

<u>Agenda Item Resolution</u>	<u>Update</u>
17-Sep-24	
WINCHESTER DISTRICT ECONOMY REVIEW	
1. That the committee noted the contents of the Winchester District Economy Review presentation.	
2. That the committee provided comments on the presentation as requested.	
3. The committee agreed to ask the Cabinet Member to consider the following:	
a) To continue supporting work on skills development, particularly in retrofitting and digital support.	<p>Since the September meeting of the Economy and Housing Committee the Economy Team has delivered three major skills projects which have been funded by the government's UKSP programme:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Retrofit skills programme which was delivered in partnership with Hampshire County Council and involved a marketing campaign, a retrofit conference and encouraging take up and paying for retrofit skills training. 187 learners completed skills training including Retrofit levels one and two courses. 2) Digital skills programme resulted in 230 residents engaged in essential digital skills programme through workshops or one to one sessions held throughout the Winchester district. 3) Business Growth Factory – 61 businesses supported with either commercialisation, incubation and scale up, acceleration and digital productivity programme or net zero support. <p>The team have also secured employment and skills plans capturing training and employment opportunities for local people for the following developments:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Road Swanmore and North Whiteley (Persimmon Homes) • Blackwood holidays Micheldever (Forest Holidays) • Care Home Queens Head Colden Common (Feltham Construction Ltd) • Locks Farm Solar Bishop's Waltham (Next Energy) <p>Worked with the Department of Work and Pensions to support their jobs and employment fair held on 22 May 2025 and to ensure the event helped and was attended by our Ukrainian guests.</p>
<p>b) To ensure that rural areas remain a focus, providing more detail and understanding of how businesses in these areas are operating and identifying additional areas of support they may need.</p>	<p>Rural Businesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winchester City Council is engaging with rural SMEs, farmers and landowners within the district to better understand their needs, such as digital infrastructure support, energy saving initiatives and sustainability opportunities as well as wider general discussion on economic growth. These groups and networks include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Winchester Downs Cluster Group ○ Winchester to the River Test Cluster Group <p>In addition, meetings with the Countryside Alliance and the National Farmers Union, who represent the views of many rural farm businesses and landowners, as well as one to one engagement with farm businesses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We respond to enquiries and signpost to support and funding on matters that include energy saving heat pumps, EV charging points and insulation on commercial and industrial properties

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Working with rural businesses to secure funding for feasibility of cooperative farming business opportunity to increase economic development and skills in the rural economy• Rural England Prosperity Funding (REPF) impact: Winchester City Council assessed over 60 applications received through three competitive funding rounds and made awards of up to £50,000. 18 businesses received REPF funding. 12 of these were fully funded by the REPF (to a total of £323,260). A further six were part-funded by REPF and part-funded by UKSPF; The REPF element for these totalled £194,161.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Four of these projects were wholly or partially for solar panelling○ Three were wholly or partially for EV chargers○ Five were for material purchases to assist with growing the business:-<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ a large roaster for a coffee producer○ a kiln and wheel for a ceramicist,○ a dust extractor for a stonemason○ an electric tuk tuk for a coffee vendor○ a tractor and attachment for a landscape gardener○ Three were for refurbishment:-<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Two pubs improved their kitchens, bathrooms and bedrooms○ One vineyard improves its access and insulation |
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Three were fore new build/conversion:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A new business unity ○ A balcony out door space/fire exit for a day nursery ○ Two new attractions for Marwell <p>In addition to the £517,421 invested in these projects by the REPF, the businesses themselves committed a further £501,675.</p>
c) To continue and expand work in the solar energy sector, working with businesses on commercial implementation, conversion from gas, and assessments related to these initiatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings with 52 commercial and industrial businesses in 2025 so far to promote the Solar for Business programme through business intermediary groups and visits • A business case for a solar PV Power Purchase Agreement on a rural business has been approved. This is based on the successful Marwell and Biffa model. Progress has been made on carrying out financial modelling of solar pv opportunities at this site. • Five community building and five commercial building solar panelling projects were funded through the UKSP and REPF programme, together with an advisory project run by Winchester Action on Climate Crisis. • At Riversdown House language school the installation of solar panels to the "Chicken Shed is an example of a commercial solar project funded through REPF. Since the installation, the Chicken Shed has become 43% self-sufficient on average and in the summer the building should be 100% self-sufficient with the capacity to sell back electricity to the grid. • Micheldever Village Store – installation of seven solar panels and a new refrigeration unit to achieve carbon savings.

	<p>Rushmere farm solar project funded through a council Green Business Grant has allowed them to increase in product volume by 75% while becoming carbon neutral and even put electricity back into the grid. It is estimated that the panels will offset a minimum of 400 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions (tCO₂e) over their lifetime.</p>
<p>d) To prioritise efforts that align with the 'Greener Faster' initiative, recognising its importance in improving the district's performance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The low carbon assessment programme has delivered 10 low carbon audits to business premises across the Winchester district. If all actions are completed this would result in lifetime carbon savings of 41,750 kWh. • The council's green business grants have funded five businesses across the district with projects to reduce energy consumption or increase renewable energy generation • Our management of the government's UK Shared Prosperity and Rural England Prosperity funding programme from 2022 to 2025 have resulted in 26 carbon reducing projects being delivered across the Winchester district
<p>e) To support using the proposed priorities to target and focus the council's approach to achieving the best economic outcomes for the district.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>f) To continue with the 'business-as-usual' approach in delivering green economic growth through the council's work.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We have an agreed and published service plan with quarterly performance reporting of the KPIs and activity to deliver the Council Plan priorities. ○ An internal programme board meets to review progress against the Action Plan ○ We publish a quarterly Economic Bulletin

HOUSING, REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE CONTRACT PROCUREMENT	
1. That the committee noted the contents of the presentation on the Housing, Repairs and Maintenance Contract Procurement.	
2. The committee agreed to ask the Cabinet Member to consider the following:	
a) To ensure that clear and detailed KPIs were developed and included in the report to Cabinet, as they were essential for guaranteeing the performance of the contract.	There have been several contextual changes since the approach to the procurement of the repairs and maintenance contract of the Council's housing stock was presented at committee in September 2024. A review of the approach to achieve efficiency and enhanced customer satisfaction, the local government reorganisation proposals and the regulatory judgement made by the social housing regulator means a revised approach was required as recommended in Cabinet Report (CAB3506) taken to Cabinet Committee and approved on 21 May 2025.
b) To focus on defining and maximising the social value aspects within the contract, acknowledging that this significant contract presented an opportunity to improve the social aspects of the local communities.	A above comment.
c) To consider the comments provided by the committee.	
COUNCIL PLAN 2025-30 (PRESENTATION)	
That the Committee requested that the cabinet member consider the committee's comments raised during the discussion of the item.	Noted. The Council Plan was subsequently agreed by Full Council on the 15th January, 2025.

<u>26-Nov-24</u>	
DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS (DFG): POLICY REVIEW	
1. The committee noted that a change to the policy regarding means-testing was appropriate to ensure that the funding was targeted to those most in need.	A revised policy will be presented at Cabinet Committee Housing on 4 th November 2025. The team are now means testing all applicants (even though not applying it) to understand the impact of any policy change regarding means testing.
2. The committee noted that option three had the potential downside of providing support to those who could contribute a significant amount themselves whilst option two, allowed "boundary" cases to be considered and so enabled funds to be used more beneficially.	A revised policy will be presented at Cabinet Committee Housing on 4 th November 2025.
3. The committee agreed to ask the Cabinet Member to consider the points raised during its discussion.	The points will be considered when developing the new revised policy that will be presented at Cabinet Committee Housing on 4 th November 2025.
HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUSINESS PLAN & BUDGET OPTIONS	
1. The committee noted the ongoing efforts to identify additional savings opportunities.	
2. The committee wished to highlight the importance of policy reviews, particularly in areas such as the repairs recharge policy, voids, and the repair process review.	Noted
3. The committee was reassured to note that officers were also considering other ways to add value, for example, addressing damp and mould issues as a non-financial benefit of the proposed changes.	Noted
4. That the Cabinet Member consider the committee's comments raised during the discussion of the item.	

<u>11-Feb-25</u>	
SUMMARY OF THE UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND AND RURAL ENGLAND FUND PROGRAMMES 2022-2025	
1. That the committee noted the concerns regarding the equitable distribution of funding across wards, particularly between rural and urban areas.	Noted and considered as part of the application assessment process. The spread of funding across the district to date is demonstrated in the UKSPF Board meeting slides April 2025 PowerPoint presentation which can be downloaded from the useful documents section on this web page: UK Shared and Rural England Prosperity Funds - Winchester City Council
2. That members would communicate with their respective wards, encouraging parishes and organisations to apply for grants in the upcoming year.	All funding programme opportunities have been listed in the weekly DSU to all Councillors for their onward communications as well as directly with Parish Clerks and via Parish Connect.
3. That the Cabinet Member consider whether maintaining some level of contribution from businesses, as beneficiaries of the funding, should be pursued, acknowledging the reduction in match funding requirements to encourage business engagement.	Noted – The match funding has been retained for businesses in the 2025/26 round of applications.
4. That officers explore avenues to encourage more community involvement and funding applications, alongside business-related projects.	Noted - promotion has taken place via community groups and through our Community team newsletters has been undertaken.
5. That officers continue to emphasise learning from both successful and unsuccessful projects, maintaining dialogue and providing feedback to applicants to ensure a steady stream of potential projects for the future.	Noted – SPF Programme Officer contract extended to enable continued provision of support, advice and feedback to applicants and award recipients.
6. That the cabinet member considers the committee's comments raised during the discussion of the item.	Noted.

HOUSING REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE POLICIES	
1. That the committee thanked officers for bringing the new policies together, noting that they provide clarity on the responsibilities of both tenants and the council.	
2. The committee raised the importance of a robust appeals process, particularly for the recharge policy, anticipating potential challenges from tenants due to its new implementation.	An appeals process has been added to the Recharge Policy it is not relevant to add for other policies as service disputes can be addressed through the Corporate Complaints Process.
3. That the committee welcomed the regular review of the policies and suggested stating the implementation date and review date on the policy itself.	Noted and added to each policy.
4. That the committee requested a review of the policies at this committee in one year, following implementation, to assess the actual situation.	Noted and policies will be brought to committee on or near the anniversary of the implementation date of July 25.
5. That the cabinet member considers the committee's comments raised during the discussion of the item.	