

WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

# COUNCIL PLAN

2025 - 2030



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# WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL YOUR CABINET



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LEADER & CABINET MEMBER  
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DEPUTY LEADER & CABINET  
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CABINET MEMBER FOR  
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Cllr Kathleen Becker

CABINET MEMBER FOR  
COMMUNITY & ENGAGEMENT



Cllr Jackie Porter

CABINET MEMBER FOR PLACE &  
THE LOCAL PLAN



Cllr Chris Westwood

CABINET MEMBER FOR  
HOUSING

# WINCHESTER IN FIGURES



127,500  
population



64.4%  
of residents aged  
16-64 qualified to  
NVQ4 and above



56,322  
homes



78.0%  
of residents aged  
16 - 64 in  
employment



76%  
reduction in  
WCC carbon  
Scope 1 & 2 to 23/24



Over  
5,000  
council houses



District covers  
250  
square miles



2,586  
planning applications  
determined for  
calendar year 2024



8,165  
businesses



2  
universities located  
in the city



80,000  
bins emptied  
each week



2,266  
listed buildings

# The Challenges we face

Your council is working hard to continue to deliver the support that residents need while making sure that we invest in our district and our services to ensure we keep things working well.

We're taking a hard look at how we will manage the impact of rising interest rates and high inflation. Our efforts are, as ever, all about focusing on what we can do to support our community, while being realistic about what we can and cannot achieve in the medium term.

This plan sets out the challenges faced by the Winchester district, how we will respond to them and the principles which underpin our work.

## THE MAIN CHALLENGES ARE:



Fast-track programme for the delivery of the Devolution Priority Programme



Preparation for Local Government Reorganisation



The climate emergency and the pressing need to reduce the Winchester district's carbon footprint



Economic uncertainty and the rise in the cost of living



Continuing to improve our services while balancing a reduced council budget



The high costs of buying and renting a home



Poor air quality in parts of the district



Inequality within our district and its effects on mental and physical wellbeing



Poor provision of public transport and safe walking and cycling routes across the district



Responding to the diverse experiences, needs and views of everyone in our community, and making sure all voices are heard

# Our financial resources

The council spends over **£42m** of revenue expenditure on delivering services to all residents and businesses in the district, funded by £24m from Council Tax, business rates and other Government funding, and £18m from income including fees and charges.

In addition, we have a separate Housing Revenue Account, delivering a further £30m of revenue expenditure on housing services to council tenants and leaseholders, funded from housing rents and service charges.

The chart below shows how the council spends it's money.



SERVICE	PERCENTAGE	AMOUNT
LANDLORD HOUSING SERVICES	<b>51%</b>	£29,481,765
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES (INCL. WASTE COLLECTION)	<b>12%</b>	£6,749,616
CORPORATE SERVICES	<b>11%</b>	£6,261,815
COMMUNITY HOUSING SERVICES	<b>7%</b>	£3,945,104
STREET CLEANSING AND GROUNDS MAINTENANCE	<b>6%</b>	£3,174,231
PLANNING SERVICES	<b>4%</b>	£2,535,638
COMMUNITY SAFETY & DEVELOPMENT	<b>3%</b>	£1,555,304
LOCAL TAX COLLECTION	<b>3%</b>	£1,512,936
REGULATORY SERVICES & LICENSING	<b>2%</b>	£1,115,908
TOURISM, CULTURE & HERITAGE	<b>2%</b>	£1,028,527
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	<b>1%</b>	£332,561

Government funding, notably business rates and new homes bonus, is expected to fall significantly over the next few years. This has been extensively reported and resulted in the formation of a Transformation Challenge programme which has already achieved notable budget savings. The Medium Term

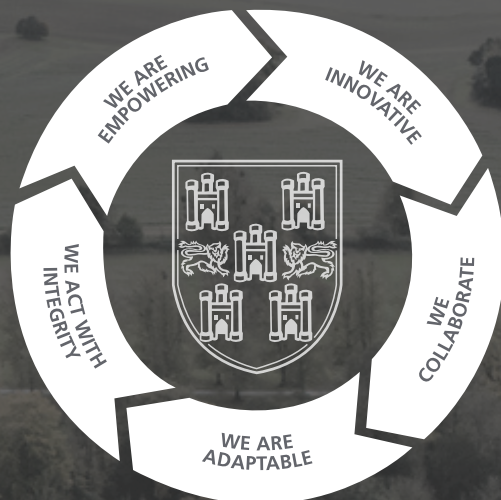
Financial Strategy highlights increasing deficits from 2027/28 and work is underway through the Transformation Challenge programme to work out exactly how we address this, focusing on the best use of assets, income generation and transforming services to reduce overall operating costs.

# OUR VISION

We will make a **real difference** to the lives of our residents, the **strength** of our business and the **quality** of our environment.

We will **listen** and **work** alongside the people and businesses of Winchester district in tackling the challenges we face.

# OUR VALUES





# Your Council Plan

2025 - 2030

This Council Plan is a high-level document covering the period 2025 to 2030. It sets out what the council wants to achieve and informs other strategies and plans including the Local Plan and individual service plans.

Tackling the climate emergency is the overarching priority for the council and will be at the heart of everything we do.

## Our Priorities:



# Greener, Faster

The climate emergency is the biggest challenge we face now and in the future. Winchester needs to do its part in addressing this crisis so that we can leave our district in better shape for our children and grandchildren.

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## What we want to achieve



The Winchester district to be carbon neutral by 2030



Cleaner air than national targets



Reversing the long-term decline in nature and biodiversity



Better protection against extreme climate events



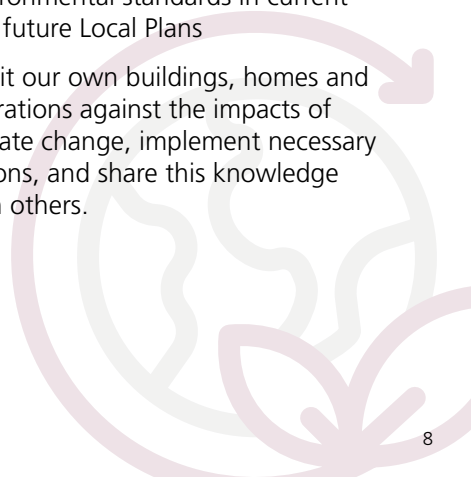
Reduced waste and increased recycling, exceeding national targets



Increased proportion of journeys by public transport, foot or bike

# How we will achieve this

- Work with and enable businesses, organisations and residents to deliver net zero guided by the Carbon Neutrality Roadmap for the district. Key elements include:
  - Local Area Energy Plan
  - Energy efficiency measures in homes and commercial buildings
  - Utility scale renewable energy
  - Carbon sequestration through nature-based solutions
  - Further expansion of EV charging
- Protect our natural environment and tackle the ongoing nature emergency by:
  - Building on the Biodiversity Action Plan to create a strategic approach to nature improvement across the whole district
  - Working with partners to support delivery of Hampshire's Local Nature Recovery Strategy
  - Using current and future Local Plans to maintain demanding standards for biodiversity and the natural environment
- Cut pollution in our district's rivers, chalk streams and watercourses by
  - Maintaining and enforcing robust planning policies in current and future Local Plans that eliminate the risks of pollution from new developments and reduce flood risk
- Upgrading our own wastewater treatment works
- Working with other authorities and private operators to secure the necessary upgrades to public and private sewage and water treatment plants
- Supporting citizen science and volunteer groups
- Work with Hampshire County Council to deliver the City of Winchester Movement Strategy and significant improvements to walking, cycling and bus provision in Winchester, our market towns and rural areas.
- Further decarbonise our own buildings, vehicles and operations – including, as far as achievable, our indirect emissions
- Increase what can be recycled, support reuse, and help residents and businesses prevent and reduce waste
- Deliver the Air Quality Strategy and Action Plan
- Embed the strongest achievable environmental standards in current and future Local Plans
- Audit our own buildings, homes and operations against the impacts of climate change, implement necessary actions, and share this knowledge with others.



# Healthy Communities

We will give our residents the chance to improve their physical and mental health and encourage community involvement and well-being throughout the district. Our goal is to create strong, healthy communities where our most vulnerable residents feel safe, supported, and can easily access the services they need.

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## What we want to achieve



Support for those most affected by the increased cost of living



Improved health and wellbeing in our most deprived communities



Increasing participation in physical activity for all ages and abilities, including active travel



Access to attractive and well-maintained public facilities, green and natural spaces with space to play and gather for all ages



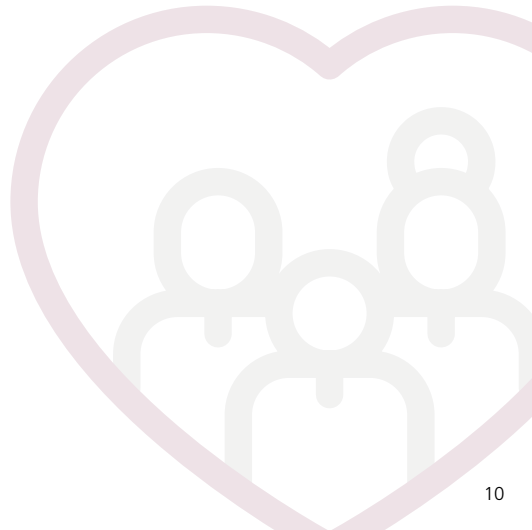
Strong health and community infrastructure across the district



Thriving local voluntary, and community sector – tackling isolation, building community cohesion and supporting those in need

# How we will achieve this

- Targeted cost of living support programme, directly and via the voluntary sector and local charities, including Council Tax hardship grants
- Close working with the police and other partners to tackle anti-social behaviour and domestic abuse
- Community Action Programmes for our most deprived areas and communities, co-produced with local people and including a review of the social determinants of health (SDH).
- District Community Facilities Review to enable targeted support (where needed), in partnership with parishes and other providers
- Updated Sports Provision Strategy, incorporating growth sports that support greater inclusion and new participation, to unlock investment in local facilities
- Continued investment in our leisure centres, sports grounds, parks and play areas
- Work with the NHS to protect local health provision and encourage increased investment across primary and secondary care
- Continued support for the City of Sanctuary movement and for refugees to our district
- In every community across the district, use Local Plan policies and other measures to support healthy lifestyles in healthy places:
  - Great air quality, access to outdoor recreation and the natural environment
  - Walking, cycling and active transport
  - Sustainable neighbourhoods with strong community infrastructure, blue/green infrastructure and employment
  - Accessible to all, especially those with physical or mental disabilities
- New grounds and street care contract, supporting active travel, access and use of open spaces, sports grounds and play areas, clean and attractive centres and improved biodiversity



# Thriving Places

We will provide reliable, good-value services that improve over time to meet the changing needs of everyone in our community – including residents, tenants, visitors, businesses, and charities. Our services will be available to everyone, no matter their situation. We will make sure all our residents can share their opinions and understand how decisions are made by the council.

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## What we want to achieve



Strong, sustainable business growth



More young people living and working in the district



Strong footfall in all our centres with lower than regional vacancy rates



Attractive, clean public spaces and facilities



Less fly-tipping and graffiti



Improved facilities within 20 minutes of people's homes



Increased investment in our district



Full gigabit broadband and mobile coverage by 2030

## How we will achieve this

- Work with partners to implement our Green Economic Development Strategy. Key elements include:
  - Increasing solar PV installation on large commercial and industrial buildings
  - Deliver a Digital Growth Factory for SMEs
  - Micro-consolidation trial to support 'last mile', 'first mile' and 'only mile' deliveries
  - Implementing the district-wide Cultural Strategy 2024-30
- Work to secure investment via the Hampshire Prosperity Partnership, any future Combined or Mayoral Authority, and other public and private sector partners to:
  - Regenerate our run-down areas, especially the Central Winchester Regeneration area
  - Support new businesses and create new jobs
  - Strengthen public transport
  - Improve our energy infrastructure
  - Fix our digital connectivity
- Work with further and higher education, alongside local businesses, to support skills and enable research and knowledge transfer
- Revitalise our street markets and support local festivals
- Invest in cleaning our city and market town centres, alongside improved management of commercial waste
- Work with partners to promote and develop our unique cultural, heritage and natural environment assets across the district
- Prosecute fly-tippers and clear fly-tipping faster
- Use Local Plan policies to support:
  - Sustained and improved facilities in local centres that reduce the need for travel
  - New business needs and opportunities, including agriculture and other rural businesses, the cultural, visitor and tourist economy, food/drink, creative, professional and education sectors

# Good Homes for All

We recognise that housing in the Winchester district is expensive, especially for families and young people. We will continue to provide the right mix of homes for all, including young people and key workers; we will also make sure all council homes are decent, safe, energy-efficient, and resilient to climate change, while working towards decarbonising district homes in line with our net zero goal.

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## What we want to achieve



Continue to increase the number of affordable homes across the district, including our 2023 commitment to deliver 1,000 more council homes by 2032



Ensure all council homes are decent, safe, energy efficient and resilient to the effects of climate change



Every homeless person to secure a permanent home



Decarbonisation of district homes, consistent with our net zero goal



Policy-led planning to deliver NPPF objectives without 'planning by appeal', ensuring the right mix of homes for all, including young people and key workers



## How we will achieve this

- Buying homes as well as building homes, in sustainable locations with sufficient local affordable housing demand
- Ensure a Local Plan remains in place for the district – consistent with NPPF objectives – and ensuring a minimum requirement of affordable homes across the district:
  - Successful implementation and adoption of 2024 Local Plan
  - Start update of local plan to deliver new NPPF objectives within 6 months of adoption
- Support our homeless and most vulnerable people working directly and in partnership with the voluntary sector, backed by:
  - Our new Homeless Pathway
  - Developing an in-house Housing First model
  - Providing the right mix of support and high-quality temporary accommodation to help people progress to permanent, secure housing
- Pilot and expand council-house decarbonisation plan, including fabric-first reduction in energy use and bills, expanded local energy generation and replacement of gas boilers with zero carbon alternatives
- New maintenance and repair contract, improving quality and responsiveness of council house repairs and retrofit
- Work with partners to drive wider residential decarbonisation across all housing types, including historic and heritage buildings



# Efficient and Effective

We aim to provide our residents with high quality, easy to access, good value services that are continually improving with a strong focus on digital options for those who prefer them.

## What we want to achieve



Improved satisfaction for our services



Good value compared to other similar authorities



High accessibility and usage of our services – with a strong shift to digital for those who prefer it



A balanced budget and stable council finances

## How we will achieve this

- New Digital Strategy and Action Plan to:
  - Improve online customer experience – focusing first on the most used services
  - Improve internal collaboration and efficiency to further improve services
  - Improve use of data and analytics to support decision-making
- Building on the TC25 programme, continue with 2-yearly transformation programmes embedded in the council's work – reducing cost and improving efficiency
- Test and deploy new technologies capable of improving efficiency and reducing cost
- Robust IT security and resilience
- Joined up system of performance management tightly integrating service plans with council plan and clear KPIs measuring economic, environmental and community outcomes
- Work to keep district council tax increases below inflation

# Listening and Learning

We want to improve resident survey results for involvement, contact, and response, increase engagement with underrepresented groups, and achieve above-average tenant satisfaction levels.

## What we want to achieve



Improved Residents' Survey results for involvement, contact and response



Improved engagement with under-represented groups



Above average Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs)

## How we will achieve this

- Satisfaction tracking and analysis across our services
- New Tenant Engagement Strategy
- Early and ongoing stakeholder engagement designed into all major projects
- Early engagement with Councillors on ward issues
- Review and refresh the current Public Sector Equality Duty Policy and create an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan, including refreshed EDI objectives and LGA Equality Framework actions
- Community Governance Review to ensure strong network of parish and town councils across the entire district – capable of operating in any new local government structures
- Review options for further devolving City Council functions to ensure sufficiently resourced parishes have maximum scope to represent local communities
- Work with neighbouring authorities to ensure that our communities are involved and heard on major out-of-area developments and initiatives that impact them
- Support a learning culture:
  - Post-evaluation and lessons learnt for all major initiatives
  - Encourage reapplication of best practice from other authorities and within the council
  - Research partnerships with local universities on our most difficult challenges



Winchester  
City Council

[winchester.gov.uk](http://winchester.gov.uk)