

Community Governance Review – Proposed Town Council for Winchester

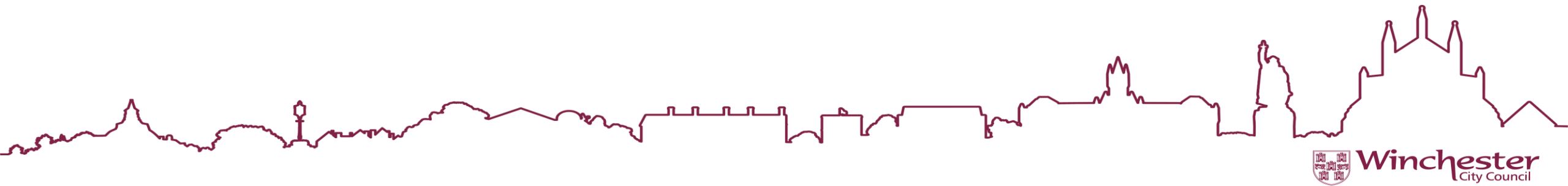
2025

Welcome



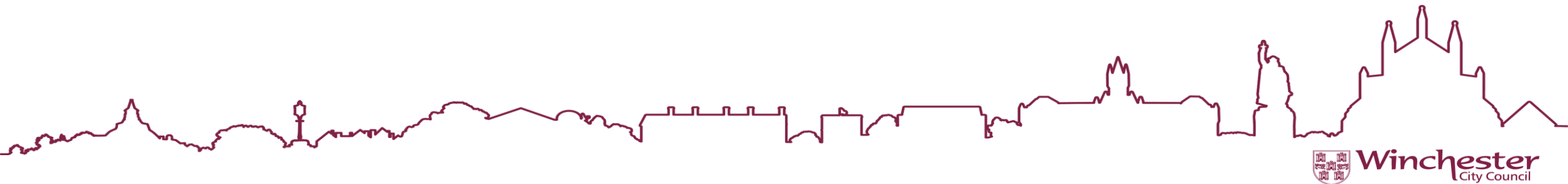
Winchester
City Council

What is a Community Governance Review?



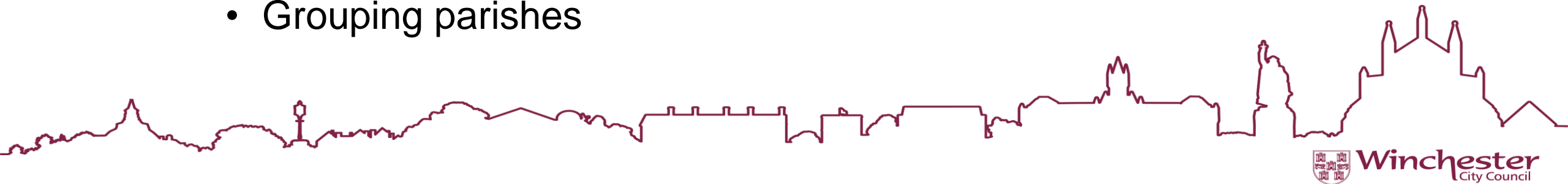
What is a Community Governance Review?

- A statutory process which enables a council to review all or part of its area in order to make changes to governance arrangements for existing town and parish councils and create new parishes.



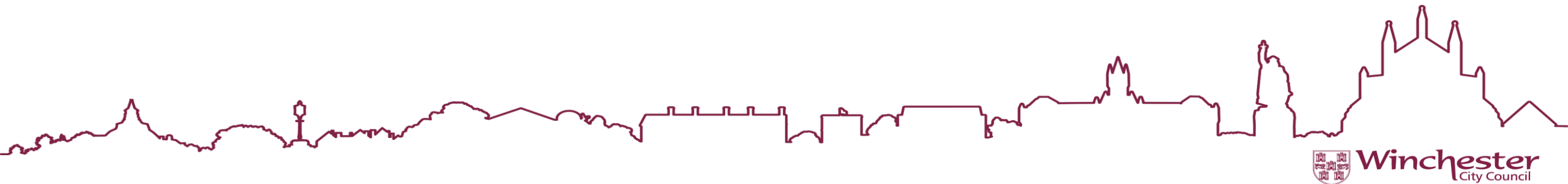
What can a CGR be used for?

- Creating, merging, altering or abolishing parishes
- The naming of parishes and the style of new parishes including the potential creation of town and parish councils
- Electoral arrangements for parishes (e.g. council size; number of councillors, and parish/ town warding)
- Grouping parishes

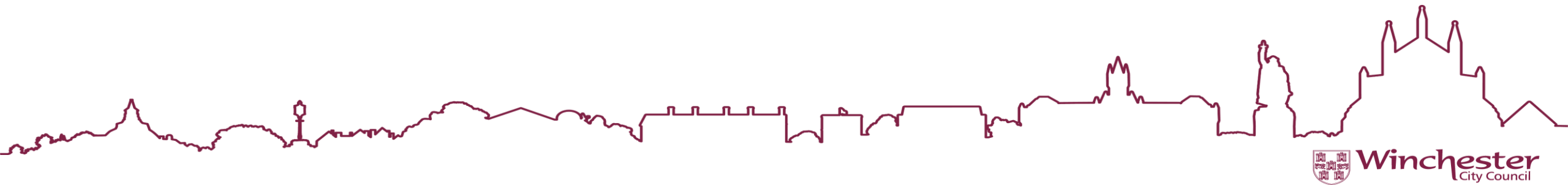


What can a CGR NOT be used for?

- Change the number of district or county councillors;
- Change district or county council ward boundaries;
- Change the amount of money that a parish/ town council raises through council tax (the 'precept');
- Change individual parish councillors

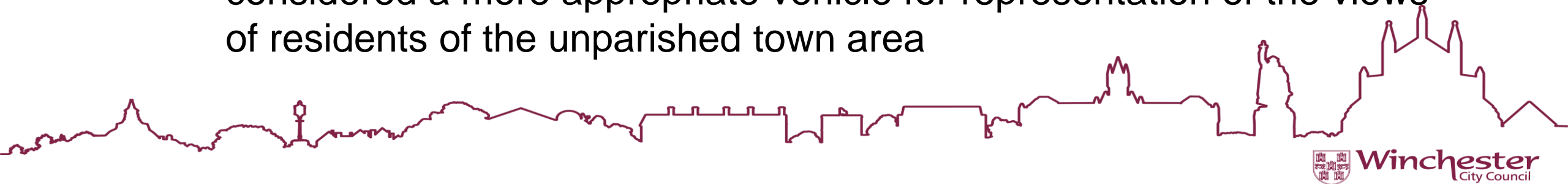


CGR & Winchester

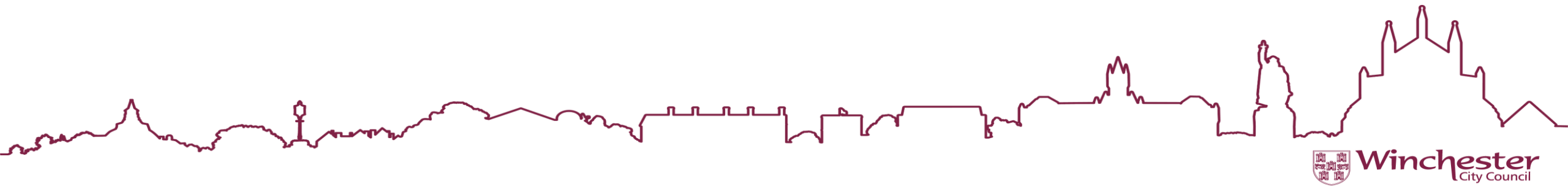


CGR & Winchester

- Undertaken previously at WCC (North Whiteley in 2023, West of Waterlooville and Littleton & Harestock in 2018)
- Most commonly used to establish new parish/ town councils in areas that were previously unparished or where there has been substantial population growth/ new development.
- The idea has been previously proposed for the urban area of Winchester but at the time the Winchester Town Forum was considered a more appropriate vehicle for representation of the views of residents of the unparished town area



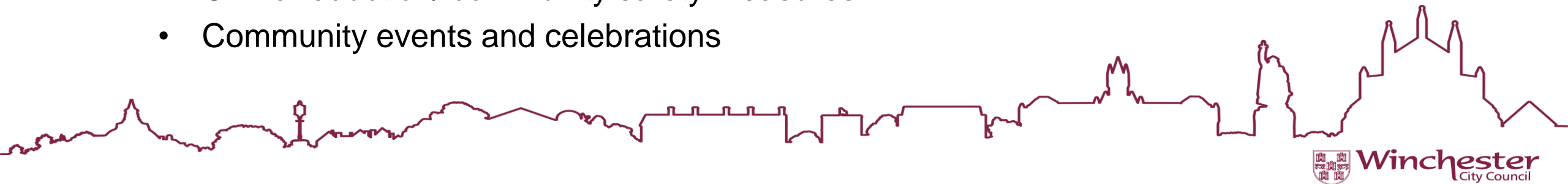
What services are provided?



Services provided by parish/ town councils

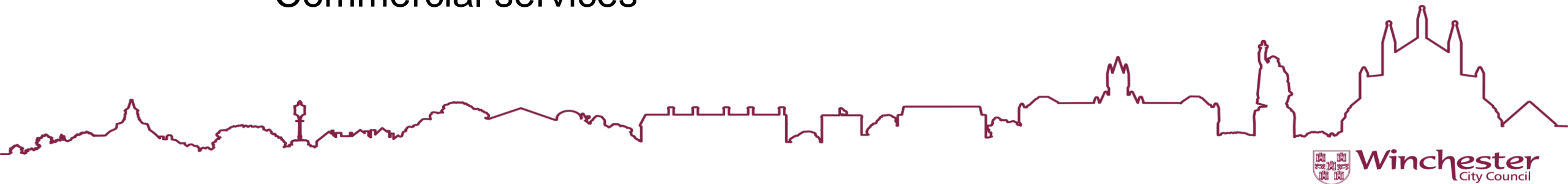
Wide ranging discretionary powers to complement/ enhance existing provision

- Allotments (the only statutory parish council service)
- Open spaces and public realm
- Public toilets
- Community centres and play areas
- Street cleaning and lighting
- Cemeteries
- Bus shelters/ community transport
- Crime reduction/ community safety measures
- Community events and celebrations



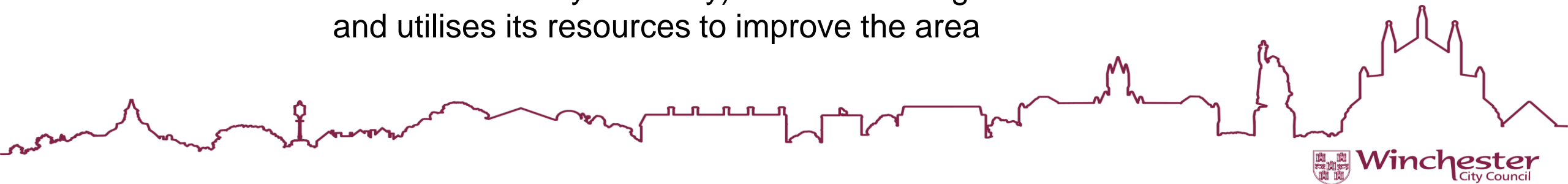
Services that are not provided by parish/ town councils

- Regulatory functions e.g. planning, licensing, environmental health
- On/ off street car parking (except with the consent of the County Council or Unitary Authority as Highways Authority for the area)
- Commercial services



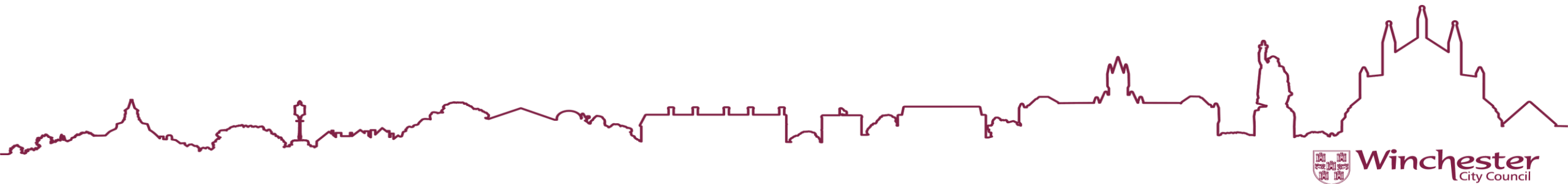
Town Council's influencing role

- Provide a focus for representing local issues and the area's identity
- Champion residents and local businesses and represent Winchester's interests
- Act as a statutory consultee, give its collective view on planning applications
- Make external funding bids
- Promote cultural events
- Not a replacement for the current Winchester City Council (or a successor unitary authority) but works alongside other authorities and utilises its resources to improve the area

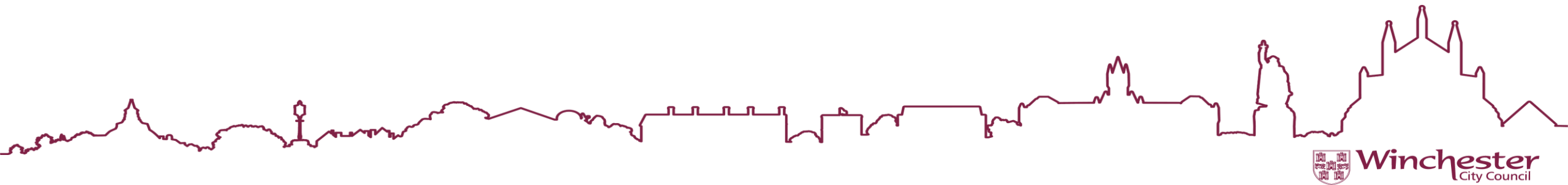


Why Now?

- Request received from Winchester Town Forum to consider.
- Winchester City Council area currently has 44 parish/ town councils and 4 parish meetings, but the built-up areas of Winchester are unrepresented at parish/ town council level
- Local Government Reorganisation will result in the formation of a larger potentially more remote unitary authority where democratic representation will potentially reduce from a 1:2500 councillor: population ratio to around 1:5000
- Parish/ town councils can be an effective way of safeguarding and promoting local services.

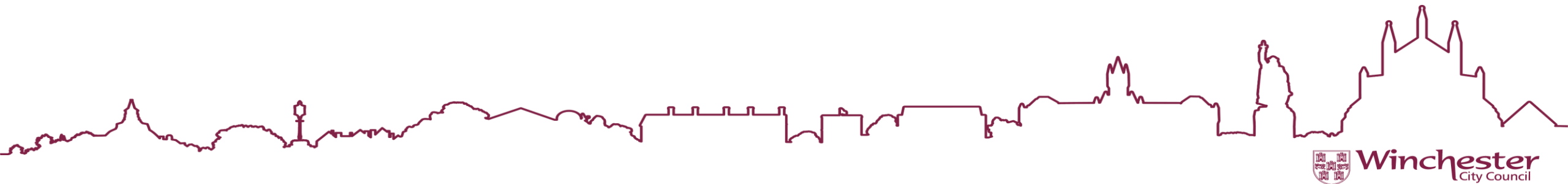


How will this be undertaken?



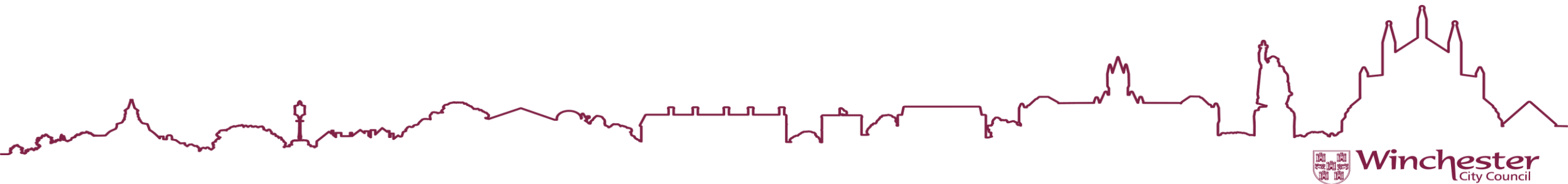
How is this undertaken (1)

- Pre-commencement engagement with potentially affected ward members/ existing parishes to inform terms of reference
- Establishment of project team consisting of officers from Legal, Democratic/ Electoral Services, Communications, Finance, Community Engagement, Policy, GIS
- Identification of assets/ service contracts affecting the area under review
- Prepare draft terms of reference for consideration/ approval by Licensing & Regulatory Committee



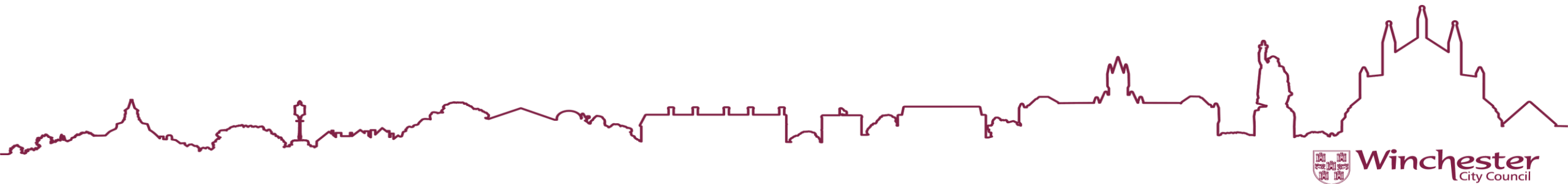
How is this undertaken (2)

- Establish member group to review/ consider consultation responses
- Initial resident consultation on draft Terms of Reference
- Consider submissions received and prepare draft recommendations
- Consultation on draft recommendations and final recommendations prepared



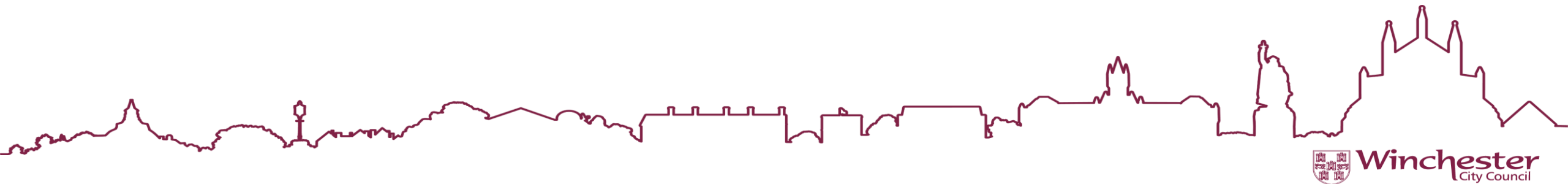
How is this undertaken (3)

- Consider submissions received and prepare final recommendations which include a schedule of assets to be transferred
- In more complex cases a third round of consultation may be required to refine recommendations
- Final recommendations considered by full Council meeting and recommendations published/ resolution to make a Reorganisation Order



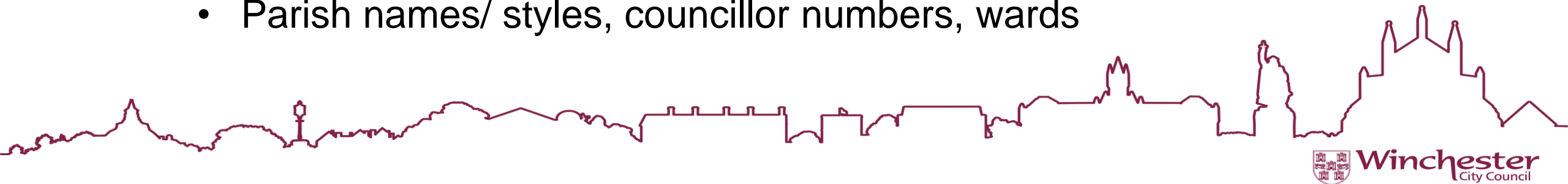
How is this undertaken (4)

- Reorganisation Order made by Council
- Precept charge determined by Council for new parish/ town council for 1st year of operation
- 1st April – new parish/ town council is established
- May – first town/ parish council elections take place
- New council is operational
- Assets and services transferred

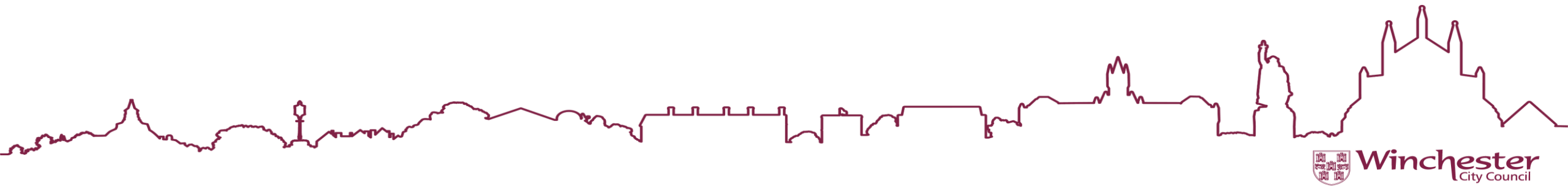


What is included in the Terms of Reference

- Context/ purpose and scope of the CGR
- Identify area under review
- Review timetable
- Plan for consultation and decision making
- Present structure of parishes/ governance arrangements and boundaries
- Parish names/ styles, councillor numbers, wards



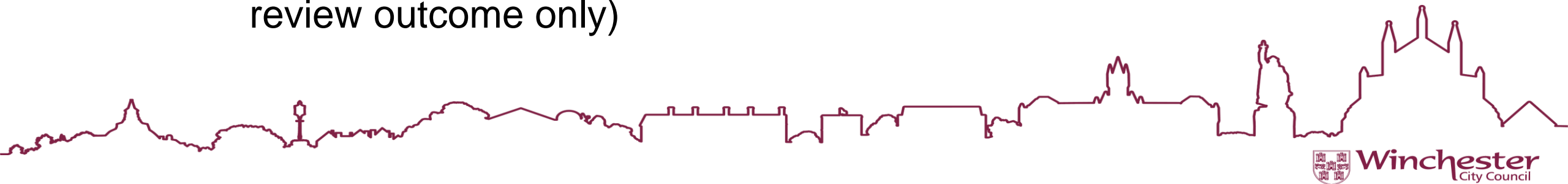
Consultation & Engagement



Consultation

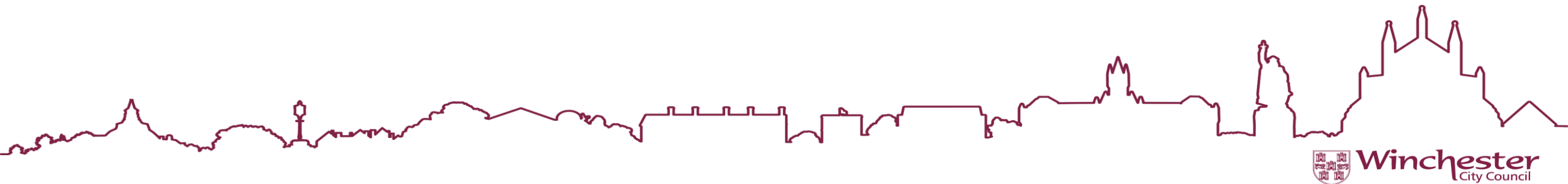
Who must be consulted?

- Local residents within the area under review
- County council (duty to inform review underway)
- Affected existing parish/ town councils
- Local businesses and residents' associations
- Other stakeholders e.g. local schools, health bodies, local voluntary organisations
- Local Government Boundary Commission for England (copy of review outcome only)



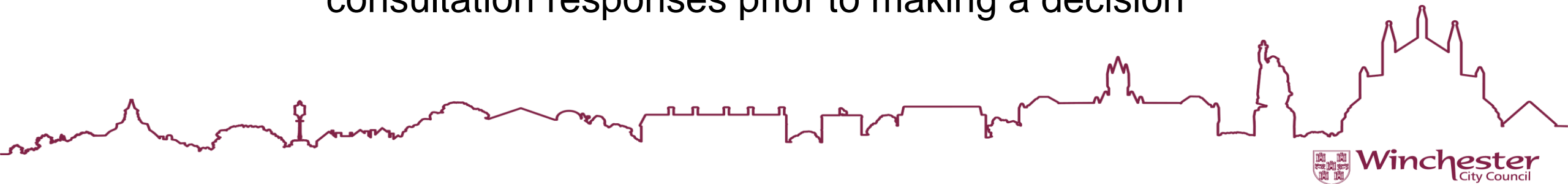
How will consultation be undertaken?

- No minimum period but will typically be for 6-12 weeks per occasion (LGA guidance)
- Press release
- Local media & social media
- Council & parish newsletters/ notice boards
- writing to stakeholder groups
- Public events
- WCC emailed resident newsletter



Engagement

- 4 Gunning Principles on consultation
- Consultation to be undertaken when proposals are at an early stage and capable of being influenced by responses
- Must be sufficient information to allow intelligent consideration
- Must be adequate time for consultees to consider and respond
- Conscientious consideration must be given to the consultation responses prior to making a decision



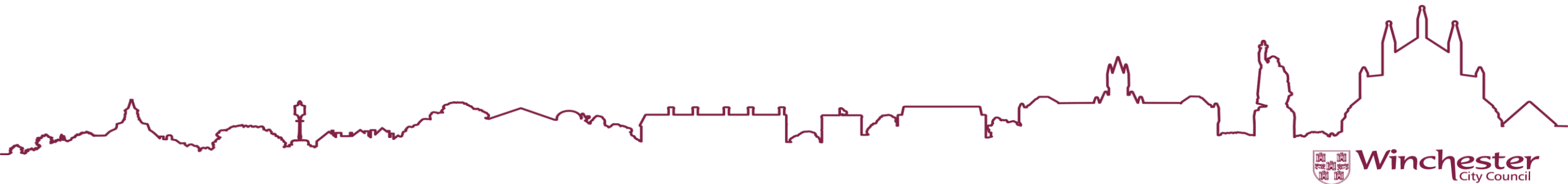
CGR Assessment

The council is required to ensure that community governance within the area under review will be:

- Reflective of the identities and interests of the community in that area, and;
- Is effective and convenient

In doing so the review is required to take into account:

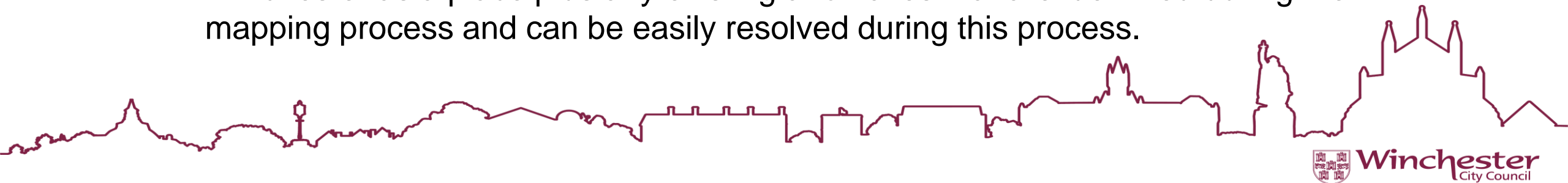
- The impact of community governance arrangements on community cohesion
- The size, population and boundaries of a local community or parish



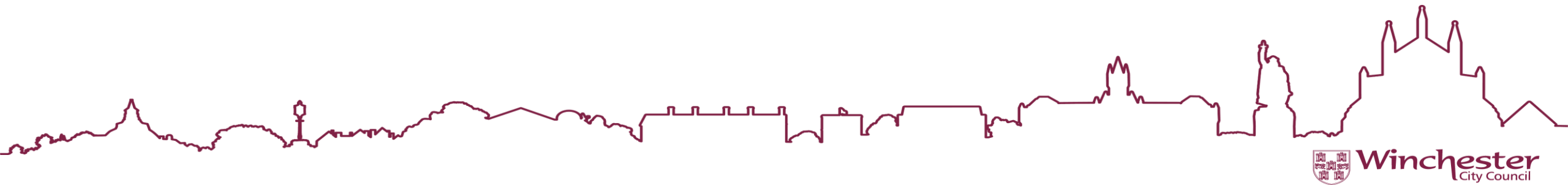
Which areas will be under review ?

Not yet determined but likely to include:

- The 5 WCC wards which comprise the Winchester Town Forum area (St Bartholomew, St Paul, St Barnabas, St Luke and St Michael) to include that part of St Barnabas ward that also forms part of Littleton and Harestock Parish Council's area
- Kings Barton area of Headbourne Worthy Parish Council's area
- Other areas that are built up, adjoin the WCC town wards and identify strongly with Winchester as a place plus any existing anomalies that are identified during the mapping process and can be easily resolved during this process.

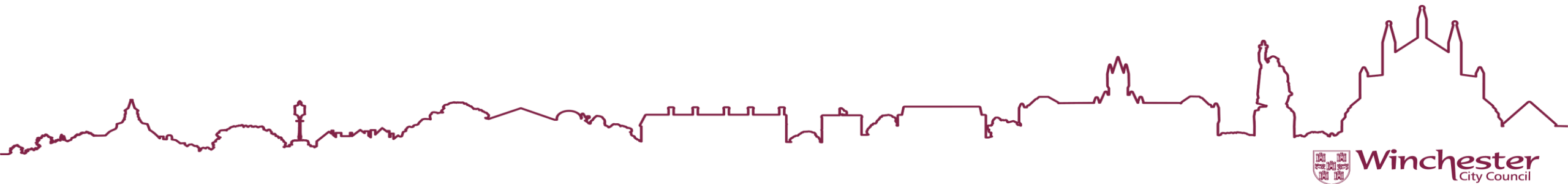


Finances and Funding



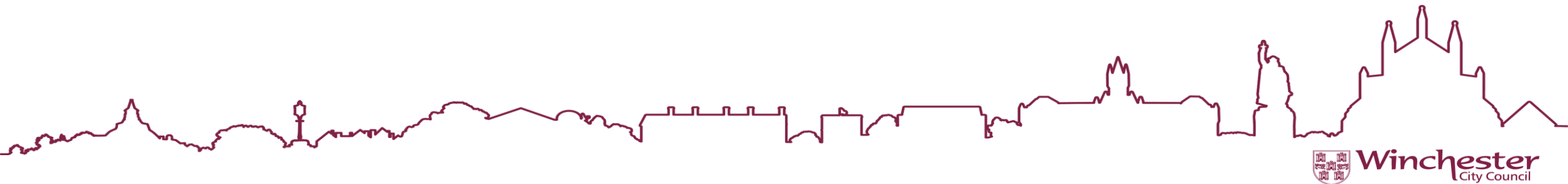
Funding of parish/ town councils

- Funded by a precept (additional charge) on council tax bill
- Vary greatly depending on services being provided e.g. range from circa £50 per annum (based on Band D) for a very small parish with very few assets/ services to circa £400 per annum for a large city council with a wide range of assets and services



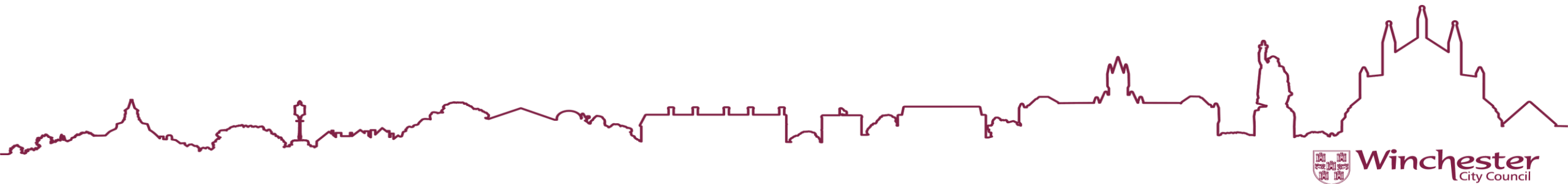
Asset/ Service Transfer

- Should be services lead e.g. asset reasonably required to deliver a particular service
- Must be rational, follow procedural requirements and be for proper purpose
- Can be undertaken after creation of new councils on request

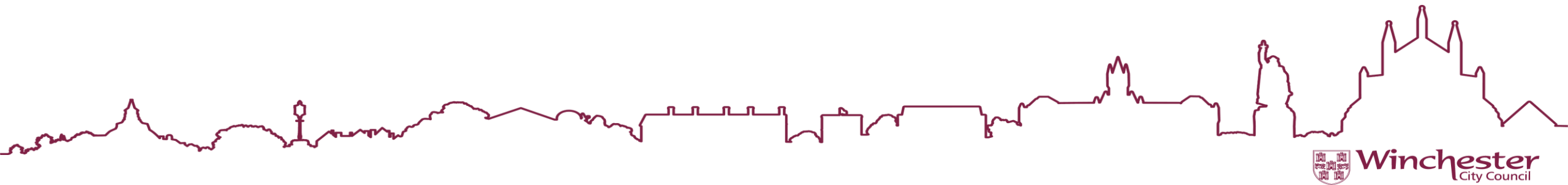


Finances/ Precept

- Funded by a precept (additional charge) on council tax bill
- WTF currently funded by additional payment circa £90 per annum for Band D
- Calculated based on previous years cost plus a forecast uplift
- Initial precept collected by WCC to fund first year of services in same way as current WTF payment

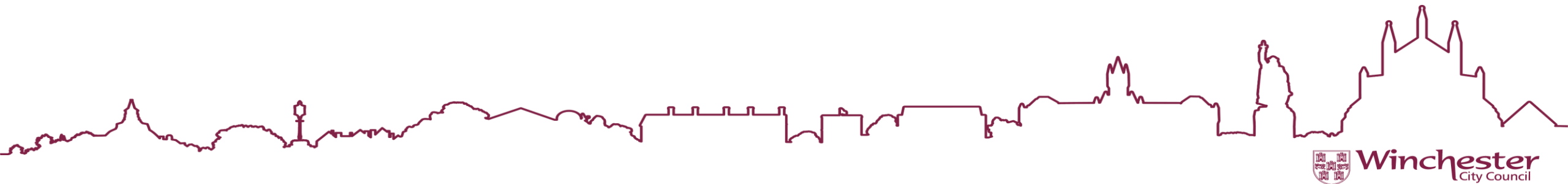


Winchester City Status / Mayoralty and Coat of Arms



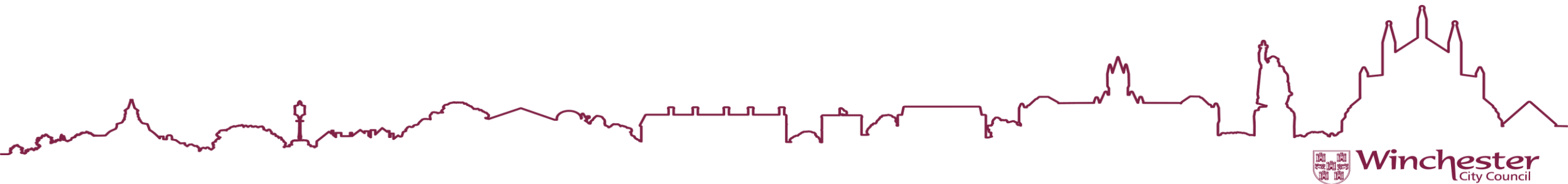
Winchester City Status / Mayoralty and Coat of Arms

- Imperative that Winchester preserves its ancient city status, mayoralty and coat of arms
- The Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) process poses a potential risk to this, and Rochester managed to lose its city status in 1998 as a result of LGR in Kent and has battled unsuccessfully since to restore it.
- Logical to try and transfer the City status, mayoralty & coat of arms to a new town council rather than a unitary authority covering a far wider area.
- This is an arcane process that involves potentially 3 petitions to the King and assistance of the York Herald at the College of Arms.

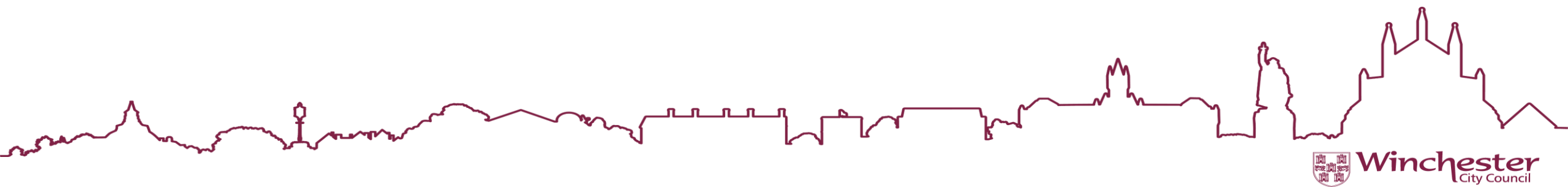


Winchester City Status / Mayoralty and Coat of Arms (2)

- This cannot be undertaken until a new town council is created and the process will be commenced in April 2027 when the new Town council is established to allow time for this to take place prior to completion of LGR
- The new town council will be established as a parish council but can style itself as a town council by a decision at its first meeting. Once the city status is transferred by Royal Charter it can resolve to style itself a 'city council'
- Further advice still required/ being sought on novel civic/ heraldic issues

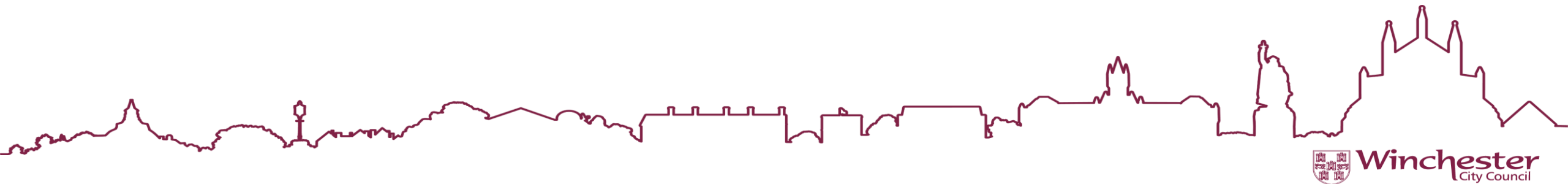


And Finally....



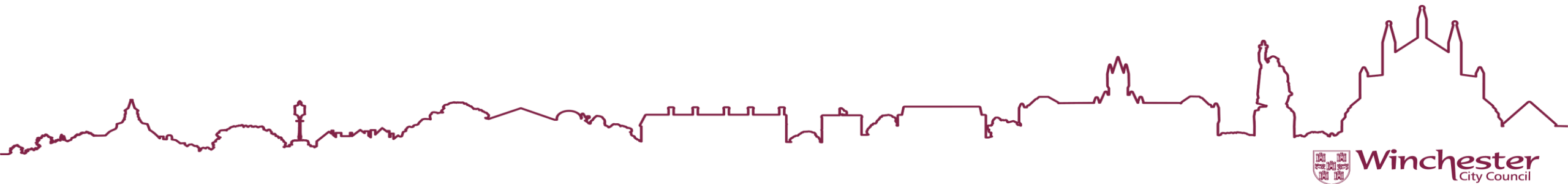
Next Steps

- Early engagement
- Timetable for implementation
- Assets and contracts scoping
- Project team
- Draft terms of reference – Licensing & Regulatory Committee
- Member task and finish group



Action Plan

- May/ June 2025 - Establish officer project group
- June 2025 – briefing for Winchester Town Forum
- June 2025 – Licensing & Regulatory Committee/ establish member task and finish group
- June 2025 - briefing for potentially affected parishes
- September 2025 - Consideration of draft terms of reference by Licensing & Regulatory Committee
- September to November – First round of public consultation



Questions and close

