduction by the Cabinet Member for Recycling and Public Protection, the Service Lead: Public Protection then gave a presentation on public space protection orders and enforcement, and several questions were asked, including the following:

1. Further clarification was sought on the low number of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) served in Winchester, specifically requesting the figures and the time period they covered.
2. It was explained that four FPNs were served for dog fouling over the previous two years, while none were served for littering or alcohol-related offences.
3. An enquiry was made as to whether data was available concerning the number of cautions that had been issued by the council or the police.
4. The officer noted that this information was not immediately available but could be provided, and it was further clarified that data was not currently shared between the police and the council regarding the use of these powers.
5. A question was asked regarding the risk of further criminalising vulnerable members of the community and whether the use of third-party enforcement agencies would create perverse incentives.
6. It was clarified that the use of external agencies was only being scoped as an option and was not a definitive proposal at that stage.
7. Further clarification was sought on how the council could address the issue of begging on the high street, which some residents reportedly found intimidating.
8. The officer explained that a staged approach involving words of advice was typically used before a fine was issued, and that PSPOs could provide a swifter method for dealing with individuals who moved between different locations.
9. An enquiry was made as to whether begging was already a criminal offence under existing statutes.
10. The officer noted that while an older act allowed for arrests for begging, it was slated for removal, and the council was exploring whether a PSPO was a more appropriate tool.
11. A request was made for the council to establish a clear evidence base and data recording system to justify the adoption or renewal of these powers.
12. It was confirmed that sufficient data was a legal requirement for the adoption of a PSPO and that specific controls, such as those for the volume of amplified busking, could be built into the orders.
13. Further clarification was sought on whether a district-wide PSPO for dog fouling was already in effect.
14. It was clarified that there was no current PSPO for dog fouling and the council instead relied on the Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act.

15. A question was asked regarding whether other individuals, such as Parish Clerks, could be authorised to issue FPNs for dog fouling in their local areas.
16. It was confirmed that the council had the power to authorise other persons to take such action, although it was noted that many parish councils had previously been reluctant to do so.
17. An enquiry was made concerning whether the primary issue was a lack of visible street presence and human resources rather than a requirement for new legislation.
18. A question was raised as to whether committee members believed residents were avoiding the city centre due to anti-social behaviour.
19. Further clarification was sought on the use of alternative tools to address issues such as busking and commercial waste management before committing to a range of PSPOs.
20. An enquiry was made as to whether the proposal involved a single PSPO or multiple orders for different behaviours.
21. It was explained that the preferred model was to have separate PSPOs for specific activities to ensure legal clarity and ease of enforcement.

The questions were responded to by the Cabinet Member, the Corporate Head of Planning and Regulatory Services and the Service Lead: Public Protection.

In conclusion, the committee thanked officers and the Cabinet Member for an informative presentation

RESOLVED:

That the presentation be received and the comments raised by the committee, as summarised above, be noted.

9. **BUILDING A RESILIENT WASTE SERVICE FOR THE FUTURE - PRESENTATION**

Following introduction by the Cabinet Member for Recycling and Public Protection, the Corporate Head of Service: Place then gave a presentation on building a resilient waste service for the future, and several questions were asked, including the following:

1. A question was raised regarding the debate over using bags for food waste, the variable quality of compostable liners, and the presence of plastic in tea bags. It was noted that a video was produced to explain the recycling process and that the use of bags was preferred by collection crews to assist with efficiency.

2. Further clarification was sought on how to simplify the perceived complexity of recycling, with suggestions made to utilise circular economy videos or peer-led engagement campaigns similar to those used in public health. It was suggested that the communications team could provide materials to councillors to help amplify these messages through parish newsletters and social media platforms.
3. An enquiry was made as to how the amount of avoided carbon dioxide was calculated for residents, and whether a breakdown of recycling performance between rural and urban areas was available. It was explained that carbon data was based on verified specialist references, and it was noted that messaging regarding the financial savings achieved by avoiding landfill was also under consideration.
4. A question was asked concerning the accessibility of glass recycling and the current capacity of bins following changes to kerbside collections. It was reported that a new material recycling facility was being tendered which would allow glass to be collected in the main recycling bin, which was expected to increase capacity and simplicity for residents.
5. Further clarification was sought on whether the Emissions Trading Scheme represented a financial cost or a potential income for the council. It was clarified that while there was no immediate impact on the collection authority, the future unitary authority would benefit from reduced disposal costs if waste tonnages were lowered before the scheme's introduction in 2028.
6. A question was raised regarding the council's enforcement strategy for fly-tipping and whether reported figures included incidents occurring on private land. It was noted that fly-tipping incidents had decreased and that the council pursued prosecutions for offences on both public and private land.
7. An enquiry was made to verify that residual waste was sent for energy recovery rather than to landfill. It was confirmed that the majority of non-recyclable waste was sent to an energy-from-waste facility, and it was noted that a primary objective was to reduce the volume of material sent for incineration to further lower carbon emissions.
8. A question was asked regarding the possibility of the council providing a parallel waste collection service for commercial establishments. It was noted that such a service was a potential consideration for the future unitary authority.
9. Further clarification was sought on the actions being taken to influence the government and producers to reduce unnecessary packaging. It was explained that the Extended Producer Responsibility scheme, which began in April 2025, required producers to pay for the packaging they produced, with higher costs for materials that were more difficult to recycle.

10. Confirmation was sought on whether the council received a share of the funding generated by the Extended Producer Responsibility scheme to cover its waste management costs. It was confirmed that this funding was received by the council.

The questions were responded to by the Cabinet Member and the Corporate Head of Service: Place.

In conclusion, the committee thanked officers and the Cabinet Member for an informative presentation

RESOLVED:

That the presentation be received and the comments raised by the committee, as summarised above, be noted.

10. **TO NOTE THE MEETING DATES FOR THE COMMITTEE IN 2026/27**

RESOLVED:

That the meeting dates of the committee for 2026/27, as set out on the agenda, be noted.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and concluded at 9.00 pm

Chairperson

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