

MINUTES OF THE OTTERBOURNE PARISH ANNUAL ASSEMBLY HELD IN THE BIANCHI ROOM, OTTERBOURNE VILALGE HALL 7 MAY 2024 AT 7.30 PM

Present: Cllrs Smith (Chairman); Gilbert; Moody; Green; King; Herring; Sinclair.

In attendance: County Cllr J Warwick; District Cllrs J Warwick and B Laming. 10 Parishioners. Clerk.

1. **Apologies for absence:** Cllr Stansbury; District Cllr A Brophy
2. **Welcome:** The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.
3. **Minutes of the 2022/23 Annual Assembly**

The 2022/23 Minutes had been approved as an accurate record at the 16 May 2023 Parish Council meeting and distributed to all attending the Assembly. There were no comments raised. Proposed by Cllr Gilbert; seconded Cllr Green and agreed for signing by the Chair.

4. Chair's Report: Cllr Mark Smith

The Chairman thanked his fellow councillors for their continued hard work and support. Particular thanks were also extended to Ron Emery whose input to the community had extended over many decades in cricket coaching via the former Top of the Hill club and as Chairman of the Otterbourne Allotment Gardens Association from which he had recently retired and handed over to Paul Valteris. The Parish Council was very fortunate to have the support and advice from the long-standing Clerk and from the many volunteers and helpers within the community, including: the Tree Warden, Southampton International Airport Representative, SOCCT members, the Conservation Group, the Village Hall Committee, Allotments Association, Footpaths Representative, litter pickers and rota for the evening closure of the recreation ground, the volunteers with the Scouts, the webmaster and those producing and delivering the parish church magazine, the organisers of the village fete and Neighbourhood Watch contributors. The County and District Councillors Jan Warwick, Adrian Brophy and Brian Laming were also thanked for their contributions and guidance. There had been two significant events during the year. The Big Lunch for the King's Coronation had been held in collaboration with Allbrook Parish Council bringing neighbours and communities together for food, entertainment and games on the common. The Queen Elizabeth Memorial Garden in Cranbourne Drive had been officially opened by the Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire and it was hoped that the garden would develop and be added to at other significant national times. Planning was well advanced for the 80th celebration of D-Day on 6th June which would again be held in conjunction with Allbrook Parish Council on the common and follow the national guidelines with the lighting of beacons. The Parish Council had submitted consultation response for the Southern Water Resource Management Plan challenging costs for future projects and it would continue to monitor how these would impact on all Southern Water customers. Two new councillors had joined the Council during the year: Councillor Kerrie Sinclair would be focussing on Climate Change and Sustainability, and Councillor Ian Herring would be covering Enforcement Cases, Footpaths and Riparian matters. The Council would soon be two councillors down with some areas of the village needing representation and anyone interested was encouraged to contact the clerk or ask a councillor for more information.

5. Report of Planning and Highways 2023/24

Planning Applications: Cllr David Green

Over the past year Councillors had regularly reviewed all planning applications with a majority view formed before comment to WCC. Cllr Green thanked fellow Councillors and the Tree Warden, Dave

Cox, for their help in examining the various applications. A total of 22 applications had been received during the year (down from 31 reported last year), with two objections raised by the Parish Council relating to tree work and one objection relating to the residential development of a barn. Comments on 12 other applications had also been made. Of the applications processed by the Parish Council, WCC had refused four. One planning appeal relating to Otterbourne Manor had been upheld in favour of WCC by the Planning Inspector. The majority of applications related to extensions and alterations with a fall in applications from 23 in 2022-23 to 12 in 2023-24. Four commercial applications had also been received with three permitted by WCC and one refused relating to space for new businesses (IncuHive) within an office building off Poles Lane. Two other applications had been received relating to the construction of a playhouse and for installation of polytunnels on Kiln Lane, both of which had been approved by WCC. Four Tree Planning Orders had been processed, the Tree Warden had proposed objection to two and raised comments on the other two applications.

Planning Enforcement: Cllr Ian Herring

There were five cases where the Parish Council had concerns and were in consultation with WCC. Two cases related to dwellings in the village both of which were ongoing: one would require a retrospective planning application and the second related to a listed building. The three other cases related to land in outlying areas of the village. One case concerned land off Poles Lane where there had been a positive verbal response to the Enforcement Officer requesting removal of rubbish, abandoned vehicles and alleged occupation of a camper van and this case was awaiting a compliance check. The second case related to land west of Kiln Lane where there was alleged unauthorised change of agricultural land to industrial with storage of camper vehicles and lorries and this case was awaiting further outcome. The third case related to Springbridge Farm on Highbridge Road where WCC had considered the harm caused by unauthorised development unacceptable and an Enforcement Notice had been served on 14 November 2023 to remedy the breach of planning control. The Parish Council had been involved in this case since 2016 and the Appellant had received a number of visits over the years, however there continued to be an accumulation of buildings, vehicles and non-agricultural equipment together with construction of a large area of hard-standing on agricultural land. The Parish Council's concerns had always been that this was inappropriate and visually unacceptable in a strongly rural area surrounded by sites of special scientific interest. It had consistently reviewed these developments and been aware that they failed to meet several key points in the Winchester District Local Plan. The recipient of an Enforcement Notice has the right to lodge an appeal and the recipient had responded to that effect. An independent Planning Inspector would decide the Appeal arranged over three days commencing 8th May in Winchester. In its submission to The Planning Inspectorate the Parish Council had stated its strong support that the Enforcement Notice be upheld.

Strategic Planning: Cllr Mark Smith

The Winchester Local Plan to 2039 was still in progress and the Regulation 19 – Publication of Local Plan was awaited July to September 2024. The document would then be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for Independent Examination Hearings which was anticipated in Autumn 2024: the WCC website gave further information. The council had fulfilled its brief in 2022/23 and identified a partial site of land east of Main Road as being the most suitable for the housing needs of Otterbourne due to sustainability, the benefit offered to the community and the most appropriate fit within the fabric of the village. The Parish Council was keeping a watching brief on the proposed planning application for the Bushfield site in Compton & Shawford Parish. Although the submitted plan appeared generic, there was concern for Otterbourne in regard to the potential 2000 cars a day identified by Hampshire and National Highways which they believed would enter into southern Winchester and have an impact upon the village road infrastructure.

Highways and Street Amenities: Cllr Stacey King

The recent flooding in the village by the Nisa store had been a significant concern and Cllr Warwick as thanked for the support and assistance provided. A follow-up had been made with Southern Water for a check on the sewers and with the Environment Agency for advice on the Bourne and the Emergency Planning document had been updated. Water flooding down Otterbourne Hill had also been a problem and HCC had advised that the gullies through the village were cleared annually and last done in April. A follow-up check by the Parish Council would be made in the autumn. A report to HCC had been made regarding the dislodged lamp post at the zebra crossing outside the Nisa store. Enquiries had been made regarding further parking restrictions between the two entrances to Chapel Lane, however HCC had advised that the accident record did not support it being a priority. Following the glass on the Otterbourne Hill bus shelters being repeatedly vandalised, it had been decided to replace the glass with a half wooden side. A new contractor had started for cleaning the street amenities which had proved very successful.

6. Report of Recreation: Cllr James Gilbert

The recreation ground continued to be a well-used facility for the village with the play park, youth facilities, football club and general use by dog walkers. There had been further maintenance work carried out on the play park and youth facilities including tightening loose fittings, re-painting and replenishing some of the wet-pour areas. The cracking along the pavement leading to the play park had also been repaired. The council had changed contractors for maintenance of the recreation ground (cutting and strimming grass) and this included monitoring and emptying the bins. Colden Common Football Club had continued its use of the ground although the very wet weather over the winter had impacted matches. The Club had also worked to resolve issues raised by local residents earlier in the year. Due to the very heavy rain in January, there had been an issue with rainwater runoff into neighbouring gardens and advice from HCC was being sought. The group of local residents undertaking the lock-up rota of the recreation ground car park (6pm Oct-Mar, 9pm Apr-Sept) were thanked; this had helped to prevent anti-social behaviour, however some gatherings in the car park had continued. The residents who had supported the litter picking events and in and around the youth facilities area in the summer months were also thanked. The burst pipework leading to flooding of the pavilion had been a major incident in the early part of the year that cost almost £44,500 to reinstate the reception area and kitchen, however all but £3,000 had been covered by an insurance claim. The work had included replacement of the copper pipework in the roof to plastic pipework which would be more resilient to cold weather and there had also been replacement of the shower heads. Cllr Stansbury had overseen the refurbishment and he continued to ensure that the statutory tests and inspections were carried out each year. Recently, a HCC 'Go Faster Greener' grant award of £9,000 had been received for replacement of the windows and front reception door with double glazed units which would be scheduled for work during the summer months and the pavilion would then be in the best condition it had been for a long time.

Climate and Sustainability Report: Cllr Kerrie Sinclair

Council members and residents from the parishes of Otterbourne and Allbrook had formed a group working towards reducing climate change and improving sustainability and biodiversity. A scoping event had been held in January to determine issues of interest such as improvement of home energy, recycling and repurposing and local food production. WCC and HCC were working hard to meet targets in order to reduce emissions and the group had been fortunate to receive input from WinACC and a resident who worked within WCC on these matters. The group's structure and remit would be determined at the Annual Parish Council meeting and it would then look at projects.

7. Report of Finance and Administration: Cllr Lesley Moody

There were no matters arising from the external audit of the Accounts for 2022/23.

Unaudited accounts for 2023/24: The Internal Audit had taken place on 22 April 2024 with no matters arising. The Annual Return had been sent for External Audit.

The total income for the year was £88,083 (ex VAT of £12,423) and the main items were: Precept £40,121 (46% of total income); Rent from the footpath and pavilion £1,877 (2% of total); Allotment rents £1,211 (1% total); Bank Interest £1,112 (1% total); Grants and other receipts £2,346 (3% of total); Insurance Claim for Pavilion Flood £41,416 (47% of total). Grants and contributions received were: Hampshire County Council grant £500 (towards Coronation of King Charles III event); Allbrook Parish Council £470 (50% contribution for Coronation village event); Southern Water £500 (non-invasive surveys); Southern Water £876 (reimbursement of water outage).

The total expenditure for the year was £91,589 (ex VAT £11,993) and the main items were: Admin costs which included the clerk's salary, insurance, audit and professional fees; subscriptions, printing and hall hire £19,799 (22% of total expenditure); Recreation ground and open spaces which included additional items to the maintenance contracts, Sponder's Mede, maintenance of the play park and youth facilities £13,318 (15% of total expenditure); Amenities which included street furniture, the allotments, war memorial, and village events £8,543 (9% of total); Highways which included speed restriction sign, street lights, Lengthsman scheme and footpaths £3,685 (4% of total); Churchyard Maintenance for St Matthew's Church and the Old Churchyard £1,000 (1% of total); Donations £795 (1% of total) allocated as £25 towards a Remembrance Wreath; £120 towards printing of the parish magazine; £500 to SOCCT for maintenance of the Sparrowgrove and Oakwood copses; £150 towards the Winchester Citizens Advice Bureau; Pavilion Flood payments £44,449 (48% of total).

Spending plans for 2024/2025: When setting the budget for the coming financial year, overheads had been assessed and best value sought wherever possible. The Precept had been set at £41,778 which was £59.09 per household per annum at Band D equivalent to an increase of £3 per household per annum. Within this sum the following major items of spending had been allowed as additional to those within the regular budget: £2,500 towards non-contract works at the recreation ground and other open spaces work; £3,700 towards replacement of the pavilion windows and front reception door with double glazed units with £1,500 of CIL funds (received from developers) used and a further amount of £9,000 received from HCC via a 'Go Faster Greener' grant towards the project; £500 had been added to the General Reserves bringing them to £44,500 and all of the CIL fund had been utilised. The Reserves remained good to contribute towards replacement of parish assets and as an emergency fund. The Finance Committee was also responsible for administrative matters including the appointment and monitoring of the auditor and ensuring that procedures complied. To this end the Council's Governance documents, the insurance of our assets, risk assessments, the internal audit procedures and banking arrangements were annually reviewed.

8. Questions from the Floor

The County and District Councillors had submitted reports which were distributed to the attendees. A Parishioner raised concern about the proposed housing development site east of Main Road in relation to the public footpath. Cllr Smith advised that the partial site proposed to WCC was only the field adjacent to Main Road with the remainder, including the footpath, to be public open space and transferred to the parish. It was known that the old Roman road also extended across the site. The proposal was for 55 dwellings as smaller-sized, two bedroomed houses to accommodate young families and those wishing to downsize and it was thought that the potential increase in the number of young children to the village could have a positive effect on Otterbourne C of E Primary School.

The Chairman thanked all for attending and the Assembly closed at 8.20 pm.

OTTERBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS SUMMARY 2023-2024

Audited Year ending 31/03/2023		Unaudited Year ending 31/03/2024
£	<u>RECEIPTS</u>	£
40,091	Precept	40,121
0	Loans	0
180	Interest on Bank Investments	1112
999	Allotments	1211
1,445	Rentals (footpath and pavilion)	1,877
3,438	Grants and Other Contributions	2,346
0	Pavilion Flood Insurance Claim	41,416
2,493	VAT Repayments	12,423
48,646	TOTAL RECEIPTS	100,506
	<u>PAYMENTS</u>	
20,279	Administration (insurance, audit, office, clerk's salary, subscriptions)	19,799
795	S137 Payments (donations)	795
13,550	Recreation Ground and Open Spaces	13,318
5,259	Amenities (street furniture, allotments, war memorial, village events)	8,543
3,677	Highways (speed restriction sign, street lighting, verges, Lengthsman)	3,685
0	Planning	0
1000	Churchyard Expenses (St Matthew's and Old Churchyard)	1,000
0	Pavilion Flood Refurbishment	44,449
2,975	VAT on Payments	11,993
47,535	TOTAL PAYMENTS	103,582

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS SUMMARY

Audited Year ending 31/03/2023		Unaudited Year ending 31/03/2024
£		£
56,851	Balance as at 01 April	57,962
48,646	Add Total Receipts	100,506
-47,535	Deduct Total Payments	-103,582
57,962	Balance as at 31 March	54,886

Represented b by:

14,162	Current Account Balance	13,735
43,800	Deposits/Investments	44,000
0	Uncleared cheques/bank payments	-2,849
0	Petty Cash in Hand	0
57,962	Balance as at 31 March	54,886

The 2024 Financial Year Statement is unaudited and may be subject to amendment.
 Mrs Julie Ayre, Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

Hampshire County Councillor: Annual Report 2023-2024

HCC budget 2024-25

The County Council's budget for the next financial year has been approved by the council. This budget covers £2.6 billion of public spending on the ongoing delivery of important local services to Hampshire's 1.4 million residents.

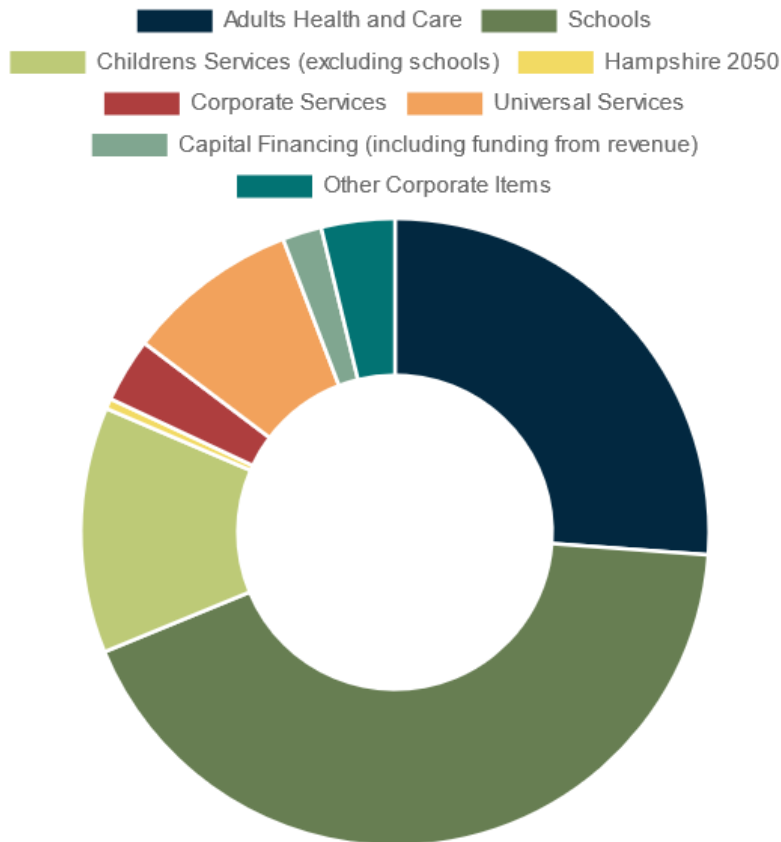
The County Council also approved the spending of **£880.6 million** over the next three years on capital programs, to help boost jobs and the local economy, the quality of the environment and contribute towards the County Council's commitment to tackling climate change. This provision for Hampshire's infrastructure, including more school places, improving roads and bridges and investing in the fabric of Hampshire's older people's social care estate, is one of the largest in the country, and brings the County Council's four-year total investment in the fabric of Hampshire to £1.4 billion, providing a huge boost to the local economy through jobs, skills and construction.

Transforming in-house care for older people

The County Council operates in-house care homes for older people and will invest **£173m** on new specialist nursing and complex dementia care, as well as short term pre-and post-hospital support, to better meet the needs of the county's ageing population.

It will increase the overall number of beds available to local people from 900 to 1,000, within a network of 13 homes. Approving these plans secures the long-term future of our in-house homes ensuring they remain in the council's ownership.

Where the budget will be spent



HCC Highlights from 2023/2024

Invitation by Hampshire County Council to bid for funding to plant disease resistant elms

Communities across Hampshire are invited to apply for funding to plant disease resistant elm trees. The English countryside was once dominated by elms, but since the 1960s these trees have been ravaged by Dutch elm disease that was accidentally introduced to Europe in the early 20th century. The disease has killed nearly all the mature elms in Britain, an estimated toll of 60-100 million trees. Our planting initiative will be a great opportunity to enhance local spaces and provide essential habitats for wildlife including species of moth and butterfly. The Hampshire Forest Partnership has already supported 1,205 disease resistant elm trees to be planted across Hampshire's green spaces by farmers, landowners, and local communities. Enquiries are open now for the 2024/25 tree planting season which starts from the autumn. Organisations such as town and parish councils, local groups and landowners can find out more information including how to apply for disease resistant elms by contacting the Hampshire Forest Partnership on treeplanting@hants.gov.uk

Bus Services Hampshire's £7.2 million share of the Department for Transport's (DfT) Bus Service Improvement Plan Plus money and has been awarded to protect existing commercial services (that might otherwise see reduced timetables) and to fund more frequent services from May.

In Winchester the **Bluestar 1** service between Winchester and Southampton will have an additional evening weekday services and new late-night services in each direction on Friday and Saturday evenings. **Service 66** between Romsey and Winchester will improve to every 30 minutes, Monday to Saturday daytime.

Government appoints Hampshire County Council to take lead role in local nature recovery

Hampshire County Council has been appointed by our government to prepare a 'Local Nature Recovery Strategy' for Hampshire, including the areas of Portsmouth and Southampton. £388,000 will be provided to coordinate the development of the new strategy in collaboration with key partners. The Strategy will bring together organisations and residents to restore precious habitats, protect wildlife and combat climate change. Hampshire County Council is one of 48 individual local authorities across England designated as leads for the delivery of Local Nature Recovery Strategies and will work with Southampton and Portsmouth unitary authorities, the region's two national parks and all eleven district and borough councils across Hampshire.

Improving Recycling and Reuse at the Household Waste Recycling Centres Residents are being asked to separate their waste ahead of a visit to a Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) to reuse and recycle more, and to reduce the amount of material that goes to costly disposal methods such as landfill. By taking a few moments more to sort our waste material, we could save up to £200,000 of taxpayers' money every year. The HWRC teams will be on hand to answer any questions and offer advice.

Most HWRCs in Hampshire will be able to recycle the following materials:

- Garden and green waste
- Metals
- Wood
- Cardboard
- Electrical equipment and appliances
- Batteries, printer cartridges, and light bulbs
- Furniture
- Clothing and textiles
- Paints, chemicals, engine oil and gas bottles

County Councillor Grant

My annual devolved Councillor Grant pot is for projects or events across the Winchester Downlands Division. It was opened on 1st April 2023 for Coronation grants and will open again for other applications on 1st June 2024. Please contact me if you have a project or event that will benefit residents. In the meantime, please see the list of projects that benefitted from my grant funding last year:

My £8000 Councillor Devolved Grant Budget for the financial year 23/2024 was shared amongst the following projects.

Applicant	Project
Compton & Shawford PC	Coronation Event
Otterbourne PC	Coronation Event
Hursley PC	Coronation Event
Oliver's Battery PC	Coronation Event
Chat T Café Badger Farm	Coronation Tea Party
Otterbourne Parish Council	Queen Elizabeth Memorial Garden
Hampshire Garden Projects	Edible Garden Oliver's Battery Primary School
Key Changes	Music Therapy for young people with a disability
Winchester Young Carers	Day Outing for carers
Winchester Go Learning Disability	Day Outing to Theatre
WinACC	Support for Green Week
Hygiene Basics Bank	Start Up grant

Our Hants

The county council's app is available for download to your smart phone. You can report a pothole, book your HWRC visit, find jobs at HCC and in education, apply for a school place, renew a library book, find things to do in Hampshire and much more too!

Cllr Jan Warwick

Hampshire County Councillor for Winchester Downlands

Winchester City Councillor

Tel: 07717 104236

Email: jan.warwick@hants.gov.uk or jwarwick@winchester.gov.uk

Winchester City Councillors' Annual Report

Cllr Adrian Brophy, Cllr Brian Laming, Cllr Jan Warwick

Supporting our communities

Grants for community projects

During the year several organisations in the ward benefited from District Project Grants, District, Small Grants, and Green Grants These provide support to local groups and organisations who may need new equipment, start-up assistance or help with events and activities in their communities. Recipients include a grant to Compton Football Club for new youth equipment, to Oliver's Battery Parish for a new thermal camera to support residents' home insulation efforts, a grant for new technology at Waltham Chase Pre-school, and funding to help provide more efficient glazing to Otterbourne Pavilion. WCC continued to support many other district-wide projects benefitting residents from the Badger Farm and Oliver's Battery ward (e.g. a standout example is the £60,000 grant to support homelessness services for the district provided to homelessness charity Trinity). Winchester City Council also worked to award funding to rural businesses and not-for-profit and community groups as part of the Rural England Prosperity Funding (REPF). NB – this continues, with the next round of funding made open for applications in March 2024. The fund allows organisations to apply for between £15,000 and £40,000, with commercial businesses required to match fund their projects.

Cost of Living Support

Throughout the year, WCC continued to offer support for those affected by the cost-of-living crisis. These measures included:

- £300,000 in emergency support for affected residents
- 318 council homes retrofitted to cut bills and carbon emissions
- Managing the cost of bills with the lowest council tax increase in Hampshire
- A dedicated Cost of Living Grant Scheme provided funding to organisations supporting residents in dealing with heightened costs of living.

Winchester District Co-Mentor Scheme

To help boost local innovation and productivity in the district, WCC launched the Winchester District Co-Mentor Scheme for local businesses. The free scheme matched creative co-mentors with other business co-mentors so that both parties benefit from the co-mentoring relationship.

Support for Ukraine

Our district has also continued to extend a hand of support further afield. In March 2024, Winchester City Council's Ukraine team was shortlisted for an award at the Local Government Chronicle Awards. The team, who work within the council's Housing and Communities services, have helped to support more than 280 Ukrainian families with settling down to life in the district by organising language and skills workshops, providing assistance with accommodation, promoting to access local services and more.

Going Greener Faster

Taking urgent action on the climate emergency

In September, the council cabinet reaffirmed its commitment to carbon neutrality by agreeing a new Carbon Neutrality Action Plan (CNAP) to support WCC's goals to become a carbon neutral organisation by 2024 and a carbon neutral district by 2030. Focus areas of the plan include transport; renewable energy generation; nature-based solutions for capturing and storing

atmospheric carbon dioxide (such as tree planting); and supporting the creation of local carbon credits. Measures identified as having the most impact include: energy saving in 800 homes; funding schemes for residents' energy saving; continued installation of EV charging points and PV solar panels; exploration of large-scale renewable energy generation; decarbonising council fleet vehicles including Park & Ride; and improving cycling and walking opportunities across the district.

Focusing on Renewable Energy, WCC also held a series of Carbon Neutrality Open Forums to understand public views on the different types of renewable energy, their pros and cons, and the renewable energy choices they'd like to see made in the district. In terms of results to date, WCC was proud to be named the fifth best council nationwide by Climate Emergency UK for its actions to achieving net zero. The results in the 2023 Council Climate Action Scorecards can be seen at <https://councilclimatescorecards.uk/about/>

The council was also recognised for its efforts in training staff about the impacts of carbon and how day-to-day actions in their work and at home, can help reduce carbon emissions. The council is one of only 5 local authorities across the UK to be awarded the silver accreditation by the Carbon Literacy Trust.

Exploring renewable energy for Winchester

The city council has plans to be a carbon neutral district by 2030 – renewable energy is likely to be one of the most effective ways to reduce our carbon footprint. Focusing on Renewable Energy, WCC held a series of Carbon Neutrality Open Forums to understand public views on the different types of renewable energy, their pros and cons, and the renewable energy choices they'd like to see made in the district.

Tackling Antisocial behaviour

Fly-tipping prosecutions

Winchester City Council is pursuing a zero-tolerance approach to fly-tipping by prosecuting offenders. It has recently reported a third successful fly-tipping prosecution in four months (following fly-tipping prosecutions have also been achieved by Winchester City Council in November 2023 and January 2024). By prosecuting in this way, offenders risk a prison sentence of up to five years and receive a criminal record.

Alcohol Control zone extended to 2026

In September, WCC's licensing and regulation committee voted to support a 3-year extension of the existing alcohol consumption public spaces protection order (PSPO) to September 2026. The city's PSPO, which also covers Badger Farm, isn't a ban on public drinking but aims to address antisocial behaviour in response to complaints by the public and gives police the power to confiscate alcohol from people drinking in public and to issue a FPN for non-compliance.

Expanding CCTV

In the city, 40 additional CCTV cameras are being added to Chesil Street car park to provide additional reassurance for users and help deter anti-social behaviour. Winchester already has a network of 110 CCTV cameras across the city which are monitored from a local control room 24 hours a day. These additional cameras will bring the total to 150 and are a vital part of the city council's wider work with partners to ensure a safe and welcoming city.

An Evolving District

Central Winchester Regeneration ongoing

Winchester City Council's is undertaking a regeneration of a circa four-acre area of the city with a wide-ranging mix of uses (e.g. including flexible work and creative spaces, food and drink offerings, a hotel and new high-quality public spaces). The proposals also include new homes to suit people of all life-stages, with a range of tenures available including private sale, homes for rent and affordable housing. The project was included in WCC's Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) after extensive public engagement and community consultation. In March 2023, WCC announced the appointment of Jigsaw Consortium trading as Partnerships & Places to bring forward the Central Winchester Regeneration (CWR) project. During the past year, Jigsaw held a series of meet and greet events to gather public views to shape proposals for the site.

Work is now ongoing with key recent developments including the refurbishment of the Kings Walk area and the demolition of the Friarsgate Medical Centre. This area will be redeveloped in the interim ("meanwhile use" as an open space, ahead of the comprehensive programme of redevelopment). Concurrently, work is well advanced on the construction of the new St Clements Surgery in Middle Brook Street supported by WCC.

Local plan revised timetable

In August, the Cabinet Committee for the Local plan agreed to extend the timetable for producing a Local Plan, citing the complexity of national nutrient neutrality legislation and the value of first completing ongoing Strategic Transport assessments and studies into the local economy – all factors that could influence the emerging Local Plan. The revised timetable means that Regulation 19 consultation will take place in Summer/Autumn 2024, with adoption of the plan in 2025.

Bushfield Camp – Clarifying the anticipated timeframe

Following consultation on Bushfield Camp during autumn-winter 2023, the process was delayed after National Highways requested more time to consider the impact of the proposals. At the full council session on 17th January, Cllrs Warwick and Brophy both asked questions to Cllr Jackie Porter, the Cabinet Member for Place and Local Plan, to clarify the impact of the delay and likely timeframe.

These questions and answers are included in full below, given the local interest in this issue:

From: Cllr Warwick - "Public consultation for the Bushfield Camp planning application opened on 27th October and closed on 7th December 2023. When will the application be heard by the planning committee and how many residents will be allowed to address the committee?"

Reply from Cllr Porter

"It's become clear as the process has continued, that concerns about the highways impact of Bushfield are particularly important for residents – and so the Council is absolutely committed to ensuring that National Highways and Hampshire County Council take the time they need to properly and thoroughly assess the impact of the applications.

As a result, based on the timetable they have given us, it is likely that the Bushfield application will not be able to come to committee before May or June – possibly later.

The decision as to how it will be handled is – as was agreed in the new Constitution last month – is a matter for the Planning Committee itself and not for the administration.

If you look at page 67 of the Constitution - Part 3.3, section 1.8a – it makes clear that the Planning Committee decides their own public speaking arrangements and are also able to determine specific arrangements for public speaking on certain applications.

My hope is that the Committee will look to run a process that allows a full range of residents and affected organisations – including Parish Councils to have their say. I have spoken to the Chair of the Committee, Councillor Rutter, and this is her intention as well."

From: Cllr Brophy - "Given the request by National Highways to have more time to assess the traffic impacts of the proposed development at Bushfield Camp, can the Cabinet Member for Place and Local Plan outline how this will affect the timeline for decision making?"

Reply from Cllr Porter

"I know how concerned local residents are about the traffic and transport implications of the Bushfield planning application.

I am reassured therefore, that National Highways have sought more time to work through the highway implications of the application with the developer.

The outcome of the National Highways' discussions with the applicant will then be reconsidered by Hampshire Highways who will be given the opportunity to resubmit their comments too.

Once those comments have been received, it will be important for the public to have their say as well – particularly if there is significant new information. And, if this is the case, we will allow time in the process for this to happen. The combined effect of this is likely to mean that determination will not be possible before May or June this year – possibly later."

Regeneration of Station Approach

A regeneration of Station Approach area in Winchester was also progressed. In summer 2023, officers recommend to the cabinet that a concept masterplan should be produced for Station Approach in order to allow residents and stakeholders to determine the vision for the whole area - setting out the priorities and defining the transport hub and public realm strategy.

Looking ahead – The council budget for 2024/2025

Councillors approved a balanced budget for Winchester City Council at a council meeting on 22 February. The approved budget reflects continued investment in the Council Plan priorities, a below inflation increase in council tax and plans to improve online access for customers as part of a wider transformation programme.

Key highlights include:

- A below inflation rise in Council Tax for city council services (an increase of £4.07 per year for a Band D property, or 2.6%.)
- Investment in the council plan priority of 'Greener Faster' – This includes expanding recycling and introducing doorstep food waste collections and reducing carbon emissions in the waste vehicle fleet.
- Recognising the ongoing cost of living pressures for residents, budget has been set aside for a council tax support fund and the extension of the exceptional hardship fund.
- Investment in the Council Plan priority of Homes for All, providing additional support for the council's homelessness prevention strategy.
- Over half a million pounds of **investment to refurbish Winchester's public toilets.**

At the full council where the budget was approved, it was acknowledged that (as with the rest of the country) the financial landscape is particularly challenging for local government with uncertainty about future funding. A transformation programme (TC25), which has already identified immediate savings, has been launched to address a future funding gap challenge. Included within it are plans to improve customers' access to the council by improving the council's online services.