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THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 5 March 2025

Attendance:

Councillors
Brook (Chairperson)

Wallace
Batho
Clear
Laming

Pett
Reach
Bolton

Apologies for Absence:

Councillor V Achwal

Other members in attendance:

Councillors Horrill, Lee, Becker, Tod and Westwood

[Video recording of this meeting](#)

1. **APOLOGIES AND DEPUTY MEMBERS**

Apologies for the meeting were noted as above.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

Councillor Wallace declared a disclosable pecuniary interest due to his role as a Hampshire County Councillor. However, as there was no material conflict of interest, he remained in the room and spoke under the dispensation granted by the Audit and Governance committee.

3. **CHAIRPERSON'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairperson advised that a Member's Asset Review meeting was held on February 12th, where Councillors and officers discussed the management and income generation of the commercial portfolio. Councillors present expressed a desire for greater detail on Council-owned assets, and access to the GIS system. It was suggested an annual review meeting would help members understand ongoing projects and asset management, with discussions also covering asset sales and improved income generation.

4. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE 4 FEBRUARY 2025**

Regarding item 6 (Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget 2025 – 2026) of the previous minutes, under “Resolved item number 3”, Councillor Wallace asked for an update from the Cabinet Member regarding the points made.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 4 February 2025 be approved and adopted.

5. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Monica Gill addressed the committee regarding the formation of a Tenants and Residents Association. She explained the association aimed to provide a voice for residents and asked if councillors could publicise the group in their wards. She advised that the association consisted of 14 members, held regular meetings, and has seen attendance from contractors. Monica Gill advised that flyers providing contact information were being produced for distribution. The Chairperson believed that Councillors would be willing to share the flyers if provided.

Julian Perkins was invited to address the committee and expressed his concerns regarding the facilities at Market Lane Public Toilets. He stated that he had previously addressed the Cabinet in 2023 and was informed that £760,000 was being spent on the toilets. Mr. Perkins reported that the refurbishments were complete except the disabled entrance door, and only approximately £30,000 of the allocated funds had been used. He asked to know why so little was spent on the facilities. Councillor Brook thanked Julian Perkins for his contribution. The issues raised were discussed later in the meeting as part of agenda item 8.

Councillor Danny Lee addressed the committee regarding items: 6. Annual Community Safety Performance Update, 7. Development Delivery Plans - Central Winchester Regeneration and 8. Q3 Finance & Performance Monitoring and a summary of his contributions were captured within that agenda item.

Councillor Caroline Horrill addressed the committee regarding item 7. Development Delivery Plans - Central Winchester Regeneration and a summary of her contribution was captured within that agenda item.

6. **ANNUAL COMMUNITY SAFETY PERFORMANCE UPDATE**

Councillor Kathleen Becker, Cabinet Member for Community and Engagement introduced the report, ref SC095 which set out the Annual Community Safety Performance Update, ([available here](#)).

Councillor Becker explained that Winchester City Council was the responsible authority supporting the delivery of crime and disorder statutory duties by dedicating officer posts to the role and ensuring the Council's corporate priorities were delivered. She highlighted the report's significant successes, particularly in the night-time economy, anti-social behaviour, and grant funding applications. She mentioned the continuing focus on anti-social behaviour, working with young people including the Legacy project, and domestic violence, noting that while the data reflected women as victims, the partnership provided support for all victims of domestic violence and abuse.

Chief Inspector Korine Bishop addressed the Committee, outlining several key points which could be summarised as follows:

1. There had been a reduction in crime by 0.8% between April and Christmas, alongside a 20% increase in charges and summons. Out-of-court resolutions were up 2%, and victim satisfaction reached 68.2%, exceeding the 65% target.
2. Drug-related harm remained a top priority, with a specific focus on youth involvement in cannabis, vaping, and other drug sales. Operations have led to warrants, arrests, and interventions by the Youth Offending Team.
3. Rural crime was also prioritized, targeting commercial burglaries, plant and machinery theft, and motor vehicle theft.
4. The District was performing at the top of the force in formal action taken in the local area, with the force working with stores to report offences.
5. Formal action for shoplifting in the area had been seen for 48.8% of cases.
6. The team were working closely with community behaviour with monthly Offender Victim and Location (OVAL) meetings.
7. Chief Inspector Bishop sat on the board of directors for the Business Improvement District (BID), which allowed access to issues for businesses, and contact with universities and the council.
8. There had been an embedded officer within the prison in a bid to tackle organised crime.

Chief Inspector Bishop provided the committee with details relating to the following:

1. The "Let's Talk" scheme, which highlights top public concerns: speeding, fly-tipping, anti-social behaviour, road safety, and parking issues.
2. The Hants Snap and Hants Alert Schemes.
3. The new police response hub at Bishop's Waltham that provided 24/7 support to teams across the Winchester District.
4. An uplift in extra officers in Winchester with 12 students in the front line response team and 5 detectives.
5. She gave a summary of some local, high-profile cases.

Councillor Danny Lee addressed the committee and highlighted the following points. Councillor Lee expressed his gratitude to the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Constabulary, along with the Neighbourhood and Community Safety team, for their continued commitment to public safety. He hoped that the scrutiny process would offer greater clarity on his concerns relating to public safety and performance. These concerns were centred on the reported rise of crime data and statistical processes within the Winchester District and asked if such a breakdown could include rural statistics.

Councillor Lee then summarised his points regarding the future switch off of landlines and what provisions would be implemented to secure backup plans and communication, including considerations about power outages. A query was also raised regarding the extent to which major broadband providers were able to ensure the protection of vulnerable users. Councillor Lee asked whether it was

possible to secure fibre rollout plans, and emergency backup plans to ask to determine their inclusion into the 2025 to 2026 annual delivery plan.

The committee was asked to note and comment on the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) progress report and agree on any matters of significance.

The committee proceeded to ask questions and debate the report. In summary, the following matters were raised.

1. Clarification regarding the most effective method for residents to report criminal activity to the authorities.
2. A request for further information regarding the breakdown of activities in the rural as well as urban areas of the district.
3. Further information was sought regarding strategies for improving contact with police services, particularly where telecommunications are limited.
4. The necessity for the Community Safety Partnership to further engage partners to develop clear advice for communities.
5. A request was made to share details of communications provider rollouts, where appropriate.
6. A question was asked regarding the status and planning around broadband services for the area, as part of the upcoming rollout and for emergency backup plans for telecommunications during prolonged outages and/or battery failure.
7. Information was sought regarding any financial incentives or support available for the community.
8. A request for support to provide assistance with and report domestic violence, from a community perspective.
9. Further information was requested regarding the Yellow Door initiative and whether any funding incentives would help expand the project.
10. Consideration of resources allocated to Whiteley police units and support from the police force.
11. Further information was sought regarding clarity on how rural areas can benefit from police funding and programs.
12. How could incidents not classed as hate crimes that consume significant police resources be better handled?
13. It was asked if the number of reports had increased, was there more financial incentives to increase awareness and campaigns?
14. The relationship between drug use and rural locations.

These points were responded to by Chief Inspector Korine Bishop, Dawn Adey, Strategic Director, and Sandra Tuddenham, Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Manager accordingly.

RESOLVED:

The committee noted the report and agreed that:

1. Officers would contact the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) concerning the issues raised regarding residents' ability to contact the emergency services.
2. That a further breakdown of urban and rural crime statistics for the Winchester District be provided.
3. Officers to contact Stop Domestic Abuse to understand if further data was available regarding non-refuge numbers.
4. The Cabinet Member consider the committee's comments raised during the discussion of the item.

7. **DEVELOPMENT DELIVERY PLANS - CENTRAL WINCHESTER REGENERATION**

Councillor Martin Tod, Leader and Cabinet Member for Asset Management introduced the report CAB3484 which outlined proposals for the Development Delivery Plans - Central Winchester Regeneration ([available here](#)). The introduction encompassed the following points:

1. The Central Winchester Regeneration project was a vital opportunity to revitalise the city centre.
2. The project would deliver new homes, including affordable housing, alongside new employment and business opportunities.
3. Despite prevailing national financial constraints impacting similar regeneration schemes, the council had confidence in the viability of this project.
4. Jigsaw had been confirmed as the development partner, having been appointed in March 2023 and formalising the agreement in April 2024.
5. The cabinet would be requested to approve the development delivery plan, infrastructure delivery plan, public realm delivery plan, phase delivery plan, and the initial financial model.
6. The project aimed to establish the highest standards for the public realm, green and blue infrastructure, and transport infrastructure.
7. The footprint process would be implemented to comprehensively assess sustainability and social value throughout the planning process.
8. The report marked the next stage of the project, with a master plan anticipated later in the year, followed by a planning application expected in late 2026 or early 2027.

Councillor Danny Lee addressed the committee and welcomed the engagement in shaping the development brief. He acknowledged the development delivery plan's purpose in outlining the project's logistics. His concerns focused on the sustainability and long-term viability of the Central Winchester Regeneration project, particularly the need for a robust foundation to inform future planning. Councillor Lee welcomed the green-blue infrastructure strategy, highlighting its critical role given the environmental risks and Winchester's river setting. He asked about the strategy's completion timeline and its influence on the master plan. He also expressed surprise at the omission of the Manchester Ignition project, which offered innovative green financing solutions.

Councillor Caroline Horrill addressed the committee, raising questions for officers and the development team. Councillor Horrill asked about the developer's extended viability check and questioned the project's financial assumptions, including the land values. She also asked about bridging the funding gap from lost rental income and the success of the Kings Walk renovation. Councillor Horrill questioned the allocation of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding, the commitment to the supplementary planning document, and the lengthy design and application timelines. She also inquired about the interim bus hub, the micro-consolidation site, and the inclusion of council homes. Finally, She queried if the council had adequately maximised the potential benefits from the land and properties under its stewardship.

The committee was asked to provide feedback on the proposals outlined in the draft cabinet report CAB3484, scheduled for consideration by the cabinet on 13 March 2025.

The committee proceeded to ask questions and in summary, the following matters were raised:

1. An indication was sought regarding the anticipated commencement of physical development.
2. A request was made for project headlines to be published on the Council website.
3. Clarification was sought regarding the project's anticipated contribution to economic vibrancy.
4. A question was asked regarding the economic self-sufficiency of the proposed development.
5. The ownership of the development site was questioned, specifically in the event of Jigsaw withdrawing from the project, a further question was raised what would happen if it was decided the project was not viable.
6. Further information was sought regarding the Kings Walk development.
7. Several questions were asked regarding the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), including its use within the project, its allocation in rural areas, and the potential for increasing the overall CIL Budget.
8. A question was asked regarding the inclusion of council homes within the proposed development.
9. Further information was sought regarding the Bus Station Redevelopment, bus routes more generally, and National Express bus services.
10. A question was asked regarding Local Government Re-organisation and the opportunities and potential risks it might present for the project.
11. Further information was sought regarding the dynamics of footfall.
12. A question was asked regarding the Ignition Project in Manchester and whether there were lessons learned that could be of assistance.
13. Further information was sought regarding the Movement Strategy.

These points were addressed by Councillor Tod, Leader and Cabinet Member for Assets, Dawn Adey, Strategic Director, Ken Baikie, Director of Regeneration, Emma Taylor, Head of Programme: Regeneration, and Matt Woolgar, Jigsaw.

The committee agreed to move into an exempt session to consider the exempt appendix, during which further questions were raised regarding land values, project assumptions, and risks. The committee returned to the open session to debate the report further and to agree the following:

RESOLVED:

The committee noted the report and agreed that:

1. Officers consider providing a member briefing on the contents of the development agreement.
2. Officers to provide an update on the Council website following the public briefing, including key events and timescales.
3. The Cabinet Member consider the points made regarding increasing the wider City Council CIL budget.
4. The Cabinet Member discusses with Hampshire County Council potential avenues for enhancing highways investment relating to the project.
5. The Cabinet Member consider the committee's comments raised during the discussion of the item.

8. **Q3 FINANCE & PERFORMANCE MONITORING**

Councillor Martin Tod, Leader and Cabinet Member for Assets introduced the report, ref CAB3493, which set out the Q3 Finance & Performance Monitoring report ([available here](#)). Councillor Tod advised that the report highlighted the council's achievements in the past quarter and welcomed questions from the committee.

Councillor Danny Lee addressed the committee and raised concerns regarding the progress toward meeting the district's 2030 carbon-neutral target, questioning how risks to the Carbon Neutrality Action Plan would be addressed. He felt that there needed to be greater clarity in future reports concerning progress on climate emergency initiatives, waste management, and neutrality mitigation measures. He requested more information on the Winchester District Nature Improvement Plan, the local area energy plan, and the Central Winchester Regeneration. Finally, he questioned whether the anticipated increase in housing necessitated an adjustment to carbon delivery targets and sought clarity on the carbon impacts and costs throughout the supply chain.

The committee was asked to raise with the Deputy Leader or relevant Cabinet member any issues arising from the information in this report, ref CAB3493, which was to be presented to Cabinet on 13 March 2025, and to consider whether there were any items of significance to resolve or to be drawn to the attention of Cabinet.

The committee proceeded to ask questions and debate the report. In summary, the following matters were raised:

1. Clarification was requested on what was counted as the council's carbon emissions (page 420).
2. A question was raised concerning the district's carbon emissions, noting that the report stated carbon-neutral targets were a major risk but tracked as green and amber. It was also asked how the revised target of 520 kilotonnes of CO2 in 2030 aligned with additional housing.
3. Clarification was sought regarding the achievement of carbon neutrality, and if the only way to achieve this was through the decarbonisation of the energy grid.
4. In terms of the future of waste and recycling, it was asked if the council was aware of the requirement for businesses to recycle food waste and if this was something the council should be tracking through the BID.
5. On behalf of Councillor Power, a question was raised about why nutrient mitigation on page 425 of the papers was labelled as green.
6. Regarding the metric for homelessness, it was asked whether the increase should be a concern to the council.
7. Further information was sought regarding the KPIs used to demonstrate a vibrant economy and their adequacy.

These points were responded to by Dawn Adey, Strategic Director, Councillor Martin Tod, Leader and Cabinet Member for Assets, and Councillor Westwood, Cabinet Member for Housing accordingly.

RESOLVED:

The committee noted the report and agreed that:

1. Officers, in liaison with the Chairperson, arrange for a follow-up meeting with a small group of members to discuss existing and future KPIs used within the quarterly reports.
2. Officers, in liaison with the Chairperson, arrange a follow-up meeting with a small group of members regarding the issues raised in the meeting concerning public toilets.
3. Officers consider arranging a member briefing on Nutrient Neutrality to further understand the challenges and limitations surrounding this matter.

9. **TO NOTE THE LATEST FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS**
RESOLVED

1. That the April 2025 to June 2025 Forward Plan of Key Decisions be noted.

Chairperson

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